

Criterion 4 – Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement - The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its education programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

Core Component 4.A: The institution 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.

4.A.1. – The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews and acts upon the findings.

At Cleveland State University (CSU), the responsibility to making sure we continue to offer quality programs in all academic areas is reflected in many of the academic policies and governance structures that have been in place for many years. The [Office of Academic Planning](#) implements a regular cycle of program review, which has gone through a couple of consecutive refinements over the past 6 years, leading to stronger connections between process outcomes and data-driven decisions intended to advance the goals and objectives of particular programs in a sustainable manner. Information on [Academic Program Review](#) is included in a specialized website that provides details on roles and responsibilities for involved parties, the cyclical schedule in place as well as guidance on writing a self-study and a review report. Similar to the annual assessment process, academic program review relies on a peer system to conduct reviews. More specifically, faculty in programs/departments under review nominate peers to serve as external consultants whose feedback is intended to help CSU maintain and grow its curricula. Internal peers complement the review team by providing context based on which to identify viable, implementable recommendations supportive of the University's commitment to continuous improvement. Examples of academic program review documents that illustrate the data-driven decision making process at CSU are included under Core Component 4.B.2 below.

As part of the process by which we review curricula and implement changes to our programs, CSU seeks advice from external stakeholders, such as their alumni, advisory boards and [visiting committees](#). Such committees exist in each academic unit, as illustrated by the [Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs](#) or the [Monte Ahuja College of Business](#). Faculty use these external stakeholders as a resource to make curricular changes, based on the University's academic policies governed by the [Faculty Green Book](#), as detailed previously in Core Component 3.A.1.

4.A.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.

4.A.3. – The institution has policies that ensure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.

Our transfer students are guided by clear policies that make it easy for students to join CSU. We use a College Source product called [TES](#) to facilitate most transfer credit reviews, at least those that can be done from a course description (TES maintains a comprehensive database of course descriptions from both US and international schools). The public facing instance of TES is called [Transferology](#) and all transfer credit equivalencies determined through TES automatically display and can be searched for by students in Transferology. We also maintain transfer guides and a number of 2+2 pathways. Our primary focus has been to have articulation agreements in place with three two-year colleges that account for a significant number of transfer students, Cuyahoga Community College, Lakeland Community College and Lorain County Community College. Students have access to [transfer guides](#) from each of these three institutions. In recent years, these agreements were further formalized into the [Degree Link](#), [CSU Bound](#), and [UPExpress CSU](#) respectively. A key part to these agreements is the dual admission being offered to qualified students. There are [admission policies](#) that assist our international students, both at the graduate and undergraduate levels. The [Center for International Services and Programs](#) is the conduit for our international students.

Transfer credit is particularly important in an era where there is an increased focus on experiential learning. The [Alternative Credit](#) section of the Undergraduate Catalog contains our policies on [Advanced Placement](#), [CLEP](#) and [International Baccalaureate](#). It also includes policies on credit for [Military Training and Experience](#) and Urban's [AAPLE](#) (Assessment and Accreditation of Prior Learning Experience) program. The latter references portfolio review, which is the closest thing we have to formal Prior Learning Assessment arrangement, in addition to information about our transfer credit appeal process. The [Grading](#) section of the catalog contains our policy on transferring in C- grades. The [Admissions](#) section of the catalog contains information on [requirements for transfer](#) applicants including the need for official transcripts from all regionally accredited schools attended. This section also links to CSU's version of the ODHE-mandated [Ohio Transfer Module](#) and other information on other state initiatives (e.g. treatment of D grades). Information on transfer policies and experiential learning can be found in the [academic catalogs](#). Also, per state law, each institution of higher education has to follow the [Transfer Articulation Guidelines](#) (TAGs). This allows the seamless transfer of a set of courses among institutions. Our transfer students are provided a range of resources (there is a [Transfer Center](#) that operates). All of this information is easily accessible by students through our

[academic catalogs](#), which are updated on an annual basis. All students are provided [catalog rights](#) the year they join CSU.

4.A.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.

