

Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

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

This standard addresses the institution’s commitment to its students to deliver a comprehensive set of rigorous courses taught by qualified faculty. The university is strong in almost all aspects of this standard and has been dedicated to strengthening the student learning experience since the last self-study. The university has shown its strong commitment to educational excellence through changes in policies and administrative programs to better support faculty and ensure instructional excellence as a core institutional foundation.

Evidence in this standard, particularly within criteria 2, 6, and 8, address item 15 in the Requirements of Affiliation, regarding the professional core of faculty at the University of Maryland. The evidence in criterion 8 also addresses item 8 of the Requirements of Affiliation.

Criterion 1: Certificate, undergraduate, graduate and/or professional programs leading to a degree or other recognized higher education credential, designed to foster a coherent student learning experience and to promote synthesis of learning.

UMD offers a wide range of high-quality academic programs across a breadth of disciplines, leading to degrees or other credentials for more than 35,000 undergraduates, graduates and professionals. The [Undergraduate](#) and [Graduate](#) catalogs identify approved undergraduate academic programs, courses, and include academic, registration and graduation policies and regulations for their respective areas. All undergraduate curricula include approximately 40 credits of [General Education](#) (discussed in Criterion 5), with an overarching set of goals and outcomes expected of all students. The university’s graduate curricula are predominantly focused on doctoral research training, although many new professional master’s degree programs have been developed in the last decade.

| Undergraduate | Graduate |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Degree Programs | |
| 93 bachelors | 80 research doctorates |
| | 2 professional doctorates |
| | 105 masters |
| Certificates | |
| 1 lower division | 41 post-baccalaureate |
| 12 upper division | 1 post-master |
| | 6 advanced study |

Proposals for new academic degree/awards programs, renaming of programs, changes in curriculum, and requests to introduce new modes of course delivery are all subject to the

[Programs, Curriculum and Course \(PCC\) review](#). Under the PCC process, proposals must receive approval from the department, college, the Graduate School (as appropriate), and the University Senate, as well as in certain circumstances the Board of Regents, and the Maryland Higher Education Commission, all of which share the common goal of ensuring the educational integrity of the program or curriculum. The Provost's [Academic Planning Advisory Committee](#) also advises senior administration on institution-wide academic programming decisions. Changes at the course level are reviewed by the [Vice President's Advisory Committee \(VPAC\)](#) after being approved by department and college committees. An example of how the PCC and VPAC processes are implemented [at the college level is provided](#) by the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences (BSOS).

UMD has numerous special undergraduate opportunities, the successful completion of which lead to citations or notations on student transcripts. Students in the [Honors College](#) and its thematic [living-learning programs](#) and the [College Park Scholars](#) programs are examples.

In addition to on-campus offerings, UMD offers complete degree programs, or portions thereof, at twelve additional locations throughout the state and internationally. The majority are for specific programs for which a particular site is most convenient for the select cohort of students to be served. For example, the Robert H. Smith School of Business offers its part-time MBA program in three off-site locations: in the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center in Washington, D.C., at the Universities at Shady Grove in Rockville, MD, and in the University of Maryland BioPark in Baltimore, MD. Program oversight, course offerings, and delivery are synchronized among the three locations. The A. James Clark School of Engineering offers its Master of Engineering and Graduate Certificate of Engineering, with many specialized curricula, on the College Park campus but also through remote delivery in northeastern Maryland, at the Universities at Shady Grove, and at the [Southern Maryland Higher Education Center](#). The Clark School also supports, through its specialized accreditation (ABET), an undergraduate program in mechanical engineering at Frostburg State University, another USM partner institution. The College of Agriculture offers a joint doctoral program in Veterinary Medicine with Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, VA, which serves a regional need. The College of Education offers course work at local area schools and educational centers to support a variety of opportunities for K-12 teacher professional development.

The most significant additional location for UMD's program offerings is the [Universities at Shady Grove](#) (USG), a USM regional higher education center with programs delivered by nine partner institutions. USG is located in Montgomery County, the most populous county in the state, but which has no four-year institution located within. Undergraduate instruction is at the junior and senior level only, with the majority of students entering as transfer students from nearby Montgomery College. UMD's eight undergraduate programs and ten graduate programs represent approximately 40% of the overall enrollment of nearly 4000 students. Operations are carried out by a staff of 75 full time and 2.5 part-time FTEs who, because UMD is the managing partner, are UMD employees. USG's Executive Director reports jointly to USM's Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and UMD's Senior Vice President and Provost. Program offerings, student support services, and financial planning are overseen by the Shady Grove Governing Council, consisting of the provosts of the nine partner universities.

While UMD has a robust global educational agenda, no undergraduate programs are offered internationally. Select graduate programs are offered internationally through negotiated partnerships. Two examples include a master's degree in Criminal Justice at Nanjing Normal

University and a Master of Business Administration at the University of International Business and Economics in Beijing, China.

In all instances, programs and curricula at off-site locations are subject to the same faculty oversight and university review processes as are used for on-campus instruction, as well as to state regulations for faculty credentials and academic integrity.

UMD strives to promote the synthesis of learning in both its undergraduate and graduate academic programs through the use of educational objectives, learning outcomes, experiential learning, and capstone experiences. [PCC guidelines](#) state: “the presence of a structured and coherent program of study with clearly delineated program objectives and intended student learning outcome[s] must be evident.”

The [Provost’s Commission on Learning Outcomes Assessment](#) oversees evaluation of the success of undergraduate and graduate educational experiences in achieving their intended outcomes. Assessment is discussed in more detail under Standard V.

Specific elements of UMD’s General Education program (outlined under Criterion 5) are intended to foster synthesis of learning. Many bachelor degree programs require internships, capstone experiences, or other program requirements that focus on synthesis of learning. Some programs are dedicated to synthesis of learning, including all of the living-learning curricula. Many students participate in [undergraduate research](#) (either individually or through organized programs such as [FIRE](#)), [service learning](#), [student leadership](#), and [study abroad](#) experiences. At the graduate level, all master’s and doctoral degree programs require a capstone experience designed to develop a student’s ability to synthesize learning within their program requirements. For example, master’s degree programs have required capstone projects, internships, portfolios, or theses, while doctoral degree programs often have qualifying examinations and a required dissertation project.

