

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-COMMERCE

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Fifth Year Interim Report 2020

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission
on Colleges

Dear SACSCOC Committee,

Thank you for taking time to virtually visit Texas A&M University-Commerce! This document reflects our commitment to the ceaseless pursuit of excellence at A&M-Commerce.

We are working hard to transform lives through quality education, pursue impactful research, serve an inclusive community where all are valued, and foster collaboration to solve problems.

The university's academic programs and services are designed to support student achievement and meet the needs of our community of diverse learners. Through our Quality Enhancement Plan, we continue to prioritize the development of global competence as we help prepare our students for a rapidly changing world.

In everything we do, student success and well-being are our top priorities. With this attitude, we welcome peer evaluation and feedback so we can continue to grow and strengthen our institution for the benefit of our students.

We hope you enjoy your time learning about our university. Please consider this an invitation to visit A&M-Commerce at any time so we can show you around in person and introduce you to our wonderful Lion family.

Sincerely,

Mark Rudin
President

Part I Signatures Attesting to Integrity**I-1 Signatures Attesting to Integrity**

Compliance Status: Compliant

By signing below, we attest that Texas A&M University-Commerce (*name of institution*) has conducted an honest assessment of compliance and has provided complete and accurate disclosure of timely information regarding compliance with the identified Core Requirements, Comprehensive Standards, and Federal Requirements of the Commission on Colleges.

Date of Submission: 03/05/2020

Accreditation Liaison: Ricky Dobbs (*name of Accreditation Liaison*)

Chief Executive Officer: Mark Rudin (*name of Chief Executive Officer*)

Part II The "Institutional Summary Form Prepared for Commission Reviews"

GENERAL INFORMATION

II-A1 Institution Information

Compliance Status: Compliant

Name of Institution

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Name, Title, Phone number, and email address of Accreditation Liaison

Dr. Ricky Dobbs, Associate Provost, (Office) 903-468-8707, (Cell) 903-461-2538,
Ricky.Dobbs@tamuc.edu

Name, Title, Phone number, and email address of Technical Support person for the Compliance Certification

Mary Cheek, Institutional Effectiveness Officer (Office) 903-886-5935, (Cell) 281-543-6068,
Mary.Cheek@tamuc.edu

IMPORTANT:

Accreditation Activity (Check one)

- Submitted at the time of Reaffirmation Orientation
- Submitted with Compliance Certification for Reaffirmation
- Submitted with Materials for an On-Site Reaffirmation Review
- Submitted with Compliance Certification for Fifth-Year Interim Report
- Submitted with Compliance Certification for Initial Candidacy/Accreditation Review
- Submitted with Merger/Consolidations/Acquisitions
- Submitted with Application for Level Change

Submission date of this completed document: 03/05/2020

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

II-B1 Level of offerings

Compliance Status: Compliant

Level of offerings (Check all that apply)

- Diploma or certificate program(s) requiring less than one year beyond Grade 12
- Diploma or certificate program(s) of at least two but fewer than four years of work beyond Grade 12
- Associate degree program(s) requiring a minimum of 60 semester hours or the equivalent designed for transfer to a baccalaureate institution
- Associate degree program(s) requiring a minimum of 60 semester hours or the equivalent not designed for transfer

- Four or five-year baccalaureate degree program(s) requiring a minimum of 120 semester hours or the equivalent
- Professional degree program(s)
- Master's degree program(s)
- Work beyond the master's level but not at the doctoral level (such as Specialist in Education)
- Doctoral degree program(s)
- Other (Specify)

II-B2 Types of Undergraduate Programs

Compliance Status: Compliant

Types of Undergraduate Programs (Check all that apply)

- Occupational certificate or diploma program(s)
- Occupational degree program(s)
- Two-year programs designed for transfer to a baccalaureate institution
- Liberal Arts and General
- Teacher Preparatory
- Professional
- Other (Specify)

GOVERNANCE CONTROL

1. Governance Control

Compliance Status: Compliant

Check the appropriate governance control for the institution:

- Private (*check one*)
 - Independent, not-for-profit
Name of corporation OR
Name of religious affiliation and control:
 - Independent, for-profit *
If publicly traded, name of parent company:
- Public state *(*check one*)
 - Not part of a state system, institution has own independent board
 - Part of a state system, system board serves as governing board
 - Part of a state system, system board is super governing board, local governing board has delegated authority

- Part of a state system, institution has own independent board

** If an institution is part of a state system or a corporate structure, a description of the system operation must be submitted as part of the Compliance Certification for the decennial review. See Commission policy "Reaffirmation of Accreditation and Subsequent Reports" for additional direction."*

INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION FOR REVIEWERS

II-D1 History and Characteristics

Provide a brief history of the institution, a description of its current mission, an indication of its geographic service area, and a description of the composition of the student population. Include a description of any unusual or distinctive features of the institution and a description of the admissions policies (open, selective, etc.). If appropriate, indicate those institutions that are considered peers. Please limit this section to one-half page.

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Texas A&M University-Commerce (A&M-Commerce) began as East Texas Normal College in 1889 when founder William Leonidas Mayo opened the doors to a one-building campus in Cooper. In 1894, the campus relocated to Commerce. The State of Texas took over the campus in 1917. The graduate program was added in 1935, followed by a doctoral program in 1962. Following multiple name changes, the institution was named East Texas State University, until the school joined The Texas A&M University System in 1996, and the institution was renamed Texas A&M University-Commerce.

As of the 2019-20 academic year, A&M-Commerce is the fifth oldest public university in the state, offering more than 130 degree programs, and housing six academic colleges: Education & Human Services; Business; Humanities, Social Sciences & Arts; Innovation & Design; Science & Engineering; and Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources. A&M-Commerce is recognized as an innovator and leader in distance education by offering programs such as an AACSB-accredited MBA and two online competency-based baccalaureates: Criminal Justice and Organizational Leadership, which is the first accredited, competency-based bachelor's degree offered at a public university in the state. Honoring its heritage, the University remains a major producer of outstanding public school teachers and administrators.

Utilizing selective admissions policies, A&M-Commerce is one of the largest members in the prestigious Texas A&M University System and is home to 12,411 (IPEDS 2018, Fall Enrollment) diverse students (22% Black or African American, 22% Hispanic undergraduate enrollment). Led by a mission to provide a personal, accessible, and affordable educational experience, A&M-Commerce serves an undergraduate population comprised of 26% first-generation college students. More than 96% of A&M-Commerce's attendees are Texas residents, with nearly 60% from Hunt, Collin, Tarrant, and Rockwall counties alone. With a main campus located only sixty miles northeast of Dallas, the University increasingly reaches out to meet the needs of a growing and diverse Metroplex population. In addition, A&M-Commerce provides education to students from many other states and typically enrolls more than 600 international students, bringing the University's mission to prepare students for an interconnected and dynamic world to life.

II-D2 List of Degrees

List all degrees currently offered (A. S., B.A., B.S., M.A., Ph.D., for examples) and the majors or concentrations within those degrees, as well as all certificates and diplomas. For each credential offered, indicate the number of graduates in the academic year previous to submitting this report. Indicate term dates.

Does the institution offer any credit, non-credit, or pathways English as a Second Language (ESL) programs? If yes, list the programs.

Compliance Status: Compliant**Narrative**

Texas A&M University-Commerce does not currently offer any credit, non-credit, or pathways English as a Second Language programs. A list of all degrees offered by institution is included below.

Note: A&M-Commerce only offers "embedded certificates." While the credit-bearing courses appear on the transcript, no designation about a certificate appears on the transcript; therefore, no certificates are listed as programs below.

| BACCALAUREATE DEGREES AWARDED Academic Year 2018-2019 | | | | Graduates | | | Graduate Total |
|--|--|------------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Degree | Major | SCH | CIP Code | Fall 2018 | Spring 2019 | Summer 2019 | Total |
| BA | Agribusiness* | 120 | 01010200 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| BA | Agricultural Science And Technology* | 120 | 01000000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| BA | Animal Science* | 120 | 01090100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| BA | Art | 120 | 50070200 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| BA | Biological Sciences | 120 | 26010100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| BA | Biology (Broadfield)* | 120 | 26010100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| BA | Chemistry* | 124 | 40050100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| BA | Chemistry (Broadfield)* | 120 | 40050100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| BA | Communication Studies | 120 | 09010000 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| BA | English | 120 | 23010100 | 10 | 16 | 0 | 26 |
| BA | History | 120 | 54010100 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| BA | Kinesiology And Sport Studies* | 120 | 31050500 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| BA | Liberal Studies | 120 | 24010100 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| BA | Mass Media and Journalism (previously Journalism and Radio/TV) | 120 | 09070200 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| BA | Mathematics | 120 | 27010100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| BA | Music | 120 | 50090100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| BA | Paralegal Studies | 120 | 22030200 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| BA | Physics | 120 | 40080100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| BA | Physics (Broadfield)* | 120 | 40080100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| BA | Political Science | 120 | 45100100 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| BA | Psychology* | 120 | 42010100 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| BA | Sociology | 120 | 45110100 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 5 |