As mentioned in Core Component 3.A, faculty, as content area experts, manage the curriculum they teach. In that capacity, they ensure that course pre-requisites, student learning outcomes, and expectations for student performance align with standards set forth within the academic discipline represented by faculty. Syllabi document the components intended to assist students in negotiating/engaging with curricula in ways that enhance their learning experiences, all of which underscore the quality assurance mechanism put in place by faculty to validate academic rigor in all courses. Access to student support services and instructional resources is also included in syllabi as a foundation for how to structure appropriate student engagement opportunities. To that end, as an example, the [Michael Schwartz Library](#) offers students a rich array of learning resources, detailed previously in Core Component 3.D.4. Over 356 [Research Guides](#) provide easy access to the most relevant information resources for each area of study at the university. As a member of [OhioLINK](#), a consortium of 117 member libraries, students can request books from a statewide collection of over 46 million books and other library materials, over 24 million electronic journal articles and over 100,000 e-books, and over 85,000 rare, scholarly, and historical records. Interlibrary Loan gives access to an unlimited number of library books and journals owned by other libraries throughout the world. Electronic Course Reserves conveniently brings together thousands of items that faculty select each semester to supplement courses. The Textbook Center offers a selection of required print textbooks. Special Collections focuses on primary research materials for the study of the economic, cultural, social, and political history of Cleveland, northeastern Ohio, and the Great Lakes region. For assistance with selecting and using information resources, students may schedule a one-on-one consultation with a subject specialist librarian through the [Ask Your Personal Librarian](#) service. Walk-in assistance is available at the Reference Center. Instruction librarians provide group or class instruction for many undergraduate and graduate classes. During these sessions, students learn to use the library's learning resources for research, academic work, and personal enrichment.

The Law Library has a strong tradition of service designed to meet the research and instructional needs of students and faculty. The Law Library's service mission is supported by a collection of over 500,000 volumes, a federal government document depository, 3,100 print and electronic periodicals, and an array of online research tools, including numerous legal and general databases, the OhioLINK catalog and databases, subscriptions, and Internet resources.

Our students have access to the [Tutoring and Academic Success Center](#) (TASC). This specialized support unit offers (e)tutoring, success coaching, and software coaching. The primary focus for TASC staff members is to help students achieve their academic goals and graduate. Other instructional resources that contribute to student success include [TRIO](#), [The Writing Center](#), [Academic Advising](#), the [Counseling Center](#) and the [Counseling and Academic Success](#)

[Clinic](#). CSU follows clear state guidelines on dual credit policies. In the state of Ohio, this program is called [College Credit Plus](#), documented in Core Component 3.A.3.

The quality of our programs is impacted by the hiring of faculty. The institution has clear [personnel policies](#) for faculty, particularly in regard to hiring, retention and continuous review of full-time faculty. The Provost's office publishes a [faculty hiring handbook](#) that establishes a clear protocol on the hiring process. This handbook is updated on an annual basis. The document includes guidelines on establishing search committees, the appropriate language to be used in the various search processes, ways to attract more diverse faculty, etc. Once a hiring decision is made, we have various ways in which we mentor faculty, from the moment they come to campus to the ongoing support provided through our [Center for Faculty Excellence](#) and the individual departments and colleges. Each college has clear Promotion and Retention documents that focus on continuous improvement and regular feedback, as illustrated by the [Monte Ahuja College of Business](#). The process involves review at multiple levels with final approval from the Board of Trustees. Faculty are also required to meet certain [graduate faculty criteria](#) for work at the graduate level, including teaching graduate courses and serving on committees and/or leading doctoral dissertation work. Adjunct faculty teaching graduate courses also need to meet graduate faculty criteria. Each college has clear workload guidelines approved by faculty, as demonstrated by the [College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences Workload Policy and Procedures](#).

4A5. – The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.