Overall, the university has met this criterion through a robust system of program review and approval that is focused on learning outcomes and learning outcomes assessment, which is in turn used to improve those programs over time. The enhancement of learning outcomes assessment process, especially at the undergraduate level, has been an important improvement during the past 10 years.

Criterion 2: Student learning experiences that are designed, delivered, and assessed by faculty (full-time or part-time) and /or other appropriate professionals who are:

- a. rigorous and effective in teaching, assessment of student learning, scholarly inquiry, and service, as appropriate to the institution's mission, goals, and policies;*
- b. qualified for the positions they hold and the work they do;*
- c. sufficient in number;*
- d. provided with and utilize sufficient opportunities, resources, and support for professional growth and innovation;*
- e. reviewed regularly and equitably based on written, disseminated, clear, and fair criteria, expectations, policies, and procedures.*

The majority (73%) of the instructional faculty at UMD are full-time employees, either in tenured or tenure-track (TTK) positions or in long-term instructional appointments. Of the full-time TTK faculty, 92% hold terminal degrees in their discipline.¹

All TTK faculty are required to submit an annual report, which includes identification of scholarly work, teaching and mentoring activity, and service. All units are required to have a [merit pay distribution plan](#) that rewards exceptional faculty contributions to teaching, scholarship, research, creative activity, and service. UMD complies with the State requirements for faculty credentials that mandate academic credentials at or above the level of instruction.

Faculty with tenure-track appointments within the University of Maryland Extension are also formally evaluated on an annual basis, with an emphasis placed on outcomes within the UME outreach programs. Outcomes include annual impact on the community, scholarship within their discipline, and service to the university. As with academic units, UME has a merit pay distribution plan that rewards exceptional faculty contributions to teaching, scholarship, research, creative activity, and service.

The university is committed to providing a similar quality instructional experience for all students regardless of modality, and different course structures are not treated differently with regard to any aspect of instructional administration or resources. Students are given the opportunity to evaluate courses at the end of each academic session using a [common online course evaluation instrument](#) across the campus, which allows for comparison and consistent review. Course evaluation data are then provided to instructors, chairs, and deans, and are used in promotion decisions. Course evaluations are similar across instructional modality, from face-to-face and blended to fully online.

In 2014, [promotion policies for TTK faculty were changed](#), through the campus shared governance process, to require inclusion of both a teaching portfolio and peer (faculty) evaluation of teaching excellence, both of which speak to an increased emphasis on effectiveness in teaching and assessment of student learning. Beginning in AY2015-16 all TTK faculty must submit a comprehensive teaching portfolio as part of a promotion review.

Assistant professors are appointed for 1-3 years, with possibility of renewal for another 1-3 years, with mandatory review for promotion and tenure in the sixth year. Tenured faculty must also be [reviewed periodically](#) and no less frequently than every five years as determined by the unit, and each unit must establish review procedures. Such reviews, an [example of which is provided by the College of Education](#) are meant to facilitate continued professional development, including teaching.

As described in Standard II, the category of Professional Track Faculty was recently created to capture all personnel who are in the employment category of “faculty” (instructional, research, and Extension oriented), but who are not eligible for tenure, and several new titles were created to provide pathways for promotion and professional development. These include both those who are hired on an annual or longer contract and those who are paid by the course. Professional track faculty with appointments of at least 50% of a full-time equivalent are eligible for benefits and

¹ The tenure-track faculty group includes not only instructional faculty, but agents within the University of Maryland Extension (UME) whose primary mission is outreach and education across the state but not for-credit instruction. There are also about 70 senior administrators above the level of department chair who hold tenured faculty appointments, and they are not included in these data. An additional 5% of the TTK faculty are agents with appointments in UME, and they are not counted in these data.

are typically, but not uniformly, hired through a contractual agreement of one academic year or longer. UMD has been a leading national voice in developing clear [policies and procedures for the hiring and promotion of Professional Track Faculty](#). Promotion requires formal evaluation on specific timelines and, starting in AY2017-18, will include a teaching portfolio for those who participate in the instructional mission. To qualify for [appointment to the Graduate Faculty](#), PTK faculty normally will hold the terminal degree in their discipline, and will require support from the department chair, as well as from the full members of the Graduate Faculty within that unit (all tenured/tenure-track faculty are full members of the Graduate Faculty).

Professional Track faculty with “adjunct” status are defined to be part-time instructional faculty who are either paid by the course or whose appointments are less than 50% of a full-time equivalent and are ineligible for benefits. They are usually approved to teach specific courses. For those adjunct faculty who have a consistent record of high quality instruction, promotion to “Adjunct II” status is available. The geographical location of UMD provides an advantage for the use of uniquely qualified adjunct instructors. The Faculty Handbook articulates [policies and procedures](#) for the hiring and promotion of adjunct instructors.

| Instructional Faculty Headcount | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | | Fall 05 | Fall 12 | Fall 13 | Fall 14 | Fall 15 |
| Instructional T/TK | Assistant Prof | 242 | 326 | 309 | 303 | 293 |
| | Associate Prof | 433 | 440 | 456 | 451 | 431 |
| | Professor | 677 | 679 | 675 | 692 | 703 |
| | subtotal | 1,352 | 1,445 | 1,440 | 1,446 | 1,427 |
| Instructional PTK | | | | | | |
| | 100% | 182* | 264 | 293 | 338 | 422 |
| | 50-99% | 171* | 224 | 210 | 208 | 205 |
| | <50% | 289* | 391 | 415 | 398 | 394 |
| | total | 642* | 879 | 918 | 944 | 1,021 |