| | | | | | | | |
|------|-------------------------------------|-----|----------|----|----|----|-----|
| BA | Spanish | 120 | 16090500 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 9 |
| BA | Theatre | 120 | 50050100 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| BAAS | Applied Arts And Science | 120 | 30999940 | 76 | 99 | 74 | 249 |
| BAIS | Interdisciplinary Studies | 120 | 30999901 | 4 | 5 | 0 | 9 |
| BACJ | Criminal Justice | 120 | 43010400 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 6 |
| BBA | Accounting | 120 | 52030100 | 15 | 22 | 10 | 47 |
| BBA | Business Analytics | 120 | 52139901 | 8 | 3 | 3 | 14 |
| BBA | Finance | 120 | 52080100 | 13 | 19 | 3 | 35 |
| BBA | General Business | 120 | 52010100 | 18 | 15 | 7 | 40 |
| BBA | Management | 120 | 52020100 | 9 | 11 | 3 | 23 |
| BBA | Marketing | 120 | 52140100 | 10 | 9 | 3 | 22 |
| BFA | Photography | 120 | 50060500 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| BFA | Studio Art | 125 | 50070200 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 10 |
| BFA | Visual Communication | 126 | 50040900 | 0 | 10 | 2 | 12 |
| BGS | General Studies | 120 | 24010200 | 48 | 42 | 23 | 113 |
| BM | Music | 127 | 50090100 | 1 | 7 | 1 | 9 |
| BS | Agribusiness | 120 | 01010200 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 11 |
| BS | Agricultural Sciences | 120 | 01000000 | 7 | 7 | 3 | 17 |
| BS | Agricultural Science And Technology | 120 | 01000000 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 10 |
| BS | Animal Science | 120 | 01090100 | 4 | 11 | 5 | 20 |
| BS | Art (General Arts)* | 120 | 50070200 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| BS | Biological Sciences | 129 | 26010100 | 7 | 22 | 3 | 32 |
| BS | Biology (Broadfield)* | 120 | 26010100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| BS | Business Administration | 120 | 52020100 | 27 | 42 | 14 | 83 |
| BS | Chemistry | 124 | 40050100 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 4 |
| BS | Chemistry (Broadfield)* | 120 | 40050100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| BS | Communication Studies | 120 | 09010000 | 3 | 6 | 0 | 9 |
| BS | Computer Science | 120 | 11010100 | 13 | 18 | 4 | 35 |
| BS | Construction Engineering | 126 | 14330100 | 0 | 13 | 0 | 13 |
| BS | Electrical Engineering | 127 | 14100100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| BS | Environmental Science | 120 | 03010400 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 12 |
| BS | Equine Studies | 120 | 01050700 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| BS | History | 120 | 54010100 | 6 | 13 | 0 | 19 |

| | | | | | | | |
|-------------|---|-----|----------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| BS | Industrial Engineering | 126 | 14350100 | 4 | 15 | 2 | 21 |
| BS | Kinesiology And Sport Studies | 120 | 31050500 | 12 | 19 | 3 | 34 |
| BS | Learning And Technology (previously BS Global E-Learning) | 120 | 30999940 | 36 | 64 | 25 | 125 |
| BS | Liberal Studies | 120 | 24010100 | 11 | 22 | 9 | 42 |
| BS | Mass Media and Journalism | 120 | 09070200 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 10 |
| BS | Mathematics | 120 | 27010100 | 10 | 11 | 1 | 22 |
| BS | Music* | 127 | 50090100 | 7 | 10 | (1) | 18 |
| BS | Paralegal Studies | 120 | 22030200 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 14 |
| BS | Physics | 120 | 40080100 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 5 |
| BS | Physics (Broadfield)* | 120 | 40080100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| BS | Political Science | 120 | 45100100 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| BS | Psychology | 120 | 42010100 | 32 | 38 | 6 | 76 |
| BS | Sociology | 120 | 45110100 | 6 | 8 | 2 | 16 |
| BS | Sport And Recreation Management | 120 | 31050400 | 4 | 3 | 11 | 18 |
| BS | Technology Management | 120 | 15061200 | 2 | 8 | 0 | 10 |
| BS | Theatre | 120 | 50050100 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 7 |
| BS | Wildlife And Conservation Science | 120 | 03060100 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 12 |
| BSCIS | Computer Information Systems | 120 | 11040100 | 9 | 3 | 0 | 12 |
| BSCJ | Criminal Justice | 120 | 43010400 | 20 | 32 | 6 | 58 |
| BSIS | Interdisciplinary Studies | 120 | 30999901 | 81 | 133 | 0 | 214 |
| BSN | Nursing | 120 | 51380100 | 0 | 1 | 31 | 32 |
| BSPH | Public Health | 120 | 51220100 | 3 | 8 | 12 | 23 |
| BSW | Social Work | 120 | 44070100 | 40 | 3 | 1 | 44 |
| Sum: | | | | 587 | 836 | 286 | 1709 |

* Programs are listed again in the Phased out or Consolidated section below

| BACCALAUREATE PROGRAMS WITH CURRENT ENROLLMENT (Spring 2019) Being Phased Out or Consolidated | | | |
|--|--|------------|-----------------|
| Degree | Major | SCH | CIP Code |
| BS | Music – Consolidating with Music BM, effective as of August 31, 2021 | 127 | 50090100 |
| BA | Psychology – Phasing out Fall 2020 | 120 | 42010100 |

| BACCALAUREATE PROGRAMS WITH ZERO ENROLLMENT (Spring 2019) Being Phased Out or Consolidated | | | |
|---|---|------------|-----------------|
| Degree | Major | SCH | CIP Code |
| BA | Kinesiology And Sport Studies, effective as of August 2, 2019 | 120 | 31050500 |
| BA | Agribusiness – Phasing out Fall 2020 | 120 | 01010200 |
| BA | Agricultural Science and Technology – Phasing out Fall 2020 | 120 | 01000000 |
| BA | Animal Science – Phasing out Fall 2020 | 120 | 01090100 |
| BA | Biology (Broadfield) – Phasing out Fall 2020 | 120 | 26010100 |
| BA | Chemistry – Phasing out Fall 2020 | 124 | 40050100 |
| BA | Chemistry (Broadfield) – Phasing out Fall 2020 | 120 | 40050100 |
| BA | Physics (Broadfield) – Phasing out Fall 2020 | 120 | 40050100 |
| BS | Art – Phasing out Fall 2020 | 120 | 50070200 |
| BS | Biology (Broadfield) – Phasing out Fall 2020 | 120 | 26010100 |
| BS | Chemistry (Broadfield) – Phasing out Fall 2020 | 120 | 40050100 |
| BS | Physics (Broadfield) – Phasing out Fall 2020 | 120 | 40050100 |

| MASTERS DEGREES AWARDED Academic Year 2018-2019 | | | | Graduates | | | Graduate Total |
|--|--|------------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Degree | Major | SCH | CIP Code | Fall 2018 | Spring 2019 | Summer 2019 | Total |
| MA | Applied Linguistics | 30 | 16010500 | 5 | 6 | 0 | 11 |
| MA | Art | 30 | 50070200 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| MA | Early Childhood Education | 30 | 13121000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| MA | Educational Technology Leadership | 30 | 13050100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| MA | Educational Technology Library Science | 30 | 25010100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| MA | English | 30 | 23010100 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 4 |
| MA | History | 36 | 54010100 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 8 |
| MA | Political Science | 30 | 45100100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| MA | Reading | 30 | 13131500 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| MA | Secondary Education* | 30 | 13120500 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| MA | Sociology* | 30 | 45110100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| MA | Spanish | 30 | 16090500 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 5 |
| MA | Theatre | 30 | 50050100 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 5 |
| MBA | Business Administration | 30 | 52020100 | 113 | 108 | 39 | 260 |

| | | | | | | | |
|-----|--|----|----------|----|----|----|-----|
| MED | Counseling | 36 | 13110100 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 9 |
| MED | Curriculum And Instruction | 36 | 13030100 | 29 | 25 | 12 | 66 |
| MED | Early Childhood Education | 36 | 13121000 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 11 |
| MED | Educational Administration | 30 | 13040100 | 59 | 32 | 4 | 95 |
| MED | Educational Technology Leadership | 30 | 13050100 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| MED | Educational Technology Library Science | 30 | 25010100 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| MED | Reading | 36 | 13131500 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 8 |
| MED | Secondary Education | 36 | 13120500 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| MED | Special Education | 36 | 13100100 | 4 | 7 | 1 | 12 |
| MED | The Art Of Teaching | 30 | 13010100 | 0 | 0 | 16 | 16 |
| MFA | Art | 60 | 50070200 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| MM | Music | 30 | 50090100 | 0 | 3 | 13 | 16 |
| MSA | Accounting | 36 | 52030100 | 54 | 50 | 21 | 125 |
| MS | Agricultural Sciences | 36 | 01000000 | 5 | 5 | 10 | 20 |
| MS | Applied Criminology | 30 | 45040100 | 11 | 13 | 7 | 31 |
| MS | Applied Linguistics | 30 | 16010500 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 11 |
| MS | Biological Sciences | 30 | 26010100 | 16 | 11 | 6 | 33 |
| MS | Biology (Broadfield)* | 36 | 26010100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| MS | Business Analytics | 30 | 52139901 | 44 | 54 | 8 | 106 |
| MS | Chemistry | 30 | 40050100 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 9 |
| MS | Chemistry (Broadfield)* | 30 | 40050100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| MS | Computational Science | 30 | 30300100 | 8 | 5 | 1 | 14 |
| MS | Computer Science | 31 | 11010100 | 61 | 37 | 10 | 108 |
| MS | Counseling | 51 | 13110100 | 17 | 14 | 16 | 47 |
| MS | Curriculum And Instruction | 36 | 13030100 | 8 | 7 | 3 | 18 |
| MS | Early Childhood Education | 36 | 13121000 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| MS | Educational Administration | 30 | 13040100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| MS | Educational Technology | 30 | 13050100 | 5 | 6 | 3 | 14 |

