

## 4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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

### 4.A - Core Component 4.A

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The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

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

### Argument

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#### 4.A.1.

As discussed in 3.A.1, Henderson practices regular program review as governed by the ADHE. The AHECB directed ADHE staff to revise existing program review processes to ensure quality academic programs that support Arkansas's economic development goals and to identify and remove non-viable programs. Henderson has developed a [master timetable](#) for each program's academic program review submission; programs prepare an external review by writing a comprehensive self-study. Subsequent to review, site teams provide a written evaluation, and the institutional responses are sent to ADHE within six weeks of receipt of the written evaluation.

Each college's [curriculum committee](#) reviews changes and additions to academic curricula, including addition of new courses, changes to existing courses, addition of new programs, and proposed changes to existing programs. Proposals then proceed through appropriate committees en route to the approval process, as outlined in Criterion 3.

The Department of Art received the [NASAD Commission Action Report in May 2018](#). Faculty

evaluated and addressed the areas of concern and submitted a [response to NASAD in March 2019](#). An area of concern pertained to the degree title. The Commission stated the Self-Study and promotional materials referred to the degree as a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Digital Art and Design. Henderson catalog referred to the degree as a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Digital Art and Design (Graphic Design). As a result, Henderson went through the curriculum approval process to officially change the title to Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design.

The Communication and Theatre Arts (CTA) Department submitted their self-study in December 2018. The external review was in April 2019. As the department was developing the self-study document, it became apparent that a new major in communication was needed to replace the two existing majors (Communication and Mass Media). The department developed a curriculum revision through the departmental planning process. The revision was presented to the Ellis College Curriculum Committee (ECCC) and UAC in 2018 for approval. The BOT approved it in 2019 and it was sent to the Arkansas Division of Higher Education in Spring 2019. The department submitted a [new department mission statement, new goals, new student learning outcomes, course change forms, and new course descriptions](#).

The present Communication and Mass Media majors evolved from previous fields of study, generally called speech and journalism. In 1990, Henderson's speech major became Communication and its journalism major became Mass Media Communication. The [new communication major](#) has a common core and multiple tracks, allowing students to choose specialization while recognizing the increasingly interrelated elements of both fields.

During 2017-2020, the SB reviewed the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) to ensure program teaches knowledge and skills while meeting program and institutional goals. By reviewing the collected data, a new [data science concentration](#) was proposed and approved by the UAC.

The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) sent a continuous improvement peer review team visit report in 2015. By 2017, The SB submitted its self-evaluation and program review [reports to AACSB](#). The role of the Continuous Improvement Review Committee is to ensure consistent application of the AACSB International accreditation standards and processes across peer review teams. The SB has since improved its curriculum committee oversights and the tracking of curricular review and changes with evidence generated from the Assurance of Learning (AOL) process and indirect measures. These changes are included in the attached [committee minutes](#).

#### **4.A.2.**

In 2018, Henderson launched [online course transfer equivalency tables](#) which inform prospective and current students of courses guaranteed to transfer toward degree completion. The articulation tables represent a history of transfer courses previously reviewed and approved for transcription and degree bearing credit. Each potential transfer course not previously reviewed is routed to the relevant department chair overseeing similar curriculum at Henderson. At minimum, the department chair will be provided with a formal course description from the originating institution. Upon approval from the department chair the transfer course is added to the articulation tables. Henderson also awards credit in accordance with the statutory [Arkansas Course Transfer System](#).

At present, Henderson does not have formal policies or procedures to award credit for prior experiential learning. Such credit has thus far been awarded on a case-by-case basis. Relevant evaluations of prior experience have taken place between the college dean and chief academic officer.

Current Henderson students have the ability to earn credit for supervised experiential learning through internship, practicum, and independent study formats and courses.

Henderson accepts college credit awarded by ACE for military experience and education. A maximum of 30 credit hours of [ACE military credit may count toward graduation](#). Henderson has an academic policy regarding students who have earned college [credit by examination](#). This policy includes Credit by Advanced Placement (AP), College Level Examination Program (CLEAP), DANTES Subject Standardized Test (DSST), and International Baccalaureate (IB). The [Teacher Education Internship](#) setting is a semester-long clinical/content teaching experience in a public school consisting of observing and teaching under the guidance of a highly qualified teacher. Internship credit is awarded by clinical and content university supervisors based upon satisfactory completion of all requirements and the recommendation of the cooperating teachers. Interns that do not earn passing scores required for teacher licensure receive an “incomplete” for clinical internship until the scores are met.

#### 4.A.3.

Policies and procedures for the evaluation and articulation of transfer credit can be accessed on the [Register's Transfer and Credit webpage](#). The Admissions Office evaluates college-level coursework completed at other institution(s) to satisfy the LAC. Registrar office evaluates transcripts for major and minor requirements. After evaluations, new students meet with a professional advisor to review a degree plan reflecting approved equivalencies. Students enrolled in a graduate degree program may use [graduate credit](#) from approved institutions upon the approval of program director and graduate dean.

#### 4.A.4

[Policies and procedures exist](#) for academic departments to create, change, and have approved any course prerequisite requirements. As discussed in 2.C.5, academic departments submit all course prerequisite requirements to curriculum approval committees. The Registrar's Office implements approved course prerequisites in the student information system (SIS). Information about the timeline for implementation of various changes can be found on the University Academic Council web page.

Academic departments oversee and maintain rigor and integrity of their curricula, and ensure expertise and qualifications for faculty and staff in their respective areas are met, including the terminal degree within the discipline, as required. As discussed in 4.B.1, student learning outcomes for courses are posted on syllabi. Standards for academic performance and integrity within individual courses are [provided on syllabi](#) and expectations of departmental and program standards and guidelines for academic rigor, performance, and integrity are outlined within the [undergraduate](#) or [graduate catalog](#) for all academic programs of the university. Academic standards, curriculum requirements, and faculty credentials drive accredited programs and programs recognized by professional organizations. Biological Sciences department teach a faculty-led [GEN1031 Henderson Seminar](#) in which first-semester majors are provided with departmental expectations and requirements for success.

As discussed in 3.A.3, concurrent enrollment offered through Henderson is governed by a set of [concurrent enrollment guidelines](#). Currently, Henderson only maintains a concurrent enrollment agreement with Arkadelphia Public Schools maintaining a [master list](#) of courses and high school instructors have been approved to teach courses for credit. The high school teachers proposed for concurrent credit instruction go through a vetting and [approval process](#) that includes evaluation of

their credentials.

As discussed in 3.D.2, the [Communication Center](#) serves as a research facility and assists students in any aspect of developing a public presentation, such as topic development, outlining, researching, organizing, delivery, overcoming communication apprehension, presentation aids, informal public speaking skills, and impromptu speaking.