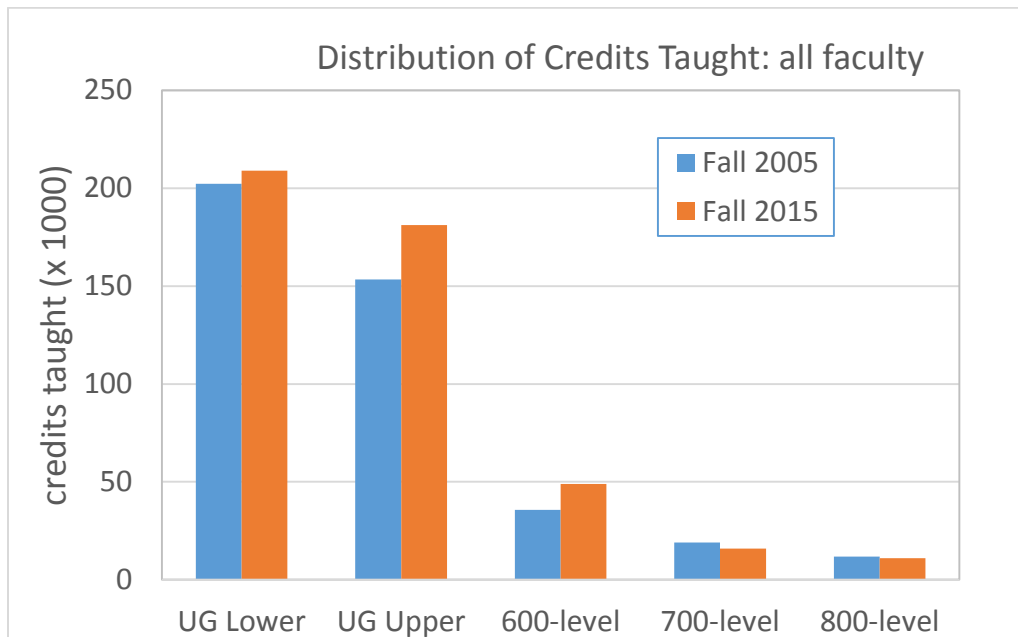
The growth in PTK faculty² reflects a variety of factors, including growth in the university’s research portfolio (for non-instructional faculty, not shown the table), a growth in master’s degree programs in which professional experts from the region are often recruited to provide instruction, an overall growth in instruction, and stagnant growth in TTK faculty as a result of a series of challenging budget years. The number of PTK faculty whose primary mission is research has grown by over 30% since 2005, to over 1800, reflecting the increase in research activity across the campus. About 70 librarians, who are not in either category but have the option of “permanent status”, also contribute to the educational mission of the university.

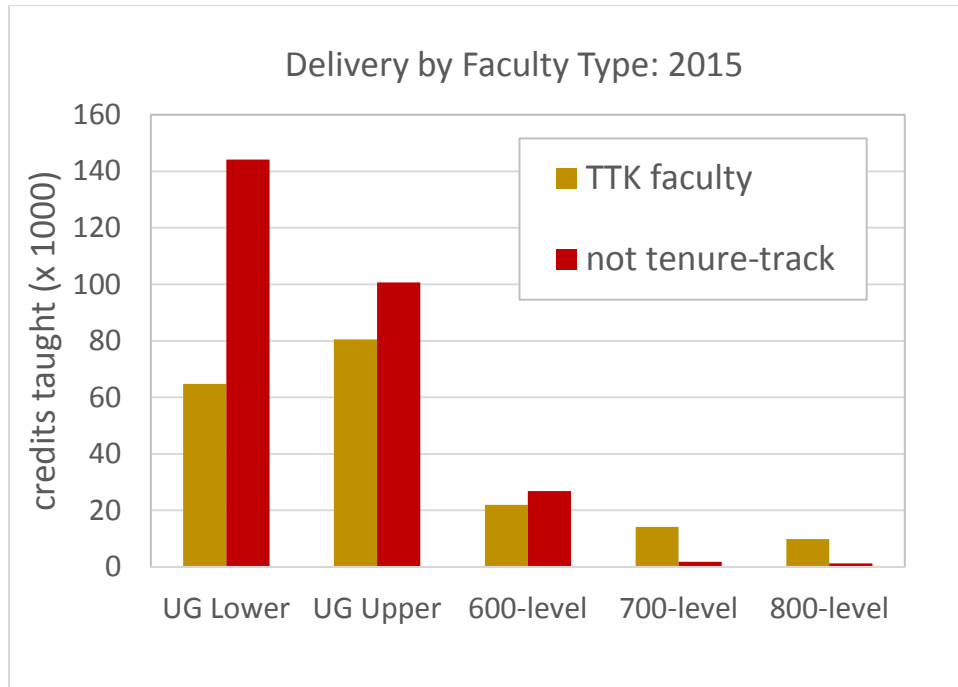
The university has experienced a 10% growth in the total number of credits taught between fall 2005 and fall 2015, with the largest growth in upper division undergraduate and master’s level instruction. The fraction taught by TTK faculty has decreased from 45% to 41%. The slight

² The corresponding breakdown of instructional PTK faculty by job type and FTE status is unavailable for 2005, due to differences in faculty titles and reporting categories, so the values for 2005 are approximate, counting only those with an official title of lecturer or instructor.

reduction in 700-level and above courses reflects a deliberate effort to match the size of doctoral programs to unit resources. The overall student to faculty ratio, as reported in the 2015-2016 Common Data Set, is 16:1.

UMD is dedicated to ensuring that all instructional faculty are provided with sufficient resources for professional growth (see also Standard II). The Provost recently reconfigured campus teaching and learning resources in the [Teaching and Learning Transformation Center \(TLTC\)](#), led by an Associate Provost, which provides professional development opportunities, resources, and support to all instructors across the university. The Division of Information Technology's [Academic Technology](#) arm provides training and resources for all faculty in the areas of educational technology.