| | Leadership | | | | | | |
|-------------|--|----|----------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| MS | Educational Technology Library Science | 30 | 25010100 | 15 | 30 | 4 | 49 |
| MS | English | 36 | 23010100 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 4 |
| MS | Health, Kinesiology And Sport Studies | 30 | 31050500 | 11 | 21 | 10 | 42 |
| MS | Higher Education | 36 | 13040600 | 9 | 7 | 1 | 17 |
| MS | History | 36 | 54010100 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 7 |
| MS | Management | 30 | 52020100 | 25 | 15 | 22 | 62 |
| MS | Marketing | 30 | 52140100 | 7 | 13 | 6 | 26 |
| MS | Mathematics | 30 | 27010100 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 11 |
| MS | Organization, Learning, and Technology (previously MS Global E-Learning) | 30 | 13120100 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 17 |
| MS | Physics | 30 | 40080100 | 2 | 9 | 8 | 19 |
| MS | Physics (Broadfield)* | 30 | 40080100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| MS | Political Science | 36 | 45100100 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| MS | Psychology | 36 | 42010100 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 12 |
| MS | Reading | 36 | 13131500 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| MS | Secondary Education | 36 | 13120500 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| MS | Sociology | 30 | 45110100 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 10 |
| MS | Special Education | 36 | 13100100 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| MS | Technology Management | 36 | 15061200 | 17 | 8 | 4 | 29 |
| MS | Theatre | 30 | 50050100 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| MSF | Finance | 30 | 52080100 | 16 | 11 | 6 | 33 |
| MSN | Family Nurse Practitioner | 46 | 51380100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| MSW | Social Work | 36 | 44070100 | 32 | 21 | 24 | 77 |
| SSP | School Psychology | 66 | 42280500 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Sum: | | | | 630 | 580 | 292 | 1502 |

* Programs are listed again in the Phased out or Consolidated section below

| MASTERS PROGRAMS WITH ZERO ENROLLMENT (Spring 2019) Being Phased Out or Consolidated | | | |
|---|--|------------|-----------------|
| Degree | Major | SCH | CIP Code |
| MA | Secondary Education – Phasing out Fall 2020 | 30 | 13120500 |
| MS | Biology (Broadfield) – Phasing out Fall 2020 | 36 | 26010100 |
| MS | Chemistry (Broadfield) – Phasing out Fall 2020 | 30 | 40050100 |

| | | | |
|----|--|----|----------|
| MS | Physics (Broadfield) – Phasing out Fall 2020 | 30 | 40080100 |
|----|--|----|----------|

| DOCTORAL DEGREES AWARDED Academic Year 2018-2019 | | | | Graduates | | | Graduate Total |
|---|--|-----|----------|--------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Degree | Major | SCH | CIP Code | Fall 2018 | Spring 2019 | Summer 2019 | Total |
| EDD | Educational Administration | 60 | 13040100 | 9 | 6 | 15 | 30 |
| EDD | Higher Education Leadership | 60 | 13040600 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 10 |
| EDD | Supervision Curriculum And Instruction | 72 | 13120200 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 8 |
| PHD | Counseling | 90 | 13110100 | 7 | 3 | 5 | 15 |
| PHD | Educational Psychology | 90 | 42280600 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| PHD | English | 60 | 23010100 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 6 |
| Sum: | | | | 26 | 18 | 26 | 70 |

| Abbreviation | Degree |
|--------------|---|
| BA | Bachelor of Art |
| BAAS | Bachelor of Applied Arts & Sciences |
| BAIS | Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies |
| BACJ | Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice |
| BBA | Bachelor of Business Administration |
| BFA | Bachelor of Fine Arts |
| BS | Bachelor of Science |
| BGS | Bachelor of General Studies |
| BM | Bachelor of Music |
| BSCIS | Bachelor of Science in Computer Information Systems |
| BSCJ | Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice |
| BSIS | Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies |
| BSN | Bachelor of Science in Nursing |
| BSPH | Bachelor of Science in Public Health |
| BSW | Bachelor of Social Work |
| MA | Master of Art |
| MBA | Master of Business Administration |
| MED | Master of Education |
| MFA | Master of Fine Arts |
| MM | Master of Music |
| MS | Master of Science |

| | |
|-----|---------------------------------|
| MSF | Master of Science in Finance |
| MSW | Master of Social Work |
| SSP | Specialist in School Psychology |
| EDD | Doctorate of Education |
| PHD | Doctorate of Philosophy |

II-D3 Off-Campus Instructional Locations and Branch Campuses

List all locations where 25% or more credit hours toward a degree, diploma, or certificate can be obtained primarily through traditional classroom instruction. Report those locations in accord with the Commission's definitions and the directions as specified below.

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Table 1: Off-campus instructional sites—a site located geographically apart from the main campus at which the institution offers **50 % or more** of its credit hours for a diploma, certificate, or degree. This includes high schools where courses are offered as part of dual enrollment. For each site, provide the information below. **The list should include only those sites reported to and approved by SACSCOC.** Listing unapproved sites below does not constitute reporting them to SACSCOC. In such cases when an institution has initiated an off-campus instructional site as described above without prior approval by SACSCOC, a prospectus for approval should be submitted immediately to SACSCOC.

| Name of Site | Physical Address (street, city, state, country) Do not include PO Boxes. | Date of SACSCOC approval letter | Date Implemented by the institution | Educational programs offered (specific degrees, certificates, diplomas) with 50% or more credits hours offered at each site | Is the site currently active? (At any time during the past 5 years, have students been enrolled and courses offered? If not, indicate the date of most recent activity.) |
|---|---|--|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| The Universities Center at Dallas – El Centro | UCD Administrative Offices/Visual Communication Dept. 801 Main Street Suite C340 Dallas, TX | Records show that notification was sent to SACSCOC on July 3, 1997.* | Fall 1997 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBA Finance • BFA Visual Communications • MFA Art • MA Art • MED The Art of Teaching • MBA • MSF Finance | Yes |

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---|---|-------------|---|-----|
| | 75202 Business, Education, Spanish Classrooms 301 N. Market Street Dallas, TX 75202 | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MSA Accounting • MS Higher Education • MS Management | |
| Mesquite Metroplex | 2600 Motley Dr. Mesquite, TX 75150 | Records show that notification was sent to SACSCOC on July 3, 1997. * | Spring 1998 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BAIS Interdisciplinary Studies • BSIS Interdisciplinary Studies • BSW Social Work • BA Spanish • MA/MS Applied Linguistics • MED The Art of Teaching • MBA • MED Counseling • MED/MS Curriculum and Instruction • MED/MS Early Childhood Education • MS Higher Education • MS Mathematics • MA/MED/MS Reading • SSP School Psychology • MED/MS Special Education • MED/MS Secondary Education • MSW Social Work • EDD Supervision, Curriculum, and Instruction | Yes |
| Navarro Partnership-Corsicana | 3200 W. 7 th Avenue Corsicana, TX 75110 | *see below | Fall 1999 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BS Environmental Science • BS Computer | Yes |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|----------------------------|
| | | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science • BSCIS • Computer Information Systems • BACJ Criminal Justice • BSCJ Criminal Justice • BAIS • Interdisciplinary Studies • BSIS • Interdisciplinary Studies • MS • Mathematics • MED/MS • Special Education | |
| Collin Higher Education Center (MITC) | 3452 Spur 399 McKinney, TX 75069 | May 17, 2010 | Spring 2010 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MED/MS Counseling • PHD Counseling • BS Psychology • BSIS • Interdisciplinary Studies • BAIS • Interdisciplinary Studies • BS Sport and Recreation Management • MSW Social Work • MED/MS Curriculum and Instruction | Yes |
| Midlothian Higher Education Center (MITC) | 899 Mt. Zion Road, Building 2, Room 115 Midlothian, TX 76065 | April 13, 2012 (25-49%) November 13, 2014 (>50%) | Spring 2012 (25-49%) Spring 2015 (>50%) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BAIS • Interdisciplinary Studies • BSIS • Interdisciplinary Studies | Closed as of August 2018 |
| A&M-Commerce at Rockwall | 2610 Observation Trail Rockwall, TX | March 9, 2009 | Fall 2014 | N/A | Closed as of December 2017 |
| L-3Harris Communications, Integrated Systems | Mission Integration Division 100001 Jack Finney Blvd. Greenville, TX | April 4, 2014 | Summer 2014 | M.S. Management | Yes |
| | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|--------------------|-------------------|--|-----|
| Texas A&M University System at RELLIS | 3100 Texas Highway 47 Bryan, TX 77807 | September 20, 2018 | February 15, 2019 | B.S. Computer Science | Yes |
| Texas A&M University-Commerce at Frisco (Collin College Preston Ridge) | 9700 Wade Blvd University Hall #105 Frisco, TX 75035 | May 24, 2019 | Sept 1, 2019 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBA General Business • BSW (Social Work) • BS Agribusiness • BBA Business Analytics | Yes |

* This off-campus location appeared on the University's prior Fifth-Year Interim Report (2009), as well as the most recent Decennial Review (2003). The date of the SACSCOC approval is not available due to time lapse.