During the 2019-2020 academic year, the [Communication Center](#) served 1,168 students. The lab has serviced 3,626 students from across nine different programs and departments since the first year of service. The Communication Center has served students to vastly improve their communication skills in various courses and encourages students to use the lab by including a [statement](#) in certain course syllabi.

The [Writing Center](#) activities and guidelines are facilitated and maintained by the Writing Center Director. The scope and function of the center is to offer a quiet personal space for students, faculty, and staff to work on various writing projects. As discussed in 3.D.2, the Writing Center staff work with individual students/clients on a peer-tutoring model to help them improve their papers and become independent writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring, the center also offers workshops on documentation styles and writing skills, and outreach for instructional support. The total number of [appointments for tutoring sessions](#) held in the Writing Center from 2015-2020 was 2,379.

As discussed in 3.D.1, [the Center for Career Development](#) offers a variety of services to students that prepare them for the successful acquisition of employment. From 2017-2019, the total number of students that have utilized the Career Development Center is 193. The Career Development Center oversees the implementation of the [All Major Career and Graduate School Fair](#) each semester. This a networking event designed for university students and alumni to connect with different companies and graduate schools to discuss job and internship opportunities. In addition, the attendance by student classification has seen an increase across all five classes.

#### 4.A.5

The following Henderson programs are accredited by specialized accrediting agencies:

**Teacher Licensure Programs (Teachers College, Henderson and Ellis College)** Early Childhood Education, Middle Level Education, Special Education, Secondary Social Science Education, Secondary Mathematics Education and Secondary English Education all are accredited through the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). It is important to note that NCATE is the previous accreditation organization for both initial and advanced programs. Currently, TCH program accreditation still is through NCATE for advanced programs. NCATE and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) joined together to form CAEP. TCH is going through the interim advanced standards visit for CAEP between March and August 2021.

**Art** - The Department of Art recently received accreditation through the National Association of Schools of Arts and Design.

**Music** - The Department of Music's B.A. and B.M. degree programs are accredited through the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM).

**Nursing** - The Department of Nursing is accredited through the Commission on Collegiate Nursing

Education for both the masters and bachelor degree programs and approved by the Arkansas State Board of Nursing.

**Business** -The B.B.A. and M.B.A. degree programs are accredited through AACSB International - The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business.

**Dietetics** - Dietetics in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences is accredited through the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND). The departmental so is a member of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences.

**Engineering** - The Bachelor of Science in Engineering program has been accredited by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) ([www.abet.org](http://www.abet.org)). ABET is the recognized accreditor of college and university programs in applied science, computing, engineering, and engineering technology.

At least one program is recognized but not accredited by the professional association: Chemistry and Biochemistry, Bachelor of Science degree - American Chemical Society (ACS)

#### 4.A.6.

Henderson alumni, working through a range of program advisory boards, such as the School of [Business Advisor Council](#) (BAC), [EDL Advisory Council](#) and [Engineering Advisory Council](#), help ensure that degree and certificate programs reflect current and emerging trends across academic and professional programs. The Center for Career Development and the Office of Assessment administer a [First Destination Survey](#) and a [Graduate Follow Up](#) survey that tracks employment information from recent graduates.

The success indicators used by our institution include the following:

#### **IPEDS surveys ([College Navigator](#))**

The IPEDS survey tracks the following data :

- Finance
- Faculty/Employee
- Student Enrollment
- Degrees Conferred
- Student Graduation
- Student Financial Aid
- Admissions Criteria and Applicants
- 12 Month Enrollment
- Academic Libraries

All of the information submitted is used to create the College Navigator webpage for Henderson. It can also be used to create a list of comparable schools when doing employee salary studies or student admission studies, etc.

#### **Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange (CSRDE)**

The CSRDE are [surveys](#) that provide continual persistence and graduation data each year beginning with Fall 2003 cohorts.

- First-time, full-time freshmen degree seeking cohorts

- STEM survey for first-time, full-time freshmen degree seeking cohorts
- Transfer survey for degree-seeking community college transfer students (2015-2016 will be the first time Henderson completes this survey)

### **National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)**

As a member institution of the NCAA, Henderson is required to report annual graduation rates and academic success rates. The [Graduation Rates Report](#) provides information on two groups of students at the university including all undergraduate students enrolled in a full-time program versus all student-athletes who receive athletic aid.

Multiple campus programs track the success of their graduates. Deans work with department chairs across all academic areas to bring more consistency in tracking and communicating with graduates at the program level. This will improve our ability to ensure that our degree and certificate programs continue preparing our graduates for their careers and opportunities for advanced study.

The Department of Biological Sciences tracks individual graduates for educational and career activities post-graduation. Detailed data since 2011 shows [biology graduates](#) are employed with a variety of agencies and employers and have entered numerous graduate and professional programs. The tracks the success of their students. For the 2018-2020 period, 80-88% SB graduates obtained a degree in four years or less. At the time of graduation, 36-38% of students had either accepted a job or will be attending graduate school.

The [Arkansas Department of Education \(ADE\)](#) annually administers a [Novice Teacher Survey](#) and reports the data collected to Teachers College, Henderson. The Department of Curriculum and Instruction reviews the Novice Teacher Survey data during their fall and spring retreats. The information is disseminated to the department chairs for improvement action plans. The dean also shares any [employer feedback](#) with the chairs. ADE has developed software to [track employment rates](#) after graduation. Currently, ADE can only track in-state graduates and job employment rates. Teachers College, Henderson also reviews data from Educational Testing Services (ETS) Institutional Reports that looks at candidates scores from Praxis II Early Childhood and Middle Level tests, as well as Principles of Learning and Teaching scores.

The Department of Nursing tracks the success of their BSN students on their state board testing and also tracks the success of its graduates. The pass rate (2017-21) on the Arkansas State Board of Nursing Exam (NCLEX) [has been at 80% or higher, with two years at 100%](#).