As mentioned in Criterion 2, CSU uses specialized accreditation as a valuable ensemble of external sets of quality assurance structures, based on which to engage in continuous improvement. Accreditation information is presented on the [Academic Planning](#) website as well as individual college websites, such as that of the [Monte Ahuja College of Business](#), the [Cleveland-Marshall College of Law](#) or the [College of Education and Human Services](#). The website includes links to accrediting agencies that provide professional guidance to both academic units and student support services, such as the Counseling Center (accredited by the [International Accreditation of Counseling Services](#)) or the Health and Wellness Center (certified by the [Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care](#)). As an example, the School of Nursing's [Continuous Improvement Progress Report to The Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education](#) [[VRR link](#)] documents how this CSU academic unit enacts upon self-reflective practice and recommendations for improvement to fulfill its mission. All externally accredited programs at CSU are in good standing with their respective governing agencies. Licensure or certification represents another set of external quality assurance measures. As an example, the state of Ohio requires teachers to pass an Assessment of Professional Knowledge (APK), content tests in each content area to be taught. Early childhood, middle childhood and intervention specialists must also pass a Foundations of Reading examination. In this light, CSU [reports](#) the overall pass rate as calculated by Title II for the most recent academic year completers from the College of Education and Human Services. In terms of the Ohio Bar exam, the Cleveland-Marshall College of Law has consistently published its pass rates for first time takers. In 2017, it had an 80% pass rate, while in 2018, it had the highest pass rate in the state (93%). Similarly, the School of Social Work receives its pass rates for its graduates from the

Association of Social Work Boards, as is the case for 2018 [[VRR link](#)] and 2019 [[VRR link](#)] data included in this document.

4.A.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.

The University and individual colleges and departments do regular surveys of their graduates. At the University level, this is primarily done through [The Office of Career Services](#), which uses National Association of Colleges and Employers' (NACE) [First-Destination Survey](#) to get graduate outcome data. "NACE's First-Destination Survey captures information regarding how new college graduates fare in their careers within six months of graduation. The annual initiative provides clear, concise, and consistent data on the outcomes associated with a college education on a national scale. Outcomes include 1) types of employment—full or part time, contract, freelance, and so forth; 2) additional education, e.g., accepted to graduate or professional school; 3) still seeking either employment or further education; 4) and starting salary for those employed full time. In addition to providing outcomes for individual classes, the First-Destination Survey is designed to provide trends data over time to inform the discussion about the value of higher education." CSU sends the First-Destination Survey through our CRM "Handshake", which automates the process. We send scheduled emails to students to complete the instrument and omit the students that have already completed it. We offer a chance to win a \$250 Amazon gift card for students that complete the survey. The survey was sent to 1,240 fall 2020 graduates. So far, 362 completed the survey (29.2% response rate). Of those who completed the survey, 58% (210) indicated that they are currently working (this includes working, continuing education, joining the military, or volunteering for a program like Peace Corps). The survey is still in process and we expect the response rate to increase. The [Alumni Association](#)'s database contains employment information, which allows for tracking of graduates' progress as they advance past initial employment, which is then captured by NACE.

The Office of Career Services has collaborated with the Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs' [Center for Economic Development](#) to harvest CSU graduate employment data provided by the [Ohio Department of Job and Family Services](#) (ODJFS). Information from ODJFS is used to backfill the First Destination Survey for students that did not complete the instrument. Ideally, through the First Destination Survey and ODJFS information, we have a complete picture of our employment outcomes of CSU graduates.

Individual colleges also get employment data through different means. The College of Education and Human Services gets hiring data on all teachers employed in [Public and Community Schools](#) from the [Ohio Department of Education](#). The college also receives aggregate data on the performance of our graduates, as it is expected to submit data to the [Ohio Department of Higher Education](#), who publishes the [Ohio Educator Preparation Performance Reports](#). Also, for accreditation purposes, we periodically keep track of impact measures such as, impact on P-12 learning, indicators of teaching effectiveness, satisfaction of employers and employment measures and satisfaction of completers. These [reports](#) are examples of how different programs help meet this standard.

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

1. The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and co-curricular 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.

A large part of our assessment and program reviews are coordinated by the [Office of Academic Planning](#), which reports directly to the Provost and Senior Vice President. The office is headed by a Vice Provost and has had strong and stable leadership for the last twenty years. The office has a well-defined mission that communicates with the academic units and academic support units on a regular basis. The practice of using assessment data is generally strong and functions well in its support of the academic mission of the University.

4.B.1. - The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and co-curricular offerings.