Table 2: Off-campus instructional sites at which the institution offers **25-49%** of its credit hours for a diploma, certificate, or degree—including high schools where courses are offered as dual enrollment. **Note: institutions are required to notify SACSCOC in advance of initiating coursework at the site.** For each site, provide the information below.

| Name of Site (Indicate if site is currently active or inactive. If inactive, date of last course offerings and date of projected reopening) | Physical Address (street, city, state, country) Do not include PO Boxes. | Date of SACSCOC approval letter | Date Implemented by the institution | Educational programs offered (specific degrees, certificates, diplomas) with 25-49% credit hours offered at each site | Is the site currently active? (At any time during the past 5 years, have students been enrolled and courses offered? If not, indicate the date of most recent activity.) |
|--|--|---|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Melissa High School | 3150 Cardinal Drive Melissa, TX 75454 | Notification: October 17, 2014 SACSCOC acknowledgement: January 22, 2015 | Spring 2015 | Core curriculum | No. Courses were last offered at Melissa High School by A&M-Commerce in the 2017-2018 academic year. |
| Boles High School | 9777 FM 2101 Quinlan, TX 75474 | Notification: May 13, 2016 SACSCOC acknowledgement: September 28, 2016 | Fall 2016 | Core curriculum | Yes |
| Commerce High | 3800 Sregit Dr. | Notification: January 12, 2016 | Fall 2016 | Core curriculum | Yes |

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------|--|--|--------------|-----------------|-----|
| School | Commerce, TX 75428 | SACSCOC acknowledgement: May 6, 2016 | | | |
| Royse City High School | 700 S. FM 2642 Royse City, TX 75189 | Notification: January 12, 2016 SACSCOC acknowledgement: May 6, 2016 | Fall 2016 | Core curriculum | Yes |
| Caddo Mills High School | 2710 Gilmer Caddo Mills, TX 75135 | Notification: August 25, 2016 SACSCOC acknowledgement: November 3, 2016 | January 2017 | Core curriculum | Yes |

**This off-campus location appeared on the University’s prior Fifth-Year Interim Report (2009), as well as the most recent Decennial Review (2003). The date of the SACSCOC approval is not available due to time lapse.*

Table 3: Branch campus—an instructional site located geographically apart and independent of the main campus of the institution. A location is independent of the main campus if the location is (1) permanent in nature, (2) offers courses in educational programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential, (3) has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization, and (4) has its own budgetary and hiring authority. **The list should include only those branch campuses reported to and approved by SACSCOC.** Listing unapproved branch campuses below does not constitute reporting them to SACSCOC. A prospectus for an unapproved branch campuses should be submitted immediately to SACSCOC.

Texas A&M University-Commerce does not have any branch campuses as of March 16, 2020.

II-D4 Distance and Correspondence Education

Provide an initial date of approval for your institution to offer distance education. Provide a list of credit-bearing educational programs (degrees, certificates, and diplomas) where 50% or more of the credit hours are delivered through distance education modes. For each educational program, indicate whether the program is delivered using synchronous or asynchronous technology, or both. For each educational program that uses distance education technology to deliver the program at a specific site (e.g., a synchronous program using interactive videoconferencing), indicate the program offered at each location where students receive the transmitted program. Please limit this description to one page, if possible.

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Texas A&M University-Commerce was approved by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges for the online delivery of courses and programs in **2003**. The table below list credit bearing degree programs where 50% or more of the credit hours are earned through online instruction.

| Program | Degrees | Delivery Method |
|------------------------|---------|---------------------|
| Special Education | MED, MS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Counseling | MS, MED | Online/Asynchronous |
| Educational Psychology | PHD | Online/Asynchronous |
| The Art of Teaching | MED | Online/Asynchronous |

| | | |
|--|-------------|---------------------|
| Curriculum & Instruction | MED, MS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Early Childhood Education | MED, MS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Reading | MA, MED, MS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Secondary Education | MED, MS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Educational Administration | MED | Online/Asynchronous |
| Educational Administration | EDD | Online/Asynchronous |
| Higher Education | MS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Higher Education | EDD | Online/Asynchronous |
| Educational Technology Leadership | MED, MS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Educational Technology Library Science | MED, MS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Organization, Learning and Technology | MS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Health, Kinesiology and Sport Studies | MS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Social Work | MSW | Online/Asynchronous |
| English | MA, MS | Online/Asynchronous |
| English | PhD | Online/Asynchronous |
| Applied Linguistics | MA, MS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Criminal Justice | BACJ, BSCJ | Online/Asynchronous |
| Sociology | BA, BS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Sociology | MA, MS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Applied Criminology | MS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Technology Management | BS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Technology Management | MS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Computer Science | BS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Computer Information Systems | BSCIS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Computational Science | MS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Biological Sciences | MS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Mathematics | MS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Physics | MS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Applied Arts and Sciences | BAAS | Online/Asynchronous |
| General Studies | BGS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Agricultural Sciences | MS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Agribusiness | BA, BS | Online/Asynchronous |
| General Business | BBA | Online/Asynchronous |
| Business Administration | BS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Business Administration | MBA | Online/Asynchronous |
| Marketing | MS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Marketing | BBA | Online/Asynchronous |
| Business Analytics | BBA | Online/Asynchronous |
| Business Analytics | MS | Online/Asynchronous |

| | | |
|------------|-----|---------------------|
| Accounting | MSA | Online/Asynchronous |
| Accounting | BBA | Online/Asynchronous |
| Finance | BBA | Online/Asynchronous |
| Finance | MSF | Online/Asynchronous |
| Management | MS | Online/Asynchronous |
| Management | BBA | Online/Asynchronous |

II-D5 Accreditation

1. List all agencies that currently accredit the institution and any of its programs and indicate the date of the last review by each.
2. If SACS Commission on Colleges is not your primary accreditor for access to USDOE Title IV funding, identify which accrediting agency serves that purpose.
3. List any USDOE recognized agency (national and programmatic) that has terminated the institution's accreditation (include the date, reason, and copy of the letter of termination) or list any agency from which the institution has voluntarily withdrawn (include copy of letter to agency from institution).
4. Describe any sanctions applied or negative actions taken by any USDOE-recognized accrediting agency (national, programmatic, SACSCOC) during the two years previous to the submission of this report. Include a copy of the letter from the USDOE to the institution.

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

(1) List all agencies that currently accredit the institution and any of its programs and indicate the date of the last review by each.

| Accreditation Agency | Accredited Programs | Last Year Reaf-firmed | Voluntary Withdrawal or T ermination | Negative Actions or Sanctions |
|--|---|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges ¹ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institution | 2014 | N/A | None |
| American Bar Association (ABA)* | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Science/Bachelor of Arts in Paralegal Studies* | 2012 | N/A | None |
| American Chemical Society (ACS) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Science in Chemistry | 2009 | N/A | Probation (see item 4 below) |
| Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBA with majors in: Accounting, Business Analytics, Finance, General Business, Management, Marketing • BS with major in Business Administration • MBA • MS with majors in Accounting, Business | 2019 | N/A | None |

| | | | | |
|---|--|------|--|--|
| | Analytics, Finance, Management, Marketing | | | |
| Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) ¹ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Science In Nursing • Masters of Science in Nursing Family Nurse Practitioner | 2019 | N/A | None |
| Computing Accreditation Commission (CAC) of ABET | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Science in Computer Science | 2015 | N/A | None |
| Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master of Science in Counseling • Doctor of Philosophy in Counseling | 2018 | N/A | Interim Report Requested (see item 4 below) |
| Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Social Work • Master of Social Work | 2017 | N/A | None |
| Engineering Accreditation Commission (EAC) of ABET | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Science in Construction Engineering • Bachelor of Science in Industrial Engineering | 2017 | N/A | None |
| National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) ¹ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Music • Bachelor of Art in Music • Master of Music | 2015 | N/A | None |
| National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSP Specialist in School Psychology | 2019 | N/A | See below |
| Masters Psychology Accreditation Council (MPAC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master of Science in Applied Psychology | 2018 | Accreditation terminated as of August 28, 2019 | Accreditation terminated as of August 28, 2019 (see below) |
| National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD)—Associate Membership ¹ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelor of Arts in Art • Bachelor of Fine Arts in Studio Art • Bachelor of Fine Arts in Visual Communication • Bachelor of Fine Arts in Photography • Master of Arts in Art • Master of Fine Arts in Art | 2019 | N/A | None |
| State Board of Educator Certification (SBEC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BSIS/BAIS- Early Childhood (EC)-6th Generalist • BSIS/BAIS- EC-6th Bilingual • BSIS/BAIS- EC-6th | 2012 | N/A | None |

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special Education • BSIS/BAIS- Middle Level (MDL) 4-8th English/Language Arts/Reading • BSIS/BAIS- Middle Level (MDL) 4-8th English/Language Arts/Reading ESL • BSIS/BAIS- Middle Level (MDL) 4-8th Math • BSIS/BAIS- Middle Level (MDL) 4-8th Math ESL • BSIS/BAIS- Middle Level (MDL) 4-8th Science • BSIS/BAIS- Middle Level (MDL) 4-8th Science ESL • BSIS/BAIS- Middle Level (MDL) 4-8th Math/Science | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|

¹ Recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE)

*The American Bar Association (ABA) “approves” programs but does not “accredit” them.