### **Sources**

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- 3D1.30 Center for Career Development Workshops
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- 3D4.16 Communication Center Usage and Data
- 4.A.6. Career Development First Destination Results 2017-2020
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- 4A1.13 Communication dept new programs\_Redacted.pdf
- 4A1.14 changes to data science\_Redacted.pdf
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- 4A1.17 Evidence-SOB Curriculum Committee Minutes-Agenda-2017-2020
- 4A1.6 Curriculum committees of the university\_Redacted.pdf
- 4A1.7 NASAD Commission Action Report\_Redacted.pdf
- 4A1.8 NASAD response\_Redacted.pdf
- 4A2.1 Transfer tables
- 4A2.2 Arkansas Course Transfer System
- 4A3.1 Registrar\_s Transfer Credit webpage
- 4A3.2 ACE military credit
- 4A4.12 doc 2 Concurrent Enrollment Approval Forms
- 4A4.15 Writing Center
- 4A4.16 Writing Center usage\_Redacted.pdf
- 4A4.17 Career Development
- 4A4.3 policies and procedures new programs
- 4A4.4 undergraduate catalog
- 4A4.5 graduate catalog
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- 4A6.2 Engineering Advisory Council\_Redacted.pdf
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- ADE Statewide Report April 2020
- Career Fair
- College Navigator - Henderson State University
- Communication Center Services Syllabi Statement
- Completer Hiring Rates
- Credit By Exam\_Henderson State University
- CSRDE Data
- HSU Program Review Updated Schedule 2018
- Novice Teacher Supervisor Survey Data
- Novice Teacher Survey Data
- Post Graduate S21 Graduate Data
- Teacher Internship Handbook and Syllabus
- Teachers Collge Henderson Advisory Minutes
- Transfer Policy\_Graduate School
- Univeristy Academic Council\_Procedures

## 4.B - Core Component 4.B

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

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

### Argument

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#### 4.B.1.

The Henderson State University assessment process is grounded in the comprehensive [university assessment plan](#), which initially was implemented in 2003 and revised three times since 2011 to ensure that it accurately tracks and reflects changes in the assessment process. This document functions as a resource to the campus community detailing the assessment process. The current university assessment plan focuses on the use of benchmarks and data to address the learning goals of the university.

The assessment process is conducted across both academic programs and non-instructional units. It is centered on student learning and academic program improvement and improving non-instructional unit performance in an effort to improve institutional effectiveness. The promotion and development of an effective, campus-wide assessment process has led to an overall increase in awareness by all constituents of the need for effective and meaningful assessment practices that improve student learning through data-driven decision making. The Improve (formerly TracDat) system provides a comprehensive method for academic programs and non-instructional units to take ownership of the assessment process. However, non-instructional unit data has been compiled in word files since 2019.

Established [policies and procedures](#) were developed to promote the assessment process. The focus of this process is to review and use assessment results for program or unit improvement in their stated mission and goals. The University Assessment Team, under the guidance and direction of the Office of Assessment director, provides oversight, assistance, and feedback to all academic programs and non-instructional units of the university including collection and analysis of assessment data. The university has demonstrated a commitment to providing resources in the form of software, as well as campus-wide, departmental, and one-on-one training for faculty and staff via seminars and workshops .

The [University Assessment Team](#) was established in 2003 to provide leadership, assistance, and mutual participation by faculty and staff for the development and oversight of a comprehensive, institutional assessment process. The University Assessment Team establishes [agendas](#) and meets on a monthly basis to discuss, consider, and act on all matters of the university. [Regular minutes](#) of its meetings are kept that provide an accurate account of the team's discussions and actions. The University Assessment Team's primary function is to serve in an advisory capacity in regard to



various aspects of assessment processes of the university; specific elements of the role of this body may be viewed in the Committee Handbook and the [University Assessment Plan](#).

The University Assessment Team, director of assessment and faculty assessment coordinator have conducted numerous and [comprehensive reviews](#) of all academic and non-instructional assessment plans. The reviews provided guidance and feedback for improvement of program and unit plans and suggestions that will enhance efficacy and functionality of assessment plans. For new or emergent programs, the reviews will allow assessment practices to commence in a timely fashion. These endeavors have been successful in assisting programs and units in development of new assessment plans, in improvement of existing assessment plans, and analyzing program/unit strengths and weaknesses for both student learning and non-instructional performance. To help ensure consistency and accuracy in the review process, a series of [evaluation instruments](#) were developed for both academic and non-instructional assessment plans. These evaluation instruments would allow for dissemination of feedback in a logical and clear fashion.

Since 2015, these instruments have undergone [multiple iterations](#). Feedback from the assessment process is communicated in a timely fashion. The assessment leadership and university assessment team provided direct assistance in interpreting and implementing the feedback. Since 2015, numerous, regularly disseminated assessment-related [communications](#) have occurred. Emails, phone conversations and department, college and campus meetings have been the methods of communication of these ideals.

In 2016, the Office of the Provost/VPAA and the Director of Assessment, established the position of [Faculty Assessment Coordinator](#) to assist the Director of Assessment and the University Assessment Team with multiple facets of the assessment process. The Faculty Assessment Coordinator, under the direction of the Director of Assessment, functions specifically to: help ensure compliance of academic programs with university assessment policies, provide assistance to individual programs for assessment-related needs, and address assessment issues pertaining to accreditation standards. The Faculty Assessment Coordinator is an ex-officio member and co-chair of the Assessment Team. The Faculty Assessment Coordinator is a full-time faculty member, who receives a three-hour load reduction per semester to perform the duties of the position.

Henderson established [university student learning goals](#) that are articulated in the university mission statement. These goals help guide the assessment process, and have been communicated to all academic and non-instructional programs. The current university learning goals and the mission statement were revised based on the current strategic plan.

[Assessment plans](#) with integrated goals, outcomes, measures, and criteria have been developed for both academic programs and non-instructional units. These plans are derived from data analysis based upon year-end results that are used to create clearly articulated frameworks for program improvement and the potential for highly effective assessment practices. Individual academic programs determine curricula, establish and monitor intended outcomes for student learning, and conduct departmental reviews and associated program changes on a four-year assessment cycle. As a result of these efforts, a culture of assessment has been developed and it continues to increase year after year. Henderson has implemented an assessment cycle for both academic and non-instructional assessment. Academic programs began their four-year assessment cycle in 2016. In 2018, non-instructional units began their four-year assessment cycle. Prior to those years, respectively, everyone was on an annual assessment cycle.

After thoughtful consideration of the annual cycle of assessment, the Director of Assessment and

Faculty Assessment Coordinator along with input from the Office of the Provost/VPAA determined that assessment initiatives and processes would be optimized by transitioning to a [four-year assessment cycle](#) similar to that of a number of other four-year institutions.