Other resources include instructional grants from the Provost’s office through the TLTC and other units across the campus (e.g., the Office of Undergraduate Studies; the Graduate School; the Office of Diversity and Inclusion; the Office of International Affairs; the Academy for Innovation and Entrepreneurship). Many schools and units also provide orientation and training sessions, which are supported by the central campus resources. New faculty are encouraged to participate in a new faculty orientation, and all faculty are encouraged to participate in a yearly ‘Innovations in Teaching and Learning’ Conference held on campus each spring. With the recent requirement that teaching portfolios now be included within the promotion process of tenure-track faculty, many units are providing additional professional development opportunities in the area of teaching and learning, which will only enhance the excellence of our instructional faculty. The Office of Undergraduate Studies, the TLTC, and the colleges have implemented a variety of faculty learning communities dedicated to improving instruction across campus. The [faculty boards](#) within the [General Education program](#) are an outstanding example of faculty communities taking the lead in undergraduate education on campus. The Graduate School provides a writing workshop for graduate faculty.

Informal, non-credit instruction is provided across the state by UME faculty, who are an additional headcount of 5% in the tenure-track category. Programs are based on the theoretical foundations of adult education, positive youth development, social cognitive theory, planned behavior change, and stages of change. Criterion-referenced assessment tools are used for judging existing educational programs, curricula, and materials. All publications, fact sheets, and UME bulletins are peer reviewed by at least three respected and accomplished faculty within the same discipline at other universities.

The teaching effectiveness of UME faculty is evaluated on a regular basis with a process that is closely aligned with that for other university faculty so that comparisons can be made. UME programs also undergo rigorous evaluation to determine the value of knowledge and skills

attained by adult and youth learners. Extension faculty work with the UME Assistant Director for Evaluation and Assessment to design and implement program evaluation research protocols that are reviewed and approved according to the University's IRB process. Findings from UME program evaluation research are published in scholarly articles, as appropriate.

The university has met this criterion, with qualified faculty who are regularly reviewed and provided with excellent resources for improving instructional quality. In particular, recent changes in APT policies, post-tenure review policies, the restructuring of the TLTC, and the General Education program all point to campus climate more supportive of instructional excellence than 10 years ago. Professional-track and adjunct faculty make up larger fractions of our faculty than they did 10 years ago, but UMD has recently provided very clear evaluation and promotion guidelines that help ensure this group of faculty are not only supported in their work but are also encouraged to maintain instructional excellence.

Criterion 3: Academic programs of study that are clearly and accurately described in official publications of the institution in a way that students are able to understand and follow degree and program requirements and expected time to completion.

The [undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#) administrative units maintain portal websites designed to guide prospective and current students to important campus resources, including information about individual academic programs, enrollment, advising, experiential learning, research, career planning, administrative, community, and support services. The undergraduate and graduate catalogs serve as the official record of academic programs, courses, and policies. A full listing of online resources for students is provided in Appendix III.2.

The undergraduate [Student Academic Success - Degree Completion Policy](#) has now been fully implemented such that each major on campus not only has clearly posted degree requirements but also has benchmark course requirements – a set of specific courses that must be completed within the first year or two of the major, and a [4-year plan](#) that must be developed by all students during their first semester in a major corresponding to the template plan provided by their major department. Students must make progress to degree or change majors.

The Registrar's Office and Graduate School are currently implementing U.Achieve for all undergraduate and graduate students, respectively, a web-based interactive degree audit and academic planning system. This software supports tracking individual progress towards degree, and will improve academic planning for students, advisors, as well as for academic and administrative stakeholders. Although U.Achieve will replace the prior online solution for undergraduate students, this is the first online tracking tool that will be used campus-wide for graduate students.

Overall, the university meets this criterion and has made significant improvements in communicating degree and program requirements, in particular the four-year plan website. That said, challenges remain due to various academic databases that are not yet well integrated across the campus, and which can hinder student support and cause confusion for students, faculty, and staff. A recent effort (as identified in recommendation #2) includes deployment of campus-wide customer relationship management software that will allow academic advisors to share advising information more efficiently as students seek to change majors, add special programs, or be advised for other reasons.

Criterion 4: Sufficient learning opportunities and resources to support both the institution's programs of study and students' academic progress.

In 2003, then President Mote convened a task force to review the issue of retention and time to degree completion. At that time, the six-year graduation rate was 81.8%, the four year rate was 62.6%, and the one year retention rate was 92.5%. Very few policies existed to require students to change majors if they were not making progress.

As a result of this task force, the [Student Academic Success-Degree Completion Policy](#) (SAS-DCP) was instituted in fall 2005. In their first semester, students pursuing undergraduate degrees are required to develop a four-year graduation plan based on published templates. These plans also include benchmark courses that students must complete by the end of specific semesters. If students fail to complete these courses, they are required to find a new major. Prior to changing majors, students need to complete a new four year plan. The SAS-DCP also provides a structure for students to plan additional educational experiences while in college (e.g., study abroad, undergraduate research, or internships). Early planning saves students time and money, and allows the university to educate more students in the State.

In fall 2015, the six year graduation rate is 86.4% and the one year retention rate is 95.4%. The university continues to focus on retention and graduation rates, particularly on four year degree completion as the four year graduation rate currently stands at 66.4%. In addition, the culture of the university has changed; upon matriculation, students understand that following a semester by semester plan assists them in graduating in a timely manner. For transfer students, the 1-year retention rate from fall 2014-15 was 92.2%, and the 4-year (after matriculation) graduation rate for the fall 2011 cohort was 85.1%.

The [Student Success Office website](#) directs students to all available support services on campus for undergraduate students, including academic support services, counseling, disability support services, and advising. Services are provided for students on academic probation, including retention programs within each college, and special advising is provided by the college for any student with a 2.3 GPA or below.

The annual “planning cycle” process, led by the Office of Undergraduate Studies, ensures adequate seats for students to graduate in a timely manner. Demand for undergraduate courses is monitored during registration periods. Sections and seats are released over time to help ensure that demand is met. Waitlists and “holdfiles” are available to ensure transparent and equitable registration processes for students. Each [Limited Enrollment Program](#) (LEP) provides an adequate number of seats so that any students enrolled in the LEP have adequate access. The Dean for Undergraduate Studies provides General Education seat targets to each college on an annual basis to meet the seat requirements of all undergraduates.