(2) If SACS Commission on Colleges is not your primary accreditor for access to USDOE Title IV funding, identify which accrediting agency serves that purpose.

Not applicable. SACSCOC is our primary accreditor for access to USDOE Title IV funding.

(3) List any USDOE recognized agency (national and programmatic) that has terminated the institution’s accreditation (include the date, reason, and copy of the letter of termination) or list any agency from which the institution has voluntarily withdrawn (include copy of letter to agency from institution).

Not applicable. There are no USDOE-recognized agencies that have terminated the institution’s accreditation or from which the institution has voluntarily withdrawn.

Accreditation status updates regarding other programmatic accreditors include the following:

Re-accreditation of the M.S. Psychology with an Applied Emphasis program was denied by the Masters in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation Council (MPCAC) and accreditation was terminated via a letter^[1] of August 28, 2019.

(4) Describe any sanctions applied or negative actions taken by any USDOE-recognized accrediting agency (national, programmatic, SACSCOC) during the two years previous to the submission of this report. Include a copy of the letter from the USDOE to the institution.

There are no USDOE-recognized accrediting agencies which have taken any negative actions or applied any sanctions to A&M-Commerce during the two years prior to the submission of this report.

Accreditation status updates regarding other programmatic accreditors include the following:

The American Chemical Society (ACS) has placed the Bachelor of Science in Chemistry program on probation, as of September 2018^[2] and requested additional documentation to verify the frequency of in-depth courses^[3]. While on probation, the department can continue to certify graduates and remains on the ACS approved program list.

The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) extended the accreditation status of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling (M.S.), School Counseling (M.S.), and Counselor Education and Supervision (Ph.D.) programs for an additional two years through March 31, 2020 but requested additional documentation, in the form of a second Interim Report, for standards-related requirements[4].

The National Association of School Psychologists conditionally approved the SSP Specialist in School Psychology program for the period January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2018 and requested a Conditional Report[5]. The program was subsequently granted full approval on February 1, 2019[6].

II-D6 Relationship to the U.S. Department of Education

Indicate any limitations, suspensions, or termination by the U.S. Department of Education in regard to student financial aid or other financial aid programs during the previous three years. Report if on reimbursement or any other exceptional status in regard to federal or state financial aid.

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Texas A&M University-Commerce does not have any limitations, suspensions, or terminations set by the U.S. Department of Education as it pertains to student financial aid or other financial aid programs during the previous three year. The university is not on a reimbursement status or any other exception status in regards to federal or state financial aid.

Part III The Fifth-Year Compliance Certification

Section 5 Administration and Organization

5.4 The institution employs and regularly evaluates administrative and academic officers with appropriate experience and qualifications to lead the institution. (*Qualified administrative/academic officers*) [CR]

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Introduction

In order to fulfill the mission of the University, highly qualified academic and administrative officers comprise the leadership roles at Texas A&M University-Commerce. Individuals hold credentials and expertise appropriate to the duties and responsibilities assigned to their respective positions and are regularly evaluated in accordance with University and System policies and regulations.

Employment and Evaluation Practices

Each hire at A&M-Commerce is made through a national search and advertised on appropriate trade and higher education job search websites as well as the Texas A&M University System website. The hiring process includes candidate application reviews and interviews conducted by a search committee, ultimately overseen and reviewed by the Office of Human Resources. If a search returns no qualified candidates, it is considered failed, and the position is re-posted at a later date. In addition to state and federal law, hiring practices are governed by A&M-Commerce Procedure 33.99.01.R0.01[1] *Employment Practices* and A&M System Regulation 33.99.01[2] *Employment Practices*.

The evaluation process is governed by A&M-Commerce Procedure 12.99.99.R0.14[3] *Academic Administrator Evaluation*, A&M System Policy 02.05[4] *Presidents of System Member Universities* and A&M System Regulation 33.99.03[5] *Performance Evaluations for Nonfaculty Employees*. Once employed at A&M-Commerce for a duration of greater than six months, all faculty, staff and administration are evaluated annually by their direct supervisor. Individuals holding supervisor roles are additionally evaluated on supervisory competencies. These evaluations are completed digitally in Workday, the University's human resources management software.

Academic administrators additionally complete a comprehensive and in-depth 360 evaluation biennially as described in A&M-Commerce Procedure 12.99.99.R0.14 *Academic Administrator Evaluation*. This evaluation is conducted through use of the Qualtrics survey platform, and administration and collection of 360 evaluations is overseen by the Department of Institutional Effectiveness and Research in conjunction with Faculty Senate and Staff Council. 360 evaluations were conducted for the first time in spring of 2019. A sample of the question set[6] for this evaluation and a summary report[7] of evaluations received for academic officers (provost and deans) is provided in evidence documentation.

Administrative and Academic Officers

A review of the experience and qualifications of the University's administrative and academic officers demonstrates that each is appropriately qualified for their role and has been regularly evaluated. For the purposes of this review, administrative officers reporting to the President and academic administrators (Deans and Associate Provosts) reporting to the Provost have been included.

For each officer listed below, a copy of the job description for the position, their curriculum vita and a record of the completion of two performance evaluations is provided, in evidence documentation, along

with a summary of their qualifications and responsibilities. Each officer has the requisite education and/or relevant experience to successfully execute the responsibilities of their position and has been regularly evaluated.

Administrative Officers Reporting to the President

A&M-Commerce is currently comprised of seven divisions reporting to the President & Chief Executive Officer (CEO) as well as three additional administrative officers.

Divisions

- Academic Affairs
- Business & Administration
- Campus Life & Student Development
- Enrollment Management
- Institutional Advancement
- Marketing & Communications
- Research & Economic Development

Additional Administrative Officers

- Chief of Staff
- Chief Compliance Officer
- Director of Athletics

See the A&M-Commerce organizational chart[8] for an overview of the University structure.

Direct reports to the President & CEO are evaluated by the President, but please note that their performance evaluations log a record of completion by the President’s Chief of Staff who is charged with completing business processes in Workday, the University’s human resource management software.

***Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs[9]
Dr. John Humphreys (CV[10]) (2018[11]) (2019[12])***

| Educational Qualifications | Professional Experience |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D.B.A in Management, Nova Southeastern University • M.A. in Management, Webster University • B.S. in Psychology, University of Southern Mississippi | <p>Dr. Humphreys has worked in academia since 2000. In that time, he has traveled to China as a Fulbright Scholar and served as a Professor, Dean, Department Head, and Provost at Texas A&M University-Commerce. He has served in an editorial capacity for several journals, and his scholarship has been cited over 2,000 times in multiple scholarly and trade publications. Prior to joining higher education, Dr. Humphreys worked in the private sector and held a leadership position with a multi-billion dollar financial services organization.</p> |
| Responsibilities | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serving as the second ranking administrative officer and the chief academic officer of the University • Overall program management of a comprehensive and integrated academic affairs program • Leading the division through systemic planning, budgeting, evaluation, coordination | |

- and administration
- Oversight, evaluation and leadership of the Associate Provost, the academic deans (CHSSA, COB, COEHS, CASNR, COSE, CID), the Dean of the Library and the Dean of the Graduate School
- Serving as liaison with external constituents regarding academic and research activities
- Promoting leadership by the University at both the state and national levels to reflect the position of the University in these contexts

Vice President for Business & Administration^[13]

Ms. Alicia Currin (Resume^[14]) (2018^[15]) (2019^[16])

| Educational Qualifications | Professional Experience |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B.B.A., Texas A&M University-Commerce | <p>Ms. Currin has nearly 40 years’ experience in higher education. She is responsible for the execution of an annual budget in excess of \$175M, leads the development of the institutional biennial Legislative Appropriations Request and submits the Annual Financial Report as the University’s Chief Financial Officer. Her higher education experience includes service to A&M-Commerce as Chief of Staff and Director of Planning and Governmental Relations, Associate Vice President for Business & Administration and Director of Financial Reporting and Risk Management.</p> |
| Responsibilities | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functioning as the Chief Business Officer (CBO) and Chief Financial Officer (CFO) for the University • Directing the University’s financial management and business affairs • Directing the administrative support services of the University • The safeguarding of all University assets | |

Vice President for Institutional Advancement^[17]

Ms. Keturi DeLong (Resume^[18]) (2018^[19]) (2019^[20])

| Educational Qualifications | Professional Experience |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M.A. in Communication Studies, University of North Texas • B.A. in Communication Studies and Spanish, University of North Carolina Wilmington | <p>Ms. DeLong has spent the entirety of her career in education, with more than ten years devoted to higher education. She is actively involved in advancement professional development, is currently growing a culture of philanthropy among current students and alumni and has greatly increased the number and size of gifts since arriving at A&M-Commerce. Her previous administrative roles have included Director of Annual Giving, Director of Stewardship-Major Gifts and Planned Giving, Senior Director of Development and Associate Vice President for Institutional Advancement.</p> |

Responsibilities

- Providing vision and strategic leadership in directing all fundraising for A&M-Commerce
- Fostering a culture of philanthropy within the organization to increase ongoing private and public sector financial support benefiting the University, its students, employees and the foundation