In 2016, the elements, structure, and requirements of the four-year assessment cycle were [communicated](#) to the campus prior to implementation. A [timeline and sequence of events](#) of the four-year assessment cycle also were created and communicated. A thorough explanation of the benefits associated with moving to a four-year assessment cycle were communicated. A detailed explanation of [assessment terminology and concepts](#) to increase understanding of the assessment process, the basics of assessment plan development, and ease transition to the four-year assessment cycle were formed and distributed. The Director of Assessment and Faculty Assessment Coordinator assisted all academic departments in the transition to the four-year assessment cycle, to include review of existing plans, with [suggestions](#) on how to improve and incorporate those changes and improvements into a meaningful and functional four-year assessment plan. In 2016/2017, the Director of Assessment and Faculty Assessment Coordinator created a [template](#) for construction of assessment plans that was distributed to all programs, and they worked with multiple programs to develop entirely new assessment plans. Multiple rounds of [communication](#) and direct assistance were provided by the Director of Assessment and Faculty Assessment Coordinator during 2016 and 2017 to facilitate successful transition for academic programs to the four-year assessment cycle.

As of spring 2020, nearly all academic programs of the university have completed the first four-year assessment cycle that included year four data analysis and interpretation along with creation of detailed summary report and action plans for future program improvement. Prior to implementation of the 2020-2024 assessment cycle, the Director of Assessment and Faculty Assessment Coordinator have reviewed all new assessment plans and provided [feedback](#) to programs which included a detailed [summary report](#) from each program that outlines the observed trends and interpretation of the assessment data from the previous cycle, along with detailed action plans for future program improvement in the area of student learning that will be incorporated into program changes.

[Improve](#) is the data repository currently used by the university to store and manage all assessment-related data for academic programs and non-instructional units. The University Assessment Team reviews assessment plans for all academic and non-instructional units on campus, with the goal of providing timely and critical feedback to each program or unit on how to improve their plans.

Since our mid-cycle review in 2015, most academic programs have met the [standards](#) established by the Office of Assessment for the development and implementation of assessment plans, useful in confirming and increasing student learning. The progress indicates an increase from an overall of [69% of academic programs](#) with meaningful assessment plans in 2015 to [92% of academic programs](#) with meaningful assessment plans in 2018.

In 2019, the rating system for academic program assessment plans was modified and revised into a [tier system](#). As of 2020, 42 out of 57 (76%) of pre-existing academic assessment plans [rated higher than tier 3](#). However, a rating above tier 3 is considered a usable/functional assessment plan. Ten new programs have been added since 2018 and some still are in the process of developing and refining their plans, causing an increase in the number of programs with lower-rated assessment plans.

Academic programs have gathered and reflected collectively on assessment evidence, and acted upon that evidence in an attempt to develop and/or enhance assessment of student learning in their curricula and facilitate program improvement. As evidence of this, we cite a participation rate of

academic programs in the assessment process of their curricula in 2014/2015 at 89% in the [2015 Mid-cycle review document](#). However, in 2018 and 2019, the rate of [academic program participation](#) in assessing student learning in their curricula was 100% of programs (57 in total) with assessment plans. The Office of Assessment continues to work closely with the 10 new academic programs to develop meaningful and functional assessment plans for implementation in the 2020-2024 four-year assessment cycle.

Beginning in 2016/2017, the non-instructional assessment process was moved from an annual cycle to a four-year assessment cycle, similar to that for academic programs. Each non-instructional unit underwent an initial program review to collect and analyze a series of metrics on current levels and trends of performance, efficacy, and expectations. In 2016/2017, the non-instructional assessment process was introduced with the new budget prioritization process, and was changed to incorporate two elements:

1. [Program Review \(2017\)](#) was slated to occur every fourth year that evaluates a unit's performance over that period, and provides a baseline of current performance data and expectations.
2. [Annual Unit Operating Plan \(2018\)](#) provided a yearly record of the program's performance effectiveness, along with intended goals for future performance and improvement.

The program review and associated summary report provided cumulative performance data and its analysis from the previous four years, including trends and inferences within the data that are used to revise the unit's assessment plan for the next assessment cycle. The annual unit operating plan allows for regular and consistent examination of a unit's performance allowing for periodic examination, reflection, and adjustment to occur over the duration of the assessment cycle based on annually collected data and analysis.

In 2016, sixty-one out of 75 non-instructional units underwent an initial program review. The discrepancy between the number of actual units and the reviewed units is because of the merging of some units/plans for various reasons. The units scoring less than adequate rating were asked to submit a second program review and incorporate the feedback and suggestions from the non-instructional budget prioritization taskforce. This was the initial evaluating body for non-instructional units during the budget prioritization process. In the initial [evaluation instrument/rubric](#) used by the taskforce, four evaluation/rating categories were used and scored.

The non-instructional units that scored adequate or higher were asked to generate an annual unit operating plan for review. Operating plans along with a second round of program reviews were evaluated by the Office of Assessment and the University Assessment Team in 2018. In 2018, a designated subcommittee of the University Assessment Team reviewed and significantly revised the [rating instrument](#) for the program review (from four to eight evaluation categories) and created the [evaluation instrument/rubric](#) for rating the annual unit operating plan. In 2018, the University Assessment Team evaluated all non-instructional units for either a program review or annual unit operating plan. Twenty-three units were evaluated for the program review, with 22/23 scoring adequate or higher. Thirty-six units were evaluated for the annual unit operating plan, with all 36 scoring adequate or higher. Some units did not submit either a program review or an annual unit operating plan in 2018.

Faculty regularly assess the extent to which students have developed the necessary, discipline-specific skills, knowledge bases, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors required for content mastery and professional achievement and success, in part through the use of [academic assessment plan data and results](#).

Where applicable, accreditation standards shape the framework for program-level assessment. Non-accredited programs use a combination of in-house and external review and evaluation to develop and refine program-level assessment.

Colleges and academic departments have assessment committees or subcommittees: School of Business — [Undergraduate Assurance of Learning Committee](#) and [BBA Accounting Assessment Committee](#), Teachers College — [TCH Curriculum and Assessment Committee](#). Additionally, some of the academic departments in the Ellis College of Arts and Sciences have departmental subcommittees on assessment. For example, [Biological Sciences](#) and [Mathematics, Computer Science, and Statistics](#). The Associate Dean for Ellis College acts as the assessment and accreditation coordinator for the college. These groups help to provide guidance and oversight for the assessment process in their respective areas. Results of assessment are used to help make decisions to enhance the quality of student learning and the learning environment.

The [history of assessment timeline](#) accurately details the chronology, adjustments and revisions, and refinements, along with major changes to the assessment process, from the 2000/2001 academic year-present. The [benefits of a functional and meaningful assessment process](#) have been conveyed to the all areas of the university, from the general for all programs, to more granular at the academic departmental level, with the [helpful hints for departmental assessment](#).

The Director of Assessment and Faculty Assessment Coordinator have produced and disseminated a number of pertinent communications: [tips for TracDat \(Improve\) usage](#); a [closing the loop narrative](#) to help with the usage of year-end results and closing the assessment cycle; and a series of [status reports](#) for academic programs and non-instructional units for updates, discrepancies, and changes/revisions necessary.