The [Office of Student Learning Assessment](#) (OSLA) has information programs to use in their annual reports. In addition, program coordinators/chairs consult with the OSLA regarding acquiring evidence of student learning and writing a report of their findings. In addition, information is provided to the [Assessment Council](#) every semester. Program coordinators employ various means to collect student learning data, and these may include surveys, interviews, focus groups, etc. Programs determine what data collection to use but they are urged to use quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Direct and indirect data methods are also described in the Summer workshop for new peer reviewers and discussed in program reviews. Assessment reports are submitted to the OSLA by May 31 each year. During the Summer, new peer reviewers attend a two-hour course on the process used at CSU. Course documents are provided to first time reviewers [\[VRR link\]](#). Thereafter, teams of peer reviewers that include faculty and staff evaluate the assessment reports and submit their evaluations to OSLA. The Director reviews the reports and also office comments on these reports. The peer reviewers' and director's comments are then forwarded to the program supervisors and program chairs. They are asked to address any recommendations by the following year in the next assessment report. There is a calendar that guides the cycle of assessment, according to which programs provide reports by 31 May, with the exception of 2020 when report submissions were delayed due to the effect of COVID-19 on the university's activities. Reviewers are selected in April. Peer reviews of program reports occurs from June August. In 2020 peer reviews occurred in the Fall 2020. Program reports come from all colleges as well as student support services, representing co-curricular areas, such as the Counseling Center, University Library, the Health and Wellness Center, and First-Year Experience, as illustrated by the following examples: [Ph. D. Urban Education \(2017\) \[VRR link\]](#), [MS in Nursing \(2018\) \[VRR link\]](#), [BA/BS Math \(2019\) \[VRR link\]](#), [MBA \(2020\) \[VRR link\]](#), [BA English \(2019\) \[VRR link\]](#), and [University Library \(2020\) \[VRR link\]](#). The Director provides comments from September to December and sends the evaluations to program directors. Assessment Council meetings are held twice, in the Fall and in

the Spring ([Assessment Council minutes](#) - Fall 2017, Fall 2018, Spring 2019, Fall 2019, Spring 2020, and Fall 2020). It should also be noted that the Director of Assessment assists programs with the assessment process throughout the year.

4.B.2. - The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.

As student learning outcomes assessment varies by program, each program learns from the data it collects and also from the peer review comments. In this way, program faculty, staff, and administrators make adjustments to their programs, which are described in the following year's report, as demonstrated by the [2017 Ph.D. Urban Education Report and Reviews \[VRR link\]](#), [2018 MSN Nursing Report and Reviews \[VRR link\]](#), [2019 BA English Report and Reviews \[VRR link\]](#), [2019 BS BA Math Report and Reviews \[VRR link\]](#), [2020 MBA Report and Reviews \[VRR link\]](#), [2020 Library Report and Reviews \[VRR link\]](#), and [2020 Ph.D. Urban Education Report and Reviews \[VRR link\]](#). Data from the regular, cyclical assessment process are used to inform the academic program review, as illustrated by the CI and Teacher Licensure Self-study, Final Report, and Memorandum of Implementation [\[VRR link\]](#), MLRHR Self-study, Final Report, and Memorandum of Implementation [\[VRR link\]](#) as well as the Black Studies Self-study, Final Report, and Memorandum of Implementation [\[VRR link\]](#).

4.B.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.

An important aspect of student learning outcomes assessment is that it is driven by faculty, staff and students. There is extensive, broad-based collaboration within the process. Data collection depends on decisions made by program faculty and may include quantitative and qualitative assessments, such as surveys, questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups. We have a good mixture of senior and junior faculty and staff who participate in our annual assessment of student learning outcomes, which indicates support from the campus community for the assessment culture at CSU. There is strong interest in serving as peer reviewers as well as consistency in the submission of reports. For the selection of peer reviewers, a notice is sent to all faculty and staff asking if they would like to be a peer reviewer during the upcoming Summer. Reviewers include faculty and staff. The number of applicants to review were 54 (2017), 57 (2018), 94 (2019), and 26 (2020). The number of reviewers for 2020 was lower than preceding years, as reviews took place in the Fall (i.e., during the academic year), due to the COVID-19 crisis delaying report submissions. The purpose of opening reviews to all staff and faculty is so that programs have members who can explain the necessity of and describe student learning and assessment to other members and students in their programs and departments. Reviewers do not evaluate their own programs, and, in the process, they may also learn alternative approaches to assessment for their own programs. The Director of Assessment ensures that review teams include at least one experienced reviewer. For new reviewers, there is a 1.5 hour workshop whose [materials \[VRR link\]](#) describe the entire process, guided by HLC guidelines. All reviewers are paid a stipend. Reviews generally occur for 3-4 days over 3 months in the Summer. Reviewers attend at least one of those days, which typically last 5-6 hours. The submission rate of program reports is consistently high. For 2017, 91 of 102 programs submitted (submission rate of 89%), for 2018, 93 of 102 programs submitted (submission rate 91%), in 2019, 89 of 98 programs submitted

(submission rate of 91%), and in 2020, 82 out of 96 programs submitted (submission rate of 85%). The submission rate for 2020 was lower, stemming from COVID-19 issues affecting completion of reports.