Each academic major must provide a template on how students may complete the degree within four years, and benchmarks are used to ensure that students are making progress toward their degrees. Benchmarks are reviewed annually to determine students’ progress. Students who do not initially meet the benchmarks develop an agreement with the college to either complete or declare a different major where they can be successful. Those directly admitted to the university who are in LEPs are reviewed at 45 credits. Internal and external transfer students who wish to declare a limited enrollment major must complete the gateway courses in order to be admitted.

UMD offers over 350 classrooms of varying sizes and styles. These spaces support teaching and learning by offering instructors flexible spaces that accommodate a variety of teaching styles, and creating technology-rich environments where students and instructors can better learn with one another. Nearly 100% of classrooms are expected to support educational technology by the end of 2016, although several classrooms retain elements less conducive to active learning (e.g., immovable seats, visual obstacles). The university provides instructors and students the opportunity to use new [technological tools](#) to both foster learning and prepare students for life after graduation, and faculty and students have access to myriad software programs through [TERPware](#). In 2017, the [Edward St. John Learning and Teaching Center](#) will open, providing new active learning classrooms and learning spaces.

To encourage the success of graduate students, the Graduate School offers students from all disciplines many robust [academic enrichment and support programs](#), such as teaching and learning training, career development mentoring, writing support, financial literacy development and a variety of [fellowships and awards](#). Clear guidelines exist to ensure that graduate students make adequate and timely [progress to the completion of their degree](#).

Overall, the university has met this criterion by ensuring adequate seats for students to graduate in a timely manner, and by providing a suite of support services to support students' academic progress. The Provost and the Office of Undergraduate Studies have altered several procedures in academic planning in the past 10 years to better ensure retention and timely graduation of our students, which is evidenced by recent data. As with Criterion 3, better integration and communication of student support services is an area in need of continued improvement for the campus [**contributes to recommendation #2**].

Criterion 5: At institutions that offer undergraduate education: A general education program, free-standing or integrated into academic disciplines, that:

- a. offers a sufficient scope to draw students into new areas of intellectual experience, expanding their cultural and global awareness and cultural sensitivity, and preparing them to make well-reasoned judgments outside as well as within their academic field;*
- b. offers a curriculum designed so that students acquire and demonstrate essential skills including at least oral and written communication, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical analysis and reasoning, technological competency, and information literacy. Consistent with mission, the general education program also includes the study of values, ethics, and diverse perspectives.*

UMD launched a new [General Education program](#) in 2012, using an approach to program design focused on outcomes. All components of the new General Education requirements are defined by sets of [learning objectives](#), with [faculty boards](#) defining the learning outcomes for each category, considering both field-specific outcomes and expectations regarding the skills and knowledge that every student who earns a University of Maryland degree should acquire, regardless of their chosen major. Every course that satisfies a General Education requirement must be submitted for review. Those who submit courses are expected to “demonstrate how the course will (1) give students the ability to meet the learning objective, and (2) determine that students were successful in meeting the learning objective.” This process guides faculty to consider the design of their course according to the learning outcomes approach, and, because of the large number of faculty involved in the process, has served to support the campus' commitment to outcomes-directed student learning.

All students complete “Fundamental Studies” coursework with learning outcomes addressing essential skills in academic and professional writing, oral communication, mathematics, and analytical reasoning. Students are also required to successfully complete classes that address [learning outcomes](#) addressing human diversity and pluralistic societies; planning, modeling and/or preparing to produce a project authentic to a discipline; proficiency in experimental science; critical thinking in the evaluation of sources and arguments; using information technology; and understanding ethical dimensions. Thus, these key aspects of student growth and learning are seamlessly woven into the fabric of the over 1,000 approved General Education courses.

The faculty boards for each of the General Education categories have recently completed development of [Learning Outcomes Assessment](#) rubrics for each category, and formal assessment has been implemented across the entire program. This extensive program is innovative and unique in the nation as a commitment to the continual improvement of the course offerings in the General Education curriculum as well as that of the overall program.

The signature element of the General Education requirements is the I-Series course. These courses pose a question to students (e.g., “Does Democracy Have a Future?”), and students analyze that question from defined disciplinary or interdisciplinary perspectives. Courses are designed to encourage to students to dive deeply into inquiry using a discipline’s set of paradigms, concepts, and approaches. All undergraduates are required to complete at least two I-Series courses.

Overall, UMD has clearly met this criterion with a General Education program that has received national recognition. While the assessment process is too new to allow for full evaluation, the program has been recognized for its innovations and scope. The development of the faculty boards has been a particularly important element of its success.

Criterion 6: In institutions that offer graduate and professional education, opportunities for the development of research, scholarship, and independent thinking, provided by faculty and/or other professionals with credentials appropriate to graduate-level curricula.

The majority of UMD academic units also offer graduate-level education, designed and facilitated by members of the Graduate Faculty within departments and schools. Graduate programs are vetted and approved using the PCC process outlined above. The Graduate School ensures academic excellence and consistency across all departmental graduate programs and colleges by setting and overseeing policies and standards with its primary governing body, the Graduate Council. The Council acts on behalf of the Graduate Faculty to ensure quality and consistency of graduate study and research.

Graduate faculty within academic units support research, scholarship, and independent thinking by teaching and serving as mentors on qualifying exam, thesis, and dissertation committees (faculty qualifications outlined above). In addition, the Graduate School and many departments offer [financial support](#) and listings of [external fellowships](#) for graduate student research and conference travel. Many departments, as well as the Graduate School, offer special activities, such as dissertation and publication workshops, which are designed to assist the development of student research and publication.

Overall, the university has met this criterion, by offering several graduate and professional programs of national ranking with qualified Graduate faculty. As outlined here and in previous

criteria, Graduate Faculty are highly qualified and graduate programs carefully and rigorously reviewed by multiple campus levels. The graduate learning outcomes assessment process is less developed than that of undergraduate programs, but the implementation of U.Achieve and improvements to the graduate process continues with the goal of strengthening graduate program through ongoing review.