The [Assessment Awards](#), which began in 2011, have been conducted on a periodic basis to honor academic programs and non-instructional units that have excelled in the assessment process. The assessment awards were expanded in 2018/2019, to include two categories for non-instructional assessment: one award for the program review and a second for the annual unit operating plan. In addition to publicly recognizing individual areas for their efforts of excellence in assessment, the assessment awards also aim to increase the desire in campus constituencies to embrace the assessment process and help cultivate a positive culture of assessment across campus. Due to Henderson financial constraints and COVID-19 pandemic, no assessment awards have been awarded since the spring of 2019.

## **ADDRESSMENT OF PRIOR ASSESSMENT CONCERNS AND DEFICIENCIES**

As evidenced in the results from the 2012 HLC visit, [2015 Mid-cycle Review](#) and [2018 Interim Monitoring Report](#), the director of assessment, faculty Assessment Coordinator, and University Assessment Team have worked closely to continue refinement and implementation of meaningful, functional, and comprehensive assessment plans for the following programs: General Education/LAC, Bachelor of Integrated Studies and Master of Liberal Arts. This includes the use of the results to revise student learning assessment in these programs moving forward. At present, each of the three programs have developed and implemented a workable and meaningful assessment process for the 2016-2020 assessment cycle. They have developed assessment plans for the 2020-2024 four-year assessment cycle.

### **Assessment in the General Education and Liberal Arts Core**

Since 2015, Henderson has implemented many changes in the [general education assessment process](#) in an attempt to improve the assessment of general education/LAC. The General Education Committee [meeting minutes](#) document changes and implementation in the general education assessment process. As discussed in 3.D.1, the continuity and stability of the General Education Committee was improved by appointing the associate dean of Ellis College to serve as the permanent chair of the committee and appointing the Faculty Assessment Coordinator, in addition to the Director of Assessment, as permanent, ex-officio members in an advisory capacity. The General Education Committee embarked upon an extensive mapping of all general education outcomes. A [spreadsheet](#) was developed to show course linkages to each outcome.

The General Education Committee also investigated how to better assess the four [outcomes for general education/LAC](#). The committee examined the current means of assessing the general education/LAC. The goal of that assessment was to determine if students achieved competence within the four outcomes. The committee has been [collecting data](#) on the four learning outcomes since 2011 using four specifically designed [evaluation instruments/rubrics](#) in upper level courses in their majors. The rubrics have undergone a number of revisions based on evaluation of assessment data and feedback from faculty that teach courses used to assess the general education curriculum. Although the general education assessment data has been analyzed from a number of perspectives, comparison of the different subcategories within each of the four outcomes over [successive academic years](#) appears to provide the clearest understanding of the trends associated with the data. The general education committee developed a [short narrative and summary report](#) covering the last four years of general education assessment.

In 2018-2019 , the Department of Mathematics, Computer Science, and Statistics implemented a [departmentally developed rubric](#) based on the quantitative reasoning rubric to a set of problems embedded in the final exam of each of their general education courses. The Writing Program Administrator created a revised version of the [written communication rubric](#) to be applied at the beginning of each semester in the upper-level communication courses to a collection of writing samples uploaded to an electronic portfolio and scored by the collection of professors teaching these courses. This rubric was piloted during fall 2020. The committee noted that students did not naturally make connections between what they learn in a writing class and classes within their major. At the direction of the General Education Committee, the writing program administrator and director of the writing center created a [one-page document](#) to help faculty provide consistent feedback to students on their writing. By using the language and vocabulary consistent with their writing classes, the committee expects to see gains in the written communication data.

In Fall 2020, the Department of Biological Sciences was asked to assess critical thinking. An [existing assignment](#) and [evaluation rubric](#) was identified with tasks and questions aligned to the critical thinking rubric. Under the direction of the Oral Communications Center Director, all oral communications courses now assess a similar type of assignment near the end of each course. Using a [common rubric](#) , this assessment will show strengths and weaknesses of students' oral communication skills at the end of the course. Data collection associated with this outcome began in spring 2018. In the fall of 2020, a General Education subcommittee analyzed the [oral communications assessment data](#). The subcommittee determined the School of Business is considering it across their programs, and that any class that has an element of public speaking would add a required Communication Center visit to show potential for growth in the area of oral communications. The subcommittee will work with the program coordinators to explore the possibility of piloting an action plan directed by the Communication Center beginning in the spring of 2021.

A [Communication Across the Curriculum \(CAC\)](#) proposal was drafted and approved by General Education committee and UAC for implementation that began in fall 2020. It will incorporate an oral communication component to all writing intensive courses, both required writing across the curriculum courses of the LAC, and departmental writing intensive courses for students in the respective majors.

All syllabi for these courses must include at least one, assessable student learning outcome for oral communication in addition to student learning outcomes for writing. Prior to approval, the CAC proposal was evaluated by the [General Education Committee](#), university faculty, and administrators via a series of meetings, [forums, and surveys](#). All feedback from these constituencies was used to shape the current CAC document and policy. A [CAC Committee](#) has been created that oversees various aspects of the CAC, including the evaluation of newly proposed CAC courses and changes to pre-existing ones. This ensures that CAC policy is followed and revised as needed. A CAC [new course proposal](#) and [course change form](#) have been developed to facilitate these processes.

### **Assessment in the Master of Liberal Arts (MLA) Program**

The new director assumed responsibility for the MLA program and its assessment in May 2017. As a result, the program underwent significant revision and refinement of its assessment plan during the 2017/2018 academic year. A new, fully functional and meaningful [MLA assessment plan](#) was developed in spring 2018 that included data collection and analysis from 2016 through 2020. The Director of Assessment and the Faculty Assessment Coordinator worked closely with the MLA Director during this time to provide guidance and oversight in this process.

The MLA has four active student learning outcomes. Each outcome has multiple measures and associated criteria used to determine the extent of student learning. These outcomes have been assessed since spring 2018 with associated [data collection and analysis](#) for the 2016-2020 four-year assessment cycle. In association to the development of these new student learning outcomes, a corresponding set of measures, criteria, and associated [evaluation instruments/rubrics](#) were developed and implemented. Analysis of assessment data for the MLA from 2016-2020 has indicated a number of strengths in the program's curriculum, along with identification of some key areas for future direction and improvement, with [action plans](#) developed to address these areas.

During the 2018/2019 academic year, the Office of Assessment officially recognized the MLA program with an [academic assessment award](#) for outstanding assessment practices. The MLA program demonstrated tremendous improvement in student learning assessment, quality of overall assessment plan development, and efficacy of implementation.