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

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

4.C.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.

In Ohio, House Bill 59 called for each public college and university to submit a [campus completion plan](#) that was approved by their board of trustees to the Chancellor by June 30, 2014. The legislation further states that these plans are to be updated every two years. Completion plans provide a continuous improvement framework that can allow campuses to identify and implement strategies to increase the number and percentage of students earning meaningful postsecondary credentials. At CSU, we have provided our completion plans to the Chancellor, as required by law. We have had a retention task force that has ongoing discussions, working closely with data produced by Institutional Research. The goals listed in these plans relate very closely to the specific needs of our students. CSU has provided a campus completion plan [in 2014, 2016, 2018](#) and 2020 ([VRR link](#)).

CSU's College Completion Plan is developed through a joint effort led by the Provost's Office in collaboration with both the university administration and faculty. The Academic Affairs and Student Success Committee reviews the plan and makes a recommendation to the Board of Trustees. Final approval of the plan rests with the board. The completion plan outlines student characteristics and institutional barriers that impede progress towards timely degree completion; defines goals for retention, persistence, and completion; describes targeted interventions; and tracks progress. The plan is updated and approved every two years. Continuous review ensures that it aligns with CSU mission and supports the needs of our student population. However, monitoring the implementation and effectiveness of these initiatives as well as progress towards meeting retention, persistence, and completion goals is a reiterative process carried out at all

levels of the university. A comparison of the plans from [2014](#), [2016](#), [2018](#), and 2020 ([VRR link](#)) shows [steady progress](#) towards reaching or exceeding the defined goals and fully realizing many of the student success strategies that were implemented to address barriers to completion.

4.C.2. – The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence and completion of its programs.

[The Office of Institutional Research and Analysis](#) (IR) serves as a comprehensive source for information about Cleveland State University. The primary goal of IR is to collect, comprehend, combine, and analyze data pertaining to a range of operational activities at Cleveland State University. IR assists in the analysis and interpretation of these data to explain past patterns of performance and predict future trends in University performance. IR is also concerned with the systematic review and evaluation of educational programs, educational support services, administrative processes, and financial resources in order to assist in identifying the strengths and weakness of the institution. IR also provides coordination and support functions to academic and non-instructional departments with regard to the assessment of student outcomes occurring throughout the University. Although annual print publication of the [Book of Trends](#) ceased in 2019, the most popular tables and charts are publicly available [online](#). Additional data tables can be requested by contacting IR. Institutional Research also maintains [Common Data Sets](#) and [Enrollment Tables](#) on its website along with data visualizations created with Tableau: [Administrative Dashboard](#), [First-Year IPEDS Cohort Dashboard](#), and [Interactive Score Card](#). Daily enrollment reports, surveys, and other data are available to authorized staff through a log in. College-level advisors have access to an interactive dashboard that allows them to generate a “Cohort Graduation Tracking Report.” This dashboard has a data export option that allows users to export spreadsheets with the desired data. In collaboration with the Retention Roundtable, which included members of the Faculty Student Success Committee and Faculty Senate, IR is in the process of refining its Retention Dashboard, an interactive tool that allows the user to filter the report by student type, cohort, and outcome measure and compare graduation rates over multiple years.

CSU identifies its at-risk students via the analysis of historical retention and graduation data by special cohorts (e.g. first generation, race, gender, student type) as well as course outcomes (gateway courses). Students’ belonging in any of these cohorts triggers outreach and support. The faculty early alert system provides real-time information to identify students at risk and need for support. As we further integrate our systems, [Starfish](#) will also generate real-time student success scores, which will be used in targeting specific students with resources.