Criterion 7: Adequate and appropriate institutional review and approval on any student learning opportunities designed, delivered, or assessed by third party providers.

All academic programs are reviewed and approved by the campus as part of the PCC process, as outlined above. The PCC process asks units to identify whether a third-party provider is involved in delivery of a course/program offering, thus ensuring identification and review of the third party prior to course or program approval.

At UMD, only one degree program is delivered in collaboration with a third party provider: the [Online Master of Business Administration within the Robert H. Smith School of Business](#), through a contractual agreement with NCS Pearson, Inc.³ Pearson provides marketing, promotion, student support and delivery of the online-based academic program. Using course content designed by the Business faculty who are the subject matter experts, Pearson develops and creates the online component of all courses, including instructional design, multimedia, and resource hosting according to mutually agreed upon standards; UMD approves all course materials before they are delivered. Student support by Pearson is limited to enrollment procedures, billing and similar issues; questions related to course content or financial assistance are forwarded by the company to UMD. UMD hires the instructors of record for each course according to the guidelines outlined above, and is responsible for assigning academic credits and degrees to students who have successfully completed the necessary academic criteria for the program. UMD retains sole authority for admission and registration decisions, as well as maintenance of education records according to Family Rights and Educational Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations. UMD retains all intellectual property rights to the course materials, but the company may use that material freely to market and deliver the program. Students complete course evaluations similar to those in typical campus degree programs, but the system is run separately given the unique schedule of this online degree program (10 week rather than 15 week terms).

Overall, UMD has met this criterion and is carefully assessing the use of third-party providers in the limited scope described here. Because the campus PCC process requires identification of third parties at the time of program approval, careful evaluation of new programs seems assured. The policy of review of such third party-supported programs after approval requires clarification.

Criterion 8: Periodic assessment of the programs providing student learning opportunities.

UMD is committed to a robust system of learning outcomes assessment at both the undergraduate and graduate levels to improve the design and delivery of student academic experiences. The [Provost's Commission on Learning Outcomes Assessment](#) provides the leadership and organizational procedures for our engagement in the assessment of undergraduate and graduate student learning outcomes. Two committees, one for [undergraduate assessment](#) and one for [graduate assessment](#), have been established to oversee the review process. This process has now matured to the point where the campus has great examples of how the outcomes

³ Formerly Embanet Compass Knowledge Group, Inc.

assessment process is guiding revisions to our undergraduate programs. For example, the department of Economics found that many students in the major were not reaching proficiency in key learning outcomes after two semesters in the major. As a result, the department proposed to significantly change the Economics BA requirements and proposed an additional Economics BS degree. These two different concentrations launched in spring 2016 with new learning outcomes in each case.

All living-learning and special undergraduate programs are now reviewed annually by the Provost's Committee on Living-Learning and Special Programs led by the Associate Provost and Dean for Undergraduate Studies. Data from the [Institutional Research, Planning & Assessment \(IRPA\)](#) office and an accompanying annual report by each program are provided to the committee. These are reviewed and feedback is provided to the program for improvements. One recent example is the [First-Year Innovation & Research Experience \(FIRE\) Program](#), which was created around and is being evaluated on specific learning outcomes.

As outlined above, courses within the General Education requirements are regularly reviewed using similar procedures. This is addressed in depth in Standard V. These assessment processes within General Education and undergraduate and graduate programs provide important input to faculty that inform the quality of their teaching and their impact on student learning, thereby providing professional growth opportunities.

Departments, institutes, and centers are periodically reviewed (on approximately 7-year intervals) according to policies established by the University of System of Maryland, and then articulated specifically by [UMD](#). The [review process](#) includes: an internal self-study including the accumulation of relevant data, external review of the unit, and proper utilization of the results of the review, all of which are overseen by the Provost's office and the dean of the unit's college. Each unit must address the following elements within its self-study: quality of both undergraduate and graduate education; quality of student advising; service activities; research, scholarship and creative activities; and recommendations for improvement. Many programs and some entire units also undergo a separate review process for specialized accreditations within their discipline, as identified in the Report on Federal Compliance.

Overall, UMD has met this criterion with a clear commitment to program assessment, including undergraduate and graduate degree programs, the General Education program, living-learning and other special opportunities, and departments, institutes and centers themselves.

Conclusions:

The University of Maryland has met all eight criteria through rigorous and coherent student learning experiences at the undergraduate and graduate levels across modalities that are supported by a qualified and exceptional faculty. In particular, the campus has shown strong commitment to educational excellence through changes in policies and administrative procedures to better support faculty and to ensure that instructional excellence is a core foundation of faculty review and promotion. The new set of General Education requirements is a principal example of the commitment of faculty and staff to provide an excellent learning experience and ensure that students are graduating with an outstanding education. Faculty-approved revisions to the APT policy requiring peer review of teaching and a teaching dossier with all tenure-track promotion applications provide additional evidence of a campus culture that appreciates the importance of instructional excellence as a core value of the university. Significant improvements in

professional-track faculty support structures, while not yet fully implemented, show a commitment to all faculty, and UMD's location near the nation's capital provides unique opportunities for recruiting remarkably qualified faculty in the adjunct and professional-track ranks.

While all eight criteria are met, challenges remain. The university has made considerable progress in standardizing the look and feel of campus websites, however the interactive and online services available for students are still widely variable in format and functionality by unit. This makes for uneven and sometimes confusing experiences for students who are citizens of many units on campus. The campus is encouraged to pursue a more "student-centered" approach to standardizing information, ensuring that the student unfamiliar with the organizational structures of this large, complex campus can find information and resources as easily as the seasoned staff or faculty member [**contributes to recommendation #2**].