### **Assessment in Bachelor of Integrated Studies program**

Since 2012, program assessment in the BIS has undergone considerable development, expansion, and refinement. The BIS program developed and implemented a meaningful, functional [assessment plan](#) that has completed one four-year assessment cycle. The four year assessment cycle summary report included [data collection and analysis](#) along with [actions plans](#) developed to address noted deficiencies in student learning. The BIS program also has developed a [new assessment plan](#) for the upcoming four-year assessment cycle (2020-2024).

The Director of Assessment and the Faculty Assessment Coordinator have worked closely with the BIS Director since 2016 to assist in the BIS assessment process. This included periodic modifications and adjustments post-implementation of the 2016-2020 BIS assessment plan with the end result

being a fully implemented student learning assessment plan. The BIS Committee worked with the aforementioned personnel in an advisory capacity to help develop and refine the assessment process in the BIS.

It was determined the efficacy of student learning should be assessed through the development and implementation of two BIS program-specific courses to the curriculum: [ISD 3003/Introduction to Integrated Studies](#) and [ISD4033/Senior Seminar](#). Both courses were approved and have been offered since fall 2017. [Two full years of data](#) were collected and used to make a number of refinements to improve student learning in the BIS program, based on analysis of the data collected from these courses. A corresponding set of [evaluation instruments/rubrics](#) were developed for collection of specific assessment data during these courses in association with two outcomes of the BIS assessment plan.

The [mission statement](#) of the BIS program has been revised to reflect three active student learning outcomes. Each outcome has two measures and associated criteria used to determine the extent of student learning for each. These outcomes have been assessed since spring 2016, with associated [data collection and analysis](#) for the previous four-year assessment cycle. In association to the development of these new student learning outcomes, a corresponding set of measures, criteria, and multiple associated [evaluation instruments/rubrics](#) were developed and implemented.

Analysis of assessment data for the BIS from 2016-2019 has indicated a number of strengths in the program's curriculum, along with identification of some key areas for future direction and improvement, with [action plans](#) developed to address these areas.

### **Syllabi Linking**

Based on the deficiencies regarding [syllabi](#) noted in the previous HLC site team reports, Henderson has undergone a comprehensive initiative to incorporate student/course learning outcomes (SLOs) and associated linkages to higher level outcomes and goals (program outcomes, and general education/LAC and university goals) on syllabi. In 2017, the Director of Assessment and the Faculty Assessment Coordinator initiated the process of requiring SLOs and associated linkages to higher level areas. Numerous [communications](#) and [formal presentations](#) that focused on best practices in the areas of course SLO and higher-level linkages in syllabi were drafted and submitted to university faculty and administrators. The [Ellis College New Faculty Orientation Guide](#) was updated to include a section on proper construction of course syllabi SLOs and linkages. The Director of Assessment and Faculty Assessment Coordinator have compiled and reviewed all submitted syllabi over consecutive semesters since 2017 to ensure compliance.

The Office of Assessment conducted a number of [assessment initiatives](#) that directly or indirectly provide feedback on the effectiveness of student learning. The initiatives are positioned at various points in the academic career of the student. The goal of these assessments is to monitor, track, unify, and report the outcomes of institutional practices in support of effective instruction and administration of the university and to provide data-based analysis in order to facilitate program improvement on a university-wide scale.

The division of Student Affairs and Student Success began work on re-writing its mission statement and identifying appropriate learning outcomes in summer 2018. This day-long retreat featured an [agenda](#) that focused on understanding assessment, key performance indicators, and program review. In fall 2018, each department in the division conducted a [program review](#) and submitted it for feedback from the assessment team. In 2019, work continued on the division's mission statement, as

well as on [reorganizing the division](#) to ensure efficient operations focused on student success. At this time, the Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs and Student Success was tasked with spearheading the division's strategic planning and assessment process. The division also implemented a [weekly reporting process](#) that focused on key performance indicators, as well as achievements in each department each week. This information is shared weekly with the division and key stakeholders at Henderson. The information included in the report is used to make adjustments in operations as needed. Conversations on fine-tuning the reporting and understanding the assessment process continue in [leadership team meetings](#).

In order to complete the process of writing the mission statement and learning outcomes, a [short-term strategy](#) for accomplishing this goal was created, and a [new mission statement](#) was developed. The new mission statement was approved in spring 2020. [Learning outcomes for the division](#) also were drafted and approved in spring 2020, and used for the 2019-2020 End of Year Reporting throughout the division.

#### **4.B.2.**

Program learning outcomes are linked to the university, liberal arts core, college and program learning goals in Improve. The Office of Assessment and the University Assessment Team have [trained](#) academic programs in proper assessment practices in group settings and/or individually in one-on-one sessions. The Office of Assessment continues to work with the remaining programs that have inadequate plans for assessment, and refine program-level assessment in those areas to achieve compliance with the university's assessment requirements.

Academic programs have reported specific use of data in the process of improving student learning outcomes. Several programs have developed assessment strategies and implemented data-driven improvements in their curricula and processes. These successes serve as models for other areas of the university. In 2019, all instructors of the Introduction to Biology for Non-majors course (BIO1013) employed a critical thinking assessment exercise pertaining to basic Mendelian genetics in all sections of the course. For this exercise, a [repository of basic genetics questions](#), along with an associated [standardized scoring instrument](#), are used to analyze critical thinking skills in these students.

In 2018, in the Department of Communications and Theatre Arts, an [oral communication assessment exercise and associated scoring instrument](#) as used in COM 2013 Oral Communications (a general education component for communications). This helped assess some critical aspects of communication skills among students in that area of the curriculum.

In 2017, the Department of Biological Sciences established a core of [common student learning outcomes](#) for both Introduction to Biology for Non-majors BIO1013 and the Introduction to Biology Laboratory courses (BIO1021).

The Biology, Mathematics, Computer Science, Physics, and Psychology programs use the Educational Testing Service (ETS) standard subjects test to assess overall student learning across program curricula.

The Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry routinely administers ACS standardized examinations in a number of their courses, including university chemistry I and II (CHM1014 and CHM1024) and organic chemistry I and II (CHM3063 and CHM3073).



The Department of Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer Sciences uses a series of standardized assessment exercises and associated scoring instruments to assess [problem solving skills and statistical reasoning skills](#) (4B2.7 AND 8) among students in their curriculum.

### 4.B.3.

Henderson has both internal and external indicators to measure effectiveness and success of student learning. Externally, Henderson has participated in comparative measurement strategies, such as annual reports to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE), IPEDS, and CSRDE. These annual reports are used to generate comparative data for self-evaluation.