CSU also takes into account student feedback related to their experiences. As an example, the comparative analysis of the [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (NSSE) data from 2018 and 2020 shows advising as an area that CSU students have expressed appreciation for the support they receive from their academic advisors, faculty, or staff assigned to work with them [[VRR link](#)]. Similarly, colleges and schools administer graduate and alumni surveys that are intended to provide guidance in terms of refining curricula, student support services, and experiential learning opportunities.

4.C.3. – The institution uses information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.

“Empowering Students” is a core component of CSU’s [mission](#). As a student-focused public institution, the University strives to empower students by providing the resources, services, and support they need to persist and succeed in their career pathways. To address CSU’s retention and graduation problem, the “Faculty Student Success Committee” was formed in 2011, and after some research laid out several recommendations to increase the 6-year graduation rate. The committee’s recommendations included faculty and student focused areas:

- Reaffirm institutional commitment to excellence in undergraduate education.
- Nurture improvement in teaching across levels and disciplines.
- Support part-time faculty preparation.
- Empower faculty to be more effective advisors by enabling all faculty to view student academic records
- Adopt intrusive advising
- Enable greater student responsibility for progress toward graduation, by means of clear, easy-to-use academic self-monitoring tools, such as Graduation Plans and enhanced Degree Audit software
- Implement or enhance retention programs aimed at specific subsets of the student body

Plans to establish this committee as a standing committee, which will include redefining its charge and membership, are underway. The new “Undergraduate Student Success Committee” will consist of one faculty member from each college, excluding the College of Graduate studies and Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, two undergraduate students, and non-voting ex officio members, or their designees: Vice Provost of Academic Programs, Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Success. These recommendations are the core of CSU College Completion Plan.

The University’s original College Completion Plan (2014) noted that the institution had been working for several years to address the problems that have historically led to low retention and completion rates. The plan described initiatives already in place and others planned for the immediate future. These initiatives were intended to address well-understood barriers to completion by:

- Overcoming the negative consequences of developmental coursework (low success rates, low numbers of college credits earned after the first year).
- Providing support for students whose high school preparation for college is weak.
- Providing careful oversight for students who are at risk of going off track and who lack access to sources of advice and support.
- Easing the transition of transfer students as they enter a new institution.
- Identifying, support and encourage pedagogical approaches that match the needs of students.
- Addressing the problem of student financial need.

The various initiatives implemented prior to and during the period covered by the original plan

have resulted in significant improvements in retention and completion rates at CSU. For example, the current 6-year graduation rate (entering class of Fall 2014) is 48.3%, up from 40.9% for the class of Fall 2010; the established goal is 47% (IPEDS cohort). Fall-to-Fall retention rates for students entering in Fall 2019 rose to an historic rate of 76.8%. Over the past 10 years, we have increased first year retention by nearly 11 points—from 65.9% in 2010 to 76.8% in 2019. Fall-to-Fall retention, based on IPEDS cohort, is 74%. These documents also evidence the university's commitment to its students. Some goals are more challenging. For example, Fall 2016 to Fall 2017 retention for transfer students with less than 30 credit hours rose from 60.8% to the target goals of 65%, but fell 62.4% for transfer students that started in fall 2019 (IPEDS goal 65%).

Some of the completed or ongoing strategies being used to address barriers to completion are summarized below. Completion plans provide full details for each initiative and progress. These documents offer insight on modifications to the initiatives over time in response to data analysis.

Strategy: Increase Success in Developmental and First-Year Mathematics Course

- [Operation STEM](#) program offers a summer bridge program that includes mathematics review, study skill training, campus orientation, and STEM career information.
- [Mathematics Emporium](#) Model allowing students to work through the curriculum at their own pace.

Strategy: Implement Intrusive Advising for First-Year Students with Early Warning System/Student Retention Software

- Implemented a pro-active, developmental, holistic and relational [advising model](#) for all first-year students to provide close monitoring as they transition to University and progress through their first year. CSU acquired [Starfish](#), an early alert and retention software system, to support this strategy.

Strategy: Provide Support for Academic Success in Entry-level Courses

- Expand academic tutoring on campus by increasing the range of subjects offered by the [Tutoring and Academic Success Center](#), the [Math Learning Center](#), and the [Writing Center](#).
- Offer [supplemental instruction](#) (SI) and mandatory [structured learning assistance](#) (SLA) for low success rate courses.
- Link tutoring to Starfish, enabling students to make on-line appointments and advisors and faculty to track student participation.
- Referenced in Core Component 3.D, the [Graduation Coaches](#) program, which has noted remarkable results over a short period of time, uses regular meetings and hands-on interactions with a diverse cohort of first-generation students as part of a holistic approach to their academic success and personal wellbeing.