Interim Vice President for Enrollment Management^[21]

Dr. Lee Young (CV^[22]) (2018^[23]) (2019^[24])

| Educational Qualifications | Professional Experience |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in Urban Higher Education Leadership, Jackson State University • M.A. in Teaching (History), Jackson State University • B.S. in History, Jackson State University | <p>Dr. Young has worked in higher education for thirty-five years. He has published and presented at conferences on several occasions. He has done extensive work with strategic enrollment management planning throughout his career. Dr. Young's previous roles have included Associate Director of Admissions; Director of Admissions; Assistant Dean of Enrollment Services; Associate Vice President for Enrollment Services; Associate Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management; Vice Provost for Enrollment Management, Student Services & Diversity; Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs; Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Success; and Associate Vice President for Student Affairs.</p> |
| Responsibilities | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing strategic, visionary, and overarching leadership for enrollment management functions • Serving the University community by providing administrative leadership and long-range planning of the student services departments • Overseeing the development, implementation, maintenance, analysis and success of enrollment management programs | |

Vice President for Research & Economic Development^[25]

Ms. Cecelia Gassner (Resume^[26])

| Educational Qualifications | Professional Experience |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J.D., Boston University School of Law • B.S.E. in Biomedical Engineering, Duke University | <p>Ms. Gassner has ten years' economic development experience with the last five years in higher education. Her legal experience began in 1997 and focused on industry matters. Ms. Gassner has served as an Assistant to the Mayor for Economic Development and Director of Economic Development in addition to her work as an attorney.</p> |
| Responsibilities | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisting the President and senior leadership in developing and managing local, | |

| |
|---|
| <p>regional, state and federal economic development initiatives and administering major growth in research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significantly increasing extramural funding for research through grants and contracts at the federal, state and private levels • Serving as the institution’s principal liaison to industry, economic development organizations and other state and federal government agencies • Establishing academic and research partnerships between the University and businesses throughout the state |
| <p>Additional Commentary</p> |
| <p>Ms. Gassner began working at A&M-Commerce in March 2019. She was not present for the 2018 performance evaluation, and she was not eligible for the 2019 performance evaluation.</p> |

Interim Vice President for Student Success and Dean of Students[\[27\]](#)
Dr. Thomas Newsom (Resume[\[28\]](#)) (2019[\[29\]](#))

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Educational Qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in Higher Education, University of North Texas • M.S. in Higher Education Administration, Texas A&M University-Commerce • B.A. in Business Administration, Austin College | <p>Professional Experience</p> <p>Dr. Newsom has over thirty years’ experience in higher education. He has twice served as a SACSCOC Peer Reviewer. He is an active member of the professional community often speaking, presenting or serving as a panelist at conferences or before relevant institutions or organizations. He has several years of administrative leadership including the positions of Director of Public Relations, Dean of Student Affairs, Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs, Vice President of Student Affairs, President, and Vice Chancellor.</p> |
| <p>Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the goals of the University as the senior student affairs officer • Providing vision, leadership and supervision for personnel, facilities, programs and other resources to ensure an atmosphere conducive to the holistic development of students • Providing vision and leadership for all student affairs divisions | |
| <p>Additional Commentary</p> <p>Dr. Newsom began working at A&M-Commerce in April 2018. He was not eligible for the 2018 performance evaluation.</p> | |

Chief Compliance Officer[\[30\]](#)
Ms. Katelyn Severance (Resume[\[31\]](#)) (2018[\[32\]](#)) (2019[\[33\]](#))

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Educational Qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J.D., University of Akron • B.S. in Sport and Fitness Administration/Management, Texas A&M University | <p>Professional Experience</p> <p>Ms. Severance has more than ten years’ experience in higher education compliance. She has served in compliance offices as Coordinator, Assistant Director, and Director. She has also served as Associate Athletic Director for Compliance and</p> |
|---|---|

| | |
|--|---|
| | Administration at A&M-Commerce. Additionally, she has held positions in risk management and athletics compliance at other institutions. |
| Responsibilities | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overseeing the University Compliance Program • Ensuring the institution is following federal and state regulations, as well as A&M System regulatory standards • Ensuring that policies and procedures are being followed • Ensuring behavior in the university meets the standards and ethical behavior set forth in applicable laws and the institution's commitment to integrity | |

Director of Athletics[\[34\]](#)**Mr. Tim McMurray** (Resume[\[35\]](#)) (2018[\[36\]](#)) (2019[\[37\]](#))

| Educational Qualifications | Professional Experience |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M.S.A./M.B.A., Ohio University • B.A.A.S. in Communication, Lamar University | Mr. McMurray has worked in higher education athletics since 1992. His work in athletics leadership has featured capital campaigns, alumni relationships, branding, partnerships/sponsorships, marketing, media relations, public relations and NCAA compliance. Mr. McMurray's previous administrative roles have included director of Media Relations, Assistant Athletics Director, Associate Athletics Director, Executive Director-Huskie Athletics Support Fund, and Senior Associate Athletics Director. |
| Responsibilities | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overall administration and management of the University's intercollegiate athletics program • Representing the program at the conference and national levels | |

Executive Director for Marketing and Communications[\[38\]](#)**Mr. Michael Johnson** (Resume[\[39\]](#))

| Educational Qualifications | Professional Experience |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M.S. in Management, Sullivan University • B.A. in Secondary Education, University of Kentucky • Post-graduate certificate in Digital Marketing, Cornell University | Mr. Johnson has been working in higher education since 1999. He has served as Director of Admissions at three institutions, Executive Director of Online, and Vice President of Marketing. At his previous institution, Mr. Johnson managed a \$12.3 million annual marketing budget and reduced marketing spending by more than 30%. |
| Responsibilities | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting the strategic direction for marketing and communications for A&M-Commerce • Serving as both a strategist and catalyst for the University initiatives • Reporting to the President and maintaining close working relationships with the members of the President's Executive Team and Administrative Council | |

Additional Commentary

Mr. Johnson began working at A&M-Commerce in July 2019. He was not present for the 2018 and 2019 performance evaluations.

Chief of Staff[\[40\]](#)

Ms. Linda King ([Resume](#)[\[41\]](#)) ([2018](#)[\[42\]](#)) ([2019](#)[\[43\]](#))

| Educational Qualifications | Professional Experience |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B.B.A., Texas A&M University-Commerce | <p>Ms. King has worked in higher education for forty years. She served as Executive Assistant to three University presidents and is serving her third University president as Chief of Staff. Ms. King serves as the primary University liaison to the A&M System and Board of Regents. In addition, she is responsible for the submission of academic program requests and changes to the THECB and SACSCOC as well as the preparation and submission of agenda items for the quarterly Board of Regents meetings.</p> |
| Responsibilities | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serving as the principal aide to the President • Handling a wide range of matters of institutional importance on behalf of the President • Coordinating and integrating the goals of the President and senior leaders in the implementation of the University’s planning process • Serving as the President’s primary liaison to the Office of the Chancellor and other System Offices as well as various external agencies • Collaboratively working and ensuring effective liaison with senior leadership teams, administrative staff, academic departments and external agencies on a broad spectrum of matters of institutional importance | |

Administrative Officers Reporting to the Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs

The Provost’s administrative leadership team consists of the six academic deans, one associate provost, the Dean of the Graduate School and the Dean of the Library. Each officer is fully tenured, with a terminal degree and experience in their field. All officers have a number of years of administrative academic leadership experience at multiple levels in the higher education environment. See the attached organizational chart[\[44\]](#) for division structure.

Dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources[\[45\]](#)

Dr. Randy Harp ([CV](#)[\[46\]](#)) ([2018](#)[\[47\]](#)) ([2019](#)[\[48\]](#))

| Educational Qualifications | Professional Experience |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in Agricultural Education and Higher Education Administration, Oklahoma State University • M.S. in Animal Science, New Mexico State University • B.S. in Animal Science, Oklahoma State University | <p>Dr. Harp has been working in higher education since 1979. He has been awarded several grants, served as President of the Faculty Senate, is a prolific scholar, and has been awarded multiple teaching and service awards. His experience includes serving as an Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor, and Department Head.</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| | |
| Responsibilities | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serving as the chief administrative officer of the College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources in all matters related to academic affairs, faculty, staff and students | |

Dean of the College of Science & Engineering[\[49\]](#)
Dr. Brent Donham (CV[\[50\]](#)) (2018[\[51\]](#)) (2019[\[52\]](#))

| Educational Qualifications | Professional Experience |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ed.D. in Educational Administration, Texas A&M University-Commerce M.S. in Electrical Engineering, Stanford University B.S. in Electrical Engineering, New Mexico State University | <p>Dr. Donham has served in higher education since 1996. He currently manages approximately one hundred faculty and staff in the College of Science & Engineering. He has been awarded several engineering grants, was named Outstanding Department Head, awarded The Texas A&M System Teaching Excellence Award on multiple occasions, and helped launch the Electrical Engineering program at A&M-Commerce. He has worked as a Teaching Administrator; Associate Dean for Technology Programs; Dean of Instruction, Engineering Technology & Emerging Programs; Executive Dean of the School of Engineering & Technology; Associate Vice President of Engineering & Technology/Education Transitions; and Department Head & Associate Professor.</p> |
| Responsibilities | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acting as the Chief Executive Officer of the College of Science & Engineering Supervising and directing the teaching, research and service missions of the College and the University Making decisions or recommendations regarding budget, curricula, degree offerings, faculty and student recruiting, faculty development/tenure and promotion, fundraising, long range strategic planning, matters of academic quality, promotion of College interests, research planning, and student mentoring for the College | |