Internally, the Director of Assessment works closely with the University Assessment Team to develop support materials for the guidance of program assessment. The Office of Assessment and the Office of Institutional Research has assisted numerous other university constituencies, including standing committees of the university, Faculty and Staff Senates and administrative offices to obtain and interpret data in order to make informed, data-driven decisions and improvements. As described in sections 4.B.2. and 4.B.3., Henderson has implemented – and continues to improve – multiple strategies and methods for effective assessment of its constituencies.

The culture of assessment at Henderson requires engaged, university-wide participation by its constituents in effective and meaningful assessment practices. As previously noted, academic and administrative programs have gathered and reflected collectively on assessment evidence. Many of those programs have acted upon that evidence in an attempt to facilitate program improvement.

## Sources

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- (4B1.20) Assessment terminology and concepts
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- (4B1.22) Template for construction of academic assessment plans
- (4B1.23) Multiple rounds of communication for four-year assessment cycle
- (4B1.24) Summary report for four year-assessment cycle
- (4B1.25) Feedback to academic programs 2020-2024 assessment plans
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- (4B1.28) 2015 Assessment plans data reviews
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- (4B1.32) 2015 mid-cycle review
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- (4B1.69) CAC guidelines and new course proposal form
- (4B1.70) CAC guidelines and course change form
- (4B1.71) MLA Assessment Plan
- (4B1.72) MLA Summary Report
- (4B1.73) MLA Evaluation Instruments
- (4B1.74) MLA action plans
- (4B1.75) MLA Assessment Award
- (4B1.76) BIS plan complete implemented
- (4B1.78) BIS Assessment plan results action plans
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- (4B2.4) oral comm assessment
- (4B2.6) SLO Intro to Bio and Bio lab
- 4B1.1 University assessment plan
- 4B1.10 Comprehensive reviews (academic assessment plans)
- 4B1.14 Higher Level Outcomes and Goal Linkages
- 4B1.18 Four-year assessment cycle timeline and sequence of events
- 4B1.2 Assessment policies and procedures
- 4B1.6 Assessment Team description mission and charge
- 4B1.7 Assessment Team agendas
- 4B1.8 Assessment Team minutes 2015\_2020\_Redacted
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- CAC Forums and Survey
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- ISD 4033\_Senior Seminar
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- Mid-Cycle Review\_Assurance Argument
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- Student Affairs and Student Success Mission and Themes

## 4.C - Core Component 4.C

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

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

### Argument

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#### 4.C.1.

Henderson developed a [strategic plan for the university](#) in 2014. [Associated data](#) indicate that first-year persistence rates of first-time freshmen for the past five years has been 57-64%. The goal was to increase the first-year persistence rate to 75%. The six-year graduation rate of first-time, full-time freshman has ranged from 34-39% since the fall 2008 cohort. The goal was to increase six-year graduation rates to 50%. The strategic plan outlined initiatives that have been implemented to increase both the persistence and the graduation rates of our students.

#### 4.C.2.

The colleges and departments have strategic plans which emphasize the importance of retention, persistence, and completion rates for degrees and certificate programs. [Ellis College Strategic Plans](#) and the [School of Business Strategic Plan](#) provide the strategies of how to improve the numbers in their respective colleges and departments.

As discussed in 4.C.4, the academic program review process collected and analyzed information on student retention, persistence and program completers in the summer of 2020. In the spring of 2021, interim Chancellor Borsig outlined the charge of the Enrollment Management Group that focused on developing a comprehensive strategic enrollment management plan that focused on the first two categories of the [Arkansas Higher Education Productivity Funding Formula](#). In the fall of 2021, the office of admissions was moved from the office of academic affairs to student affairs. Since that transition, an [enrollment management working group](#) has been established. This group meets once a week for the purpose of reviewing office operations, discuss undergraduate/graduate admission problems and any new developments in the office of admissions.

#### 4.C.3.

Henderson hosts seven federal [TRIO programs](#). Each TRIO program is charged with promoting student success and focus on higher education access and degree attainment. Each program is provided with goals from the federal government and is required to report annually on their student outcomes to continue their grant funding. For all TRIO Programs, reporting period data for [Student Support Services](#) and [Disability Resource Center](#) is maintained and analyzed, and used to make decisions regarding the services offered and any adjustments that need to be made to improve unit performance.

Henderson applied and was selected in the spring of 2016 to participate in the Higher Learning Commission's [Persistence and Completion Academy](#). This decision to apply was made because Henderson's persistence rate in the last five years has averaged 58% with our entering full-time, first-time freshman cohort. The average six-year completion rate for the past cohort terms is 33%. Completing the [HLC PCA](#) fulfilled our [Open Pathway Quality Initiative Project](#). The PCA helped build Henderson's capacity for the improvement of persistence and completion of students.

Henderson's PCA team attended the Academy Information and Planning Workshop on June 21-22, 2016. At this meeting, the team learned about the Academy and how to prepare for the Data Discovery and Academy Roundtable. During this workshop, the team also developed a Project Management Plan to help prioritize needs.

During the fall 2016 [Faculty Fall Conference](#), academy participants presented a session on the HLC PCA so faculty were aware of our initiative. Henderson's Academy Mentor, Dr. Tracy Morris, visited campus on September 14, 2016 for the [Data Discovery Visit](#). Dr. Morris visited with the president, provost, president's council, deans, staff/faculty senate executive committees, and student services council. She also hosted a staff/faculty open forum. Henderson received a [Data Discovery Feedback Form](#) from Dr. Morris.

The academy team attended the two-day [Academy Roundtable](#) in November 2016. The team discussed the data book and the leaders gave presentations on how to dig deeper into the data and how to continue conversations when returning to campus. During the fall faculty conference in 2018, an update on HLC and PCA was [presented](#).

The HLC PCA team held an [open forum](#) on September 13, 2018 to discuss data on persistence and completion and gather feedback from the faculty. The team discussed the HLC accreditation process, the quality initiative project, why Henderson joined the HLC Persistence and Completion Academy, ADHE enrollment profile reports, snapshots of the freshman cohort, and four-year graduation rates.

The Academy Team attended the Midpoint Roundtable on October 10-12, 2018. During this two day roundtable, several topics were covered regarding moving forward, setting goals, action plans, and assessing the project. As part of the PCA, the team participated in the [Academy Network](#), an academies online project management tool that is used to assist institutions in tracking the progress, and facilitate a shared learning experience amongst Academy institutions. Henderson also interacted with other institutions while participating in the academy network. Since 2016, departments and standing committees have used [PCA data](#) warehouse tools to make changes either for the university or within their department. The HLC PCA team has met throughout the academic year during 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2020 to move the quality initiative project forward and to complete the academy.