Similarly, campus-wide adoption of a single, integrated customer relationship management (CRM) system that offers a common, familiar portal for students for such tasks as making appointments, corresponding with student services offices (e.g. academic advisors, financial aid, career center, resident life), as well as offering a single and familiar view of degree progress would be of value to all our campus stakeholders. For example, as PCC and VPAC approvals are made, having systems that pull data from those central databases into student-facing websites would ensure accurate and timely information on degree requirements and related program elements. In this way, fewer websites and information portals would need to be updated with every program or curricular change [**contributes to recommendation #2**].

While the learning outcomes assessment process has become solidly engrained in our undergraduate programs, it is less so for our graduate programs. Great strides have been made in recent years and considerable improvements are expected by the time of our next progress report, as quality assessment is now clearly a focus of the university [**contributes to recommendation #8**].

Finally, while many new programs and services supporting educational excellence (e.g., TLTC, learning communities, instructional grants) have been launched in recent years, they are new enough that gauging their impact on faculty and students is difficult. Assessment of these efforts is a priority for the campus. In particular, assessing how the work of the General Education faculty boards may be impacting instructional quality beyond general education is of particular interest, as is the number of unique faculty taking advantage of these important programs [**contributes to recommendation #5**].

Documents and Appendices for Standard III: Design and Delivery of the Student Learning Experience

Appendix III.1 – Document List

- a) Undergraduate Catalog <http://www.umd.edu/catalog/index.cfm>
- b) Graduate Catalog <http://www.gradschool.umd.edu/catalog/>
- c) About the General Education Program and its Goals <http://gened.umd.edu/about-gened/aboutgened.html>
- d) Programs, Curricula & Courses (PCC) Procedures Manual http://www.provost.umd.edu/PCC_DOCUMENTS/Introduction.htm
- e) PCC Information - Design of Academic Programs Section V: Bachelor's Degrees http://www.provost.umd.edu/PCC_DOCUMENTS/DesignV_Bachelors.htm
- f) UMD Policy on Faculty Merit Pay Distribution http://www.president.umd.edu/sites/president.umd.edu/files/documents/policies/VII-400A_0.pdf
- g) List of recent changes to APT Policy and Procedures <https://faculty.umd.edu/policies/changes.html>
- h) Guidelines for Implementing the Current Post-Tenure Faculty Evaluation Policy <https://faculty.umd.edu/policies/documents/PTRGuidelines0414.pdf>
- i) Faculty Handbook: Professional Track Faculty @ UMD https://www.faculty.umd.edu/policies/ptk_changes.html
- j) Graduate Catalog: The Graduate Faculty <http://apps.gradschool.umd.edu/Catalog/policy.php?graduate-faculty-policies>
- k) Faculty Handbook: Adjunct Faculty Policy <https://faculty.umd.edu/policies/adjunct.html>
- l) General Education Faculty Boards <http://www.gened.umd.edu/documents/GenEdFacultyBoards.pdf>
- m) General Education Program <http://www.gened.umd.edu/>
- n) Student Academic Success - Degree Completion Policy <http://www.ugst.umd.edu/academicsuccess.html>
- o) Four-Year Plans <http://www.4yearplans.umd.edu/>
- p) Limited Enrollment Programs <http://www.lep.umd.edu/>
- q) Graduate School Academic Progress <http://www.gradschool.umd.edu/students/academic-progress>
- r) General Education Learning Outcomes <http://www.gened.umd.edu/documents/GeneralEducationLearningOutcomes.docx>
- s) General Education Assessment <http://www.gened.umd.edu/for-faculty/faculty-gened-assessment.html>
- t) Learning Outcomes Assessment <https://www.irpa.umd.edu/Assessment/LOA.html>
- u) Graduate Outcomes Assessment <http://www.gradschool.umd.edu/about-us/publications-and-reports/graduate-outcomes-assessment>
- v) USM Policy for the Establishment and Review of Centers and Institutes in the University of Maryland System <http://www.usmh.usmd.edu/regents/bylaws/SectionIV/IV100.html>
- w) UMD Policy on the Review of Academic Units <http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/2014-i-600a.html>

Appendix III.2 -- Most Important Online Resources for Students

One.umd.edu is a time sensitive campus-wide online resource hub.

Office of the Registrar

- [Testudo](#) is the central student hub for course registration and scheduling.
- [u.achieve](#) (new) & [Degree Navigator](#) (current) – Online degree auditing systems where students and advisors can plan and monitor course-by-course academic program progress.
- [ARTSYS](#) - Online transfer database between all Maryland public institutions
- [Transfer Credit Services](#) & [Pre-Transfer Advising](#) Program

Student Success Office

- Degree requirements for each academic major or program
- Benchmark course requirements and timelines
- [Limited Enrollment Program](#) requirements & gateway courses

Academic Colleges & Academic Affairs

- Required [4-year planning resources & sample 4-year plans](#)
- Contact information for [academic advisors](#)
- [Living and Learning](#) and Other Special Programs
- [An advising hub](#) (for academic advisors)
- [Undergraduate Catalog](#) & [Graduate Catalog](#)
- [Global Maryland](#) & International Education

Student Affairs

- [University Career Center & The President's Promise](#), including [survey](#) results for recently graduated students by college.
- [Resident Life](#)
- [The Stamp](#) & [Org Sync](#)
- [Disability Support Services](#), [Counseling Center](#) & [Health Center](#)

Enrollment Management

- [Office of Undergraduate Admissions](#)
- [Office of Student Financial Aid](#)
- [Campus Counts](#) – including recent and accessible graduation rates and time to degree comparisons.