Interim Dean of the College of Business[\[53\]](#)
Dr. Mario Hayek (CV[\[54\]](#)) (2018[\[55\]](#)) (2019[\[56\]](#))

| Educational Qualifications | Professional Experience |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ph.D. in Management, University of Mississippi M.B.A. in Finance and Entrepreneurship, American University B.B.A. in Marketing, Marymount University | <p>Dr. Hayek has worked in higher education for over twenty years, preceded by years of work in private industry. He has teaching experience in both the United States and Ecuador. Prior to his service as Interim Dean, Dr. Hayek's previous positions were Assistant Professor of Management, Interim Associate Dean, Director of the Venture College, and Department Head of Management & Economics.</p> |

| Responsibilities |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting as the Chief Executive Officer of the College of Business • Supervising and directing the teaching, research and service missions of the College and the University • Making decisions or recommendations regarding budget, curricula, degree offerings, faculty and student recruiting, faculty development/tenure and promotion, fundraising, long range strategic planning, matters of academic quality, promotion of College interests, research planning, and student mentoring for the College |
| Additional Commentary |
| Dr. Hayek began serving as Interim Dean in February 2020. Both his evaluations are paper-based department head evaluations not completed in Workday. The Workday system is not used for department head evaluations. |

Dean of the College of Humanities, Social Sciences & Arts[\[57\]](#)

Dr. William Kuracina (CV[\[58\]](#)) (2018[\[59\]](#)) (2019[\[60\]](#))

| Educational Qualifications | Professional Experience |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in History, Syracuse University • M.A. in History, State University College at Buffalo • B.S. in Chemical Engineering, Clarkson University | Dr. Kuracina has served in higher education since 2005. He has worked as an Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor, and Department Head, and Associate Provost Intern. Prior to joining academia, Dr. Kuracina worked as a Senior Grantwriter and as the Project Information Manager for the Disability History Museum. He is a Fulbright Research Scholar and received an Outstanding Dissertation Award as well as multiple teaching awards. |
| Responsibilities | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting as the Chief Executive Officer of the College of Humanities, Social Sciences & Arts • Supervising and directing the teaching, research and service missions of the College and the University • Making decisions or recommendations regarding budget, curricula, degree offerings, faculty and student recruiting, faculty development/tenure and promotion, fundraising, long range strategic planning, matters of academic quality, promotion of College interests, research planning, and student mentoring for the College | |

Interim Dean of the College of Education & Human Services[\[61\]](#)

Dr. Madeline Justice (CV[\[62\]](#)) (2018[\[63\]](#)) (2019[\[64\]](#))

| Educational Qualifications | Professional Experience |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ed.D. in Supervision, Curriculum & Instruction, Texas A&M University-Commerce • M.A. in Government & History, Texas Woman's University • B.A. in English & Government, Texas Woman's University | Dr. Justice has thirty years of experience in higher education. She has served as an Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor, Department Head, Assistant Provost, and Associate Provost. In addition, she has served as a journal editor, book reviewer, and a grant proposal reviewer. |
| Responsibilities | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting as the Chief Executive Officer of the College of Education & Human Services | |

- Supervising and directing the teaching, research and service missions of the College and the University
- Making decisions or recommendations regarding budget, curricula, degree offerings, faculty and student recruiting, faculty development/tenure and promotion, fundraising, long range strategic planning, matters of academic quality, promotion of College interests, research planning, and student mentoring for the College

Dean of the College of Innovation & Design[\[65\]](#)

Dr. Yvonne Villanueva-Russell (CV[\[66\]](#)) (2018[\[67\]](#)) (2019[\[68\]](#))

| Educational Qualifications | Professional Experience |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in Sociology, University of Missouri-Columbia • M.A. in Sociology, Western Illinois University • B.A. in Sociology, Western Illinois University • Women in Leadership Certificate, Cornell University | <p>Dr. Villanueva-Russell has nearly thirty years' experience in higher education with ten years of service as an administrator. She has served as an Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Department Head, Assistant Dean, and Associate Dean. Dr. Villanueva-Russell has multiple teaching and service awards. She has also achieved distinction as a Distinguished Global Fellow at A&M-Commerce.</p> |
| Responsibilities | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting as the Chief Executive Officer of the College of Innovation & Design • Supervising and directing the teaching, research and service missions of the College and the University • Making decisions or recommendations regarding budget, curricula, degree offerings, faculty and student recruiting, faculty development/tenure and promotion, fundraising, long range strategic planning, matters of academic quality, promotion of College interests, research planning, and student mentoring for the College | |

Dean of the Graduate School[\[69\]](#)

Dr. Jennifer Schroeder (CV[\[70\]](#)) (2018[\[71\]](#)) (2019[\[72\]](#))

| Educational Qualifications | Professional Experience |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in Educational Psychology, University of Wisconsin-Madison • M.S. in Educational Psychology, University of Wisconsin-Madison • B.S. in Psychology and English, University of Wisconsin-Madison | <p>Dr. Schroeder has worked in higher education since 2004, with an additional six years' experience in public schools. She is licensed by the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists as a Psychologist and Specialist in School Psychology. She is also certified by the National Association of School Psychologists as a Nationally Certified School Psychologist. Her previous positions include Associate Dean, Department Head and Professor, School Psychology Program Coordinator, and Licensed Specialist in School Psychology.</p> |
| Responsibilities | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The promotion, administration, and oversight of all graduate admissions, graduate programs, and instruction, including the Thesis and Dissertation Services • Providing vision, direction and coordination for Graduate School academic programs, | |

initiatives, policies and graduate student recruitment

Associate Provost for Academic Affairs^[73]

Dr. Ricky Dobbs (CV^[74]) (2018^[75]) (2019^[76])

| Educational Qualifications | Professional Experience |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in American History, Texas A&M University • M.A. in History, Baylor University • B.A. in Political Science, Baylor University | <p>Dr. Dobbs has more than twenty years' experience working in higher education—his entire professional career. He has served as an Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, Professor, Department Head, Interim Assistant Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, Dean of the University College, and Associate Vice President for Student Access & Success. Concurrently, he is also serving as the University's SACSCOC Liaison. His work has been published on several occasions, he presents at various conferences on both academic and administrative topics, and he has served as a curriculum reviewer for other institutions.</p> |
| Responsibilities | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading organizations and initiatives that provide academic support and out-of-class learning experiences • Establishes short and long-term goals for each program • Providing insight in the development of policies and procedures for undergraduate programs | |

Dean of the Library^[77]

Ms. Lanee Dunlap (CV^[78]) (2018^[79]) (2019^[80])

| Educational Qualifications | Professional Experience |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M.B.A., Southern Arkansas University • M.S. in Information Science, University of North Texas • B.S. in Marketing, University of Arkansas at Monticello | <p>Ms. Dunlap has worked in collegiate libraries since 1994. She was awarded tenure in 2010, has presented at multiple events and has published multiple articles on a variety of topics. Her previous positions have included Library Academic Technician, Library Supervisor, Assistant Librarian for Access Services, Assistant Librarian for Systems and Electronic Resources, and Head of Technical Services.</p> |
| Responsibilities | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The leadership, planning, service delivery and day-to-day management of the A&M-Commerce Libraries • Working collaboratively with both faculty and administrative leaders across campus to support the mission and vision of the University • Fostering and leading a culture of staff and resource development to support continuous growth and improvement | |

Conclusion

A&M-Commerce continues to retain many of its effective long-term officers while also adding new administrators and academic officers who possess appropriate credentials and requisite experience to provide leadership for the institution. Administrative and academic officers are regularly evaluated in accordance with University and System policies and regulations. The University finds itself in compliance with Standard 5.4.

Section 6 Faculty

6.1 The institution employs an adequate number of full-time faculty members to support the mission and goals of the institution. (*Full-time faculty*) [CR]

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Introduction

The number of full-time faculty members at Texas A&M University-Commerce is adequate to support its mission[1] to Educate, Discover and Achieve. The University's vision is to provide students with a transformative education while advancing knowledge, serving an inclusive community and fostering collaboration across the University and the region. A&M-Commerce faculty members are hired in support of this mission, and the University publishes its strategic priorities and goals[2] to help direct faculty toward this mission.

Organizational Structure of the Institution's Academic Functions

A&M-Commerce's academic organizational structure[3] complements the University's strategic plan and mission statement. Within the academic administration, the academic functions of the University are organized within six academic colleges overseen by deans and organized under the Office of the Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs. Within each of the six colleges, academic programs and their respective faculty are organized within departments under the direction of a department head. The deans, in consultation with department heads and other academic leaders, determine the number of faculty and the distribution of teaching assignments that are needed to support the mission and goals of each program and college. Faculty members are assigned to each of these areas based on their appointment responsibilities.

The mission[4] of the Provost's Office is to provide leadership and guidance to the academic colleges and divisions in the areas of research, instruction, scholarly activity and globalization. It provides primary oversight of requests for new faculty and the monitoring of existing faculty. Decisions regarding the addition of faculty for new or existing programs take into consideration the mission and goals of A&M-Commerce, the strategic goals of the A&M System and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the requirements of external accreditors.