Strategy: Establish Transfer Center and Hire a Coordinator

- The [Transfer Center](#) opened in January 2015 to assist and support prospective and enrolled transfer students as they transition to CSU. [Transfer Champions](#) provide individualized guidance for each student.

Strategy: Implement a Student-Centered Scheduling Model

- To provide registration options, support student academic needs, and remove barriers to degree completion, CSU has implemented: [multi-term registration](#); [course waitlists](#); and [time grid course scheduling policy](#) to prevent situations in which the scheduling of courses prevented students from maintaining progress towards a degree.

Strategy: The Lift Up Vikes! Fowler Emergency Fund

- This [initiative](#) began in August 2019 and supports students experiencing an unforeseen expense that, if not resolved quickly, could lead to a student's departure from the college and loss of momentum toward completion. Between August 2019-April 2020, [Lift Up Vikes!](#) distributed \$147,682 in emergency aid via 158 grants to students.

Strategy: "Project Restart" Debt Forgiveness Pilot

- Students in good academic that meet academic and financial thresholds but with an unpaid balance owed to the University may re-enroll and have a portion of their delinquent balance forgiven.

Strategy: Identify Pedagogical Methods that Promise to Improve Student Success in High Enrollment, "Gatekeeper" courses.

- The [Center for Faculty Excellence](#) (CFE) offers small teaching enhancement grants ([Teaching Enhancement Awards](#)) to faculty teaching high enrollment/low success rate courses. Successful proposals identify innovative teaching practices that promise to improve success rates in those courses.
- CFE conducts regular [workshops](#) demonstrating how innovative teaching methods can be used in undergraduate classes.
- Develop faculty training in inclusive teaching strategies.

Strategy: Provide faculty with training in cultural competency and inclusive teaching strategies, and high impact practices.

- Retention Roundtable will collaborate with the Diversity Council and the Center for Faculty Excellence to design a program to train all faculty in cultural competency.

In recognition of the breadth of its initiatives, and the measurable success that resulted, Cleveland State received an [Excellence and Innovation Award in the Student Success and College Completion](#) category from the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) in Fall 2015. CSU also was a finalist for the Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities' (APLU) [Project Degree Completion Award](#) in 2016 and was selected to participate in AASCU's [Reimagining the First Year](#) project, which has supported a number of the first-year reforms described in this plan.

Although much progress has been made, much work remains to be done. In recognition of this reality, CSU has added a number of new initiatives to the ongoing work described in the previous plan in response to ongoing and newly identified barriers revealed through data analysis and interpretation and the effectiveness of interventions revealed by the evaluation process. For example, recognizing the siloed nature of its student success initiatives, CSU reorganized

enrollment services in 2019 to create a division of [Enrollment Management and Student Success Services](#). The division seeks to align institutional resources dedicated to student success and student support under one banner, and includes admissions, financial aid, FYE, academic advising, graduation/success coaching, tutoring, health and wellness, disability services and student affairs. The provision of effective student success services is essential to holistically addressing student characteristics and institutional barriers that disrupt a student's journey to successful degree completion.

4.C.4 – The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs reflect good practice.

The [Office of Institutional Research](#) (IR) extracts enrollment, demographic, and course detail data from the university's enterprise system (PeopleSoft) using a series of Microsoft Access queries on the fifteenth day of each term (the "census" file). Thirty days after the end of each term IR extracts degree completion data along with final GPAs for each term's degree completers (the "degree completions" file). These data extracts are cleaned and loaded into a large (roughly 20 year) longitudinal SQL server database. IR uses this database to report and track fall-to-fall retention; 4-, 5-, and 6-year graduation rates; and degree completion trends. Along with standard IPEDS reporting, IR conducts analyses for internal tracking and improvement purposes. These include examinations of populations beyond the traditional first-time, first year student (e.g., transfers and graduate students). All such work is differentiated by traditional demographic categories such as race and gender, as well as a number of mission-specific demographic categories such as first generation students, veterans, and Pell recipients.