### **Breakdown of Henderson PCA exercises**

In exercise 2.0, the focus shifted to persistence and completion issues for conditionally admitted

students, as well as students moving from junior to senior classification. The process for developing a data warehouse continued with the goal of increasing communication to faculty and staff, [providing campus updates, and seeking other perspectives](#).

For exercise 4.0, the team noted three accomplishments: 1. overall communication of data to faculty and staff, 2. open communication of retention and graduation data, and 3. inclusion of data as part of the decision making process. During this period, the engagement on campus with the PCA initiative was increasing and new team members were added to the academy to include student affairs and student success.

The focus of the PCA returned to conditionally admitted students for exercise 5.0. This led to the proposal of a University College model to increase success for RISE students and to increase completion and persistence of first year RISE students. A consultant was deemed necessary to pursue the model.

For exercise 6.0, the University College model was proposed to the Executive Committee and a ROI of the proposal and an organizational model were requested. The plan was to present the quality initiative proposal to campus before the end of spring 2019. The team acknowledged the importance of sharing the information campus-wide.

Exercise 7.0 was conducted during a change in institutional leadership and a \$6,000,000 deficit faced by the university. As a result of these, the Henderson PCA moved forward with establishment of a University College, but to view it as a long-term implementation process.

In 2020, with the help of the ASU Systems Office, The Persistence and Completion Academy developed the Tableau Public program viability and enrolment management analysis tool to analyze academic program/departmental course offerings by semester and year (since 2015) to evaluate a number of key departmental metrics, including FTE to student ratios, number of students per course section, lower-division and upper-division enrollments, and graduation rates, among others. The tool allowed for identification of specific areas within departments where efficiency of curricular offerings and faculty use could be improved.

The Academic Advising Center oversees the [Early Alert Program](#). Faculty members have the capability of reporting students for attendance issues, poor academic performance, poor test scores, and other concerns. Once reported, the graduate assistants for the Academic Advising Center are the first responders to address reported students. The student's advisor also is made aware of the issue. Since fall 2020, the center has used the Calendly academic appointment calendar to help students keep track of appointments.

The center [communicates important information](#) and deadlines through email, social media, phone calls, and one-on-one sessions with the undecided students. The center provides a variety of workshops, including Time Management, Study Skills, Test Taking and Getting the Most of Your Advising Sessions are a few examples.

The R.I.S.E. program is intended for students who fall beneath the minimum ACT composite score required for unconditional admission as an incoming freshman. Since 2015, [annual data and reports](#) have been maintained regarding academic persistence for these students, including persistence within the R.I.S.E. program. Consistently, at the start of the sophomore year, approximately 40% of students continue to persist at HSU. This number drops to approximately 25% by the start of the junior year.

The FYE program was initiated in and conducted through 2019, and was coordinated through Residence Life. It was suspended indefinitely in 2020 because of a lack of evidence of effectiveness. The FYE program provided guidance to freshman students from Peer Advisors in the residence halls. The FYE Program also provided on-going tutoring in various disciplines.

[Supplemental Instruction](#) is a voluntary academic assistance program that uses peer-led group study to help students succeed in traditionally difficult courses (those courses with high drop, fail, or withdrawal rates). The program has been offered since the fall 2012 semester, where three courses: MTH1243 College Algebra, ENG1463 Freshman English A, and BIO1013 Introduction to Biology for Non-majors were available SI. In 2012, 101 sessions of SI were offered. In fall 2019, [230 sessions of SI were offered](#).

Biological Sciences recently has undergone expansion of its curriculum to include new tracks and degrees, in part to increase student retention. This directive is outlined in the 2018-2019 [Department of Biological Sciences strategic plan](#). Many students that select biology as their first major often change after a semester or two and select other majors —[Ellis College strategic plan data for Biology](#). As a result, the department has done a number of things in an attempt to address this matter. In addition to a potential increase in retention and graduation rates, these changes also may expand interest in biology to prospective students— see [new tracks and programs in biology since 2017](#). As a result of these changes, a number of students have recently graduated after switching from the B.S. in general biology track to the B.S. in wildlife and field biology or B.A. in biology.

#### 4.C.4.

Henderson has used the IPEDs definitions and methodology for tracking persistence and graduation of first-time freshman cohorts since 1996. Each fall semester, about 78% of incoming students are classified as first-time freshmen, with 22% being classified as new transfer students. Although ADHE does use the IPEDS definitions, the methodology is slightly different when tracking students for retention and graduation purposes. For [IPEDS reporting](#), students who are deceased, permanently disabled and cannot return to school, or have left to serve in the armed forces, are removed from the original headcount. ADHE reporting does not remove these students, thus there is a slight difference in the retention and graduation numbers when the reports of the two are compared.

The Office of Institutional Research also provides data to academic departments and various standing committees regarding retention, persistence, and completion of students, including the **Persistence and Completion Academy Committee**. Since 2016, this committee has looked at data on first-time freshmen to identify areas where the university can work to potentially increase the retention and graduation rates of its students. Academic departments use the data regarding retention, persistence, and completion for improvement processes. For example, the Educational Leadership department in Teachers College Henderson requested data reports regarding completers to determine whether to continue offering the MSE Technology Leadership degree. Although enrollment numbers are small, students are completing the degree. Reports are generally shared with advisory councils for input and to determine programming needs. Reports also are used to determine the viability of course offerings.

In 2020, Henderson and the ASU Systems Office worked together to create an academic prioritization and review process to evaluate enrollment and degrees conferred for each degree program in each department. The [reports](#) provided efficacy data from multiple areas within degree programs, and data was gathered on a number of aspects of each program and analyzed. Three key indicators of “program performance” were identified and evaluated: 1. student full-time equivalent enrollment to faculty full-time equivalent course enrollment, not just full-time majors, but all

students taught by faculty were considered (data from 2019); 2. credit hours attempted/generated to full-time faculty load – is a course efficiency metric – do departments have the right number of students for full-time faculty; and 3. proxy measure of graduation rates – FTE enrollment of the students designated in a major, the FTE student enrollment divided by the number of program completions in the academic year.

## Sources

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## **4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary**

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

### **Summary**

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Since 2011, the culture of assessment on Henderson's campus has changed in a positive manner to meet the needs of our students. The assessment process is conducted across both academic programs and non-instructional units. It is centered on student learning and academic program improvement and improving non-instructional unit performance in an effort to improve institutional effectiveness. The promotion and development of an effective, campus-wide assessment process has led to an overall increase in awareness by all constituents of the need for effective and meaningful assessment practices that improve student learning through data-driven decision making.

### **Sources**

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*There are no sources.*