Appendix III.3 – Referenced Campus Offices, Committees and Groups

- a) Academic Planning Advisory Committee (APAC) <http://www.provost.umd.edu/APAC/>
- b) Vice President's Advisory Committee (VPAC) <http://vpac.umd.edu/>
- c) Provost's Commission on Learning Outcomes Assessment
<http://www.provost.umd.edu/pcloa/index.cfm>
- d) Teaching and Learning Transformation Center <http://tltc.umd.edu/>
- e) Division of Information Technology Academic Technology
http://it.umd.edu/academic_technology
- f) Office of Undergraduate Studies www.ugst.umd.edu/
- g) The Graduate School <http://gradschool.umd.edu/>
- h) Student Success Office <http://studentsuccess.umd.edu/>
- i) Office of Institutional Research, Planning, & Assessment <https://www.irpa.umd.edu/>

Appendix III.4 – Other References

- a) College of Behavioral and Social Sciences PCC Committee Charge & Information for 2015-16 [http://bsosundergrad.umd.edu/sites/bsosundergrad.umd.edu/files/BSOS_PCC Committee Memo 150830.pdf](http://bsosundergrad.umd.edu/sites/bsosundergrad.umd.edu/files/BSOS_PCC_Committee_Memo_150830.pdf)
- b) Honors College <http://www.honors.umd.edu/>
- c) Living and Learning Programs - Department of Resident Life <http://reslife.umd.edu/llp/>
- d) College Park Scholars <http://scholars.umd.edu/>
- e) Universities at Shady Grove <http://shadygrove.umd.edu/>
- f) Maryland Center for Undergraduate Research <http://www.ugresearch.umd.edu/>
- g) The First-Year Innovation and Research Experience (FIRE) <http://www.fire.umd.edu/>
- h) Leadership and Community Service-Learning - Division of Student Affairs http://thestamp.umd.edu/leadership_community_service-learning
- i) Orgsync- Student Organizations/Clubs http://orgsync.umd.edu/browse_student_organizations
- j) Education Abroad <http://globalmaryland.umd.edu/offices/education-abroad>
- k) Course Evaluations <https://courseevalum.umd.edu/>
- l) College of Education Post-Tenure Review Policy <http://www.education.umd.edu/SharedGovernance/COEPost-tenurePolicy.pdf>
- m) Student Success Office: Student Academic Success - Degree Completion Policy <http://studentsuccess.umd.edu/studentpolicies/studentacademicsuccess.php>
- n) Division of Information Technology Academic Technology Supported Tools <http://it.umd.edu/tools>
- o) TERPware <http://terpware.umd.edu/Windows>
- p) Edward St. John Learning and Teaching Center <http://umd.edu/esjcenter/about.html>
- q) Graduate School Opportunities for Success <http://www.gradschool.umd.edu/students/opportunities-success>
- r) Graduate School Student Fellowships & Awards <http://www.gradschool.umd.edu/funding/student-fellowships-awards>
- s) Graduate School External Fellowships <http://www.gradschool.umd.edu/funding/fellowships-awards/external-fellowships>
- t) Online Master of Business Administration R. H. Smith School of Business http://onlinemba.umd.edu/?Access_Code=UMD-MBA-SEO2&utm_source=seo2&utm_medium=referral

Appendix III.5 – Other Sources Evaluated by Review Team

- a) UMD 2012 Periodic Review Report <http://www.provost.umd.edu/MS-PRR-12>
- b) UMD 2007 Accreditation Self-Study <http://www.ms07.umd.edu/>
- c) Approved Academic Programs and Proposals
<http://www.provost.umd.edu/ProgDocs/index.htm>
- d) Approved Minors <http://www.umd.edu/catalog/index.cfm/show/content.chapter/c/127>
- e) Undergraduate Catalog: Geology Program – Capstone Experience Example
<http://umd.edu/catalog/index.cfm/show/content.section/c/1/s/85>
- f) Undergraduate Catalog: Bioengineering Program – Capstone Experience Example
<http://umd.edu/catalog/index.cfm/show/content.section/c/1/s/602>
- g) Undergraduate Catalog: Community Health Program – Capstone Experience Example
<http://umd.edu/catalog/index.cfm/show/content.section/c/1/s/140>
- h) Undergraduate Catalog: Journalism Program – Capstone Experience Example
<http://umd.edu/catalog/index.cfm/show/content.section/c/2/s/1102>
- i) Faculty Affairs Lyterati Website <https://faculty.umd.edu/lyterati/>
- j) UMD Guidelines for Appointment, Promotion and Tenure
<https://www.faculty.umd.edu/policies/documents/APTManual.pdf>
- k) UMD Policy on Appointment, Promotion, and Tenure of Faculty
<http://www.president.umd.edu/sites/president.umd.edu/files/documents/policies/II-100A.pdf>
- l) Faculty Handbook: Professional Track Instructional Faculty
https://faculty.umd.edu/policies/ntt_overlap.html
- m) Faculty Handbook: Tenure-track and Tenured Faculty Titles
https://faculty.umd.edu/policies/ten_titles.html
- n) UMD Policy on Periodic Evaluation of Faculty Performance
<http://www.president.umd.edu/administration/policies/section-ii-faculty/ii-120a>
- o) Provost's Memo on Implementation of the Post-tenure Review Policy
http://faculty.umd.edu/policies/documents/PTR_Implementation_memo.pdf
- p) Academic Facilities http://www.provost.umd.edu/academic_facilities/index.html
- q) Center for Literary and Comparative Studies (Graduate Student Research Grants)
<https://www.english.umd.edu/academics/clcs>
- r) Center for Historical Studies(Graduate Student Research Grants)
<http://history.umd.edu/historicalstudies>
- s) College of Arts and Humanities Fellowships & Grants
<http://www.arhu.umd.edu/graduate/fellowships>
- t) College of Agriculture and Natural Resources Scholarships
<http://agmr.umd.edu/students/scholarships>
- u) College of Computer, Mathematical, and Natural Sciences Research Opportunities for Students and Postdocs <http://cmns.umd.edu/research/research-opportunities-students-and-postdocs>
- v) A. James Clark School of Engineering Research Opportunities
<http://www.eng.umd.edu/research/opportunities>
- w) School of Public Health Research Resources <http://sph.umd.edu/content/research-resources>
- x) Graduate Catalog: Graduate School Field Committees
<http://apps.gradschool.umd.edu/Catalog/policy.php?field-committee-policies>

- y) Graduate School Writing Initiatives <http://gradschool.umd.edu/students/opportunities-success/writing-initiatives>
- z) Graduate School Faculty and Staff Awards <http://gradschool.umd.edu/funding/faculty-and-staff-awards>