The Faculty Senate is composed of faculty members representing each academic department and serves as the organizational body through which the opinion of the faculty at A&M-Commerce is expressed. It plays a role in originating proposals in addition to considering proposals related to matters that impact faculty adequacy such as tenure and promotion, faculty workload and the approval of curricular, programmatic or administrative changes which may impact the number of faculty needed to fulfill the mission of the University[5].

Faculty Definitions, Roles, and Responsibilities

Faculty Definitions and Roles

Full-time faculty at A&M-Commerce may fall into one of the following categories:

Tenured/Tenure-track: Tenured and tenure-track faculty are hired with the rank of Assistant

Professor, Associate Professor or Professor. The Board of Regents grants tenure based on the recommendation of the president and following guidelines established in The Texas A&M University System Policy 12.01[6] *Academic Freedom, Responsibility and Tenure* and A&M-Commerce Procedures 12.02.99.R0.03[7] *Implementing Faculty Tenure and Promotion* and 12.01.99.R1[8] *Academic Freedom and Responsibility*.

Professional Track: Professional track faculty are hired at the rank of Assistant Professional Track Faculty, Associate Professional Track Faculty and Senior Professional Track Faculty. These faculty members are hired on contract, and appointments are on an annual basis. Guidelines for appointment and promotion of Professional Track faculty are found in A&M System Policy 12.07[9] *Fixed Term Academic Professional Track Faculty* and University Procedure 12.01.99.R0.01[10] *Academic Freedom, Tenure, Promotion and Post Tenure Review*.

Non-Tenure-Track and Clinical Faculty: Non-tenure-track faculty are hired with the rank of Lecturer or Senior Lecturer. These faculty are hired on one-year contracts with contract renewal contingent upon program needs and satisfactory annual evaluations. These appointments are considered “at will” appointments and have no claim to continuing appointment. Guidelines for appointment and promotion of Non-Tenure Track and Clinical Faculty are found in University Procedure 12.01.99.R0.06[11] *Appointment, Reappointment, and Promotion of Non-Tenure Track and Clinical Faculty*.

Ad Interim Faculty: Ad interim appointments are used to fill departmental needs on short notice and are made on a nine or twelve month basis. Guidelines for appointment of Ad interim faculty are found in University Procedure 12.9.99.R0.09[12] *Ad Interim (Exceptional Hire) Faculty Appointments*.

Faculty at A&M-Commerce counted as part-time include the following categories:

Adjunct faculty: Part-time faculty are hired as adjunct faculty; they do not hold academic rank and are not budgeted by name. Appointments are less than half-time teaching only, and adjunct faculty have no expectation of participation in research, scholarly and creative activities (RSCA) or in service as required of full-time faculty. Guidelines for appointment of Adjunct Faculty are found in University Procedure 12.99.99.R0.10[13] *Adjunct Faculty Appointments*.

Graduate Assistants – Teaching: Graduate Assistantships at A&M-Commerce are support positions for teaching, research or other institutional services. Graduate assistants with teaching responsibilities (Graduate Assistants – Teaching) are included in counts of part-time faculty. Guidelines for Graduate Assistantships are found in University Procedure 33.99.08.R0.03[14] *Graduate Assistantships*.

Faculty Responsibilities and Workload

The mission of A&M-Commerce prioritizes teaching as demonstrated by its focus on providing a transformative education that allows students to discover and achieve. To reflect this priority, University Procedure 12.03.99.R1 *Faculty Workload* states that, “teaching loads receive[e] the first priority.”

Faculty members are evaluated on their performance in the areas of teaching/contributions to student learning; research or other scholarly and creative activities (RSCA); and service to the university, profession and community. To be awarded tenure at A&M-Commerce, a faculty member must display excellence in teaching, achievement in scholarly and/or creative contributions to the discipline, and a record of quality service to the university. Non-tenure track, temporary and adjunct faculty have no expectation of RSCA or service as part of their appointment, unless otherwise specified in their appointment letter[15].

In addition to instruction and as part of their contributions to student learning, typical functions carried

out by full-time faculty include development of new courses, laboratories and teaching methods; measurement of the extent to which students meet course objectives or program learning outcomes and using the results to enhance student learning; publication of instructional materials; and supervision of graduate students[16].

Faculty workload is guided by A&M-Commerce Procedure 12.03.99.R1[17] *Faculty Workload*, A&M System Policy 12.03[18] *Faculty Academic Workload and Reporting Requirements* and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's Faculty Workload Policy Guidelines[19]. The faculty workload procedure defines the normal teaching assignment for tenured/tenure-track faculty members as 24 workload credits per academic year. Academic teaching load should not exceed 15 workload credits in any given long semester. For non-tenure-track faculty, teaching is the primary assignment. The normal academic teaching load for non-tenure-track faculty is 30 workload credits per year and should not exceed 18 workload credits in any given long semester. Approval for the assignment of overloads (semester credit hours taught beyond the normal teaching load) is granted by the Office of the Provost and typically reflects situations of increased student demand, response to unexpected circumstances and attention to guidelines associated with programmatic accreditation requirements. The Provost, in consultation with deans and department heads, receives all faculty workload reports, monitors workload to ensure equity and submits final reports[20] to the A&M System Chancellor and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in accordance with Section 51.402[21].

Number of Full-Time Faculty

To reflect the University's prioritization of instruction within its mission to provide a transformative education that allows students to discover and achieve, a review of faculty adequacy to support this mission includes a study of the number of full-time faculty, semester credit hour production by full-time faculty and student/faculty ratios. A review of the percentage and number of full-time faculty receiving release time for non-instructional assignments is also provided to illustrate other work by full-time faculty, which supports the mission and goals of A&M-Commerce.

Total Number of Full-Time Faculty

As reported by the Department of Institutional Effectiveness and Research (IER), A&M-Commerce employed 687 faculty members with teaching assignments in Spring 2019, of which 378 (55%) were full-time and 309 (45%) were part-time. For the same term, undergraduate enrollment totaled 7,436 students and graduate enrollment totaled 3,544 students. In Fall 2019, the University employed 696 faculty with teaching assignments, of which 390 (56%) were full-time and 306 (44%) were part-time. For the same term, undergraduate enrollment totaled 8,324 students and graduate enrollment totaled 3,401 students. It is important to note that the numbers for part-time faculty include 47 graduate teaching assistants in spring 2019 (7% of total faculty) and 33 in fall 2019 (5% of total faculty). The graduate assistants are used to teach labs and introductory-level undergraduate courses. As it can be seen, the University employs a majority of full-time faculty for instruction at both the undergraduate and graduate level. A review of historical data (Table 1) demonstrates current numbers are in line with past trends.

Table 1. Percentage of Full-Time vs. Part-Time Faculty Headcount

| Term | % Full-Time Faculty | % Part-Time Faculty |
|-------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Fall 2019 | 56% | 44% |
| Spring 2019 | 55% | 45% |
| Fall 2018 | 55% | 45% |
| Spring 2018 | 56% | 44% |
| Fall 2017 | 53% | 47% |
| Spring 2017 | 51% | 49% |

Fall 2016

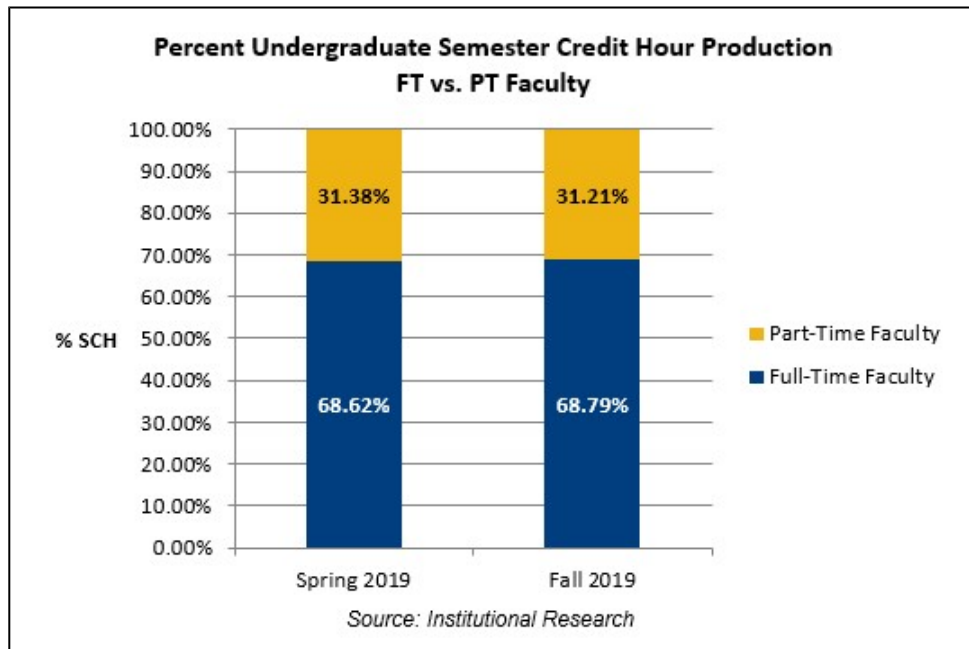
51%

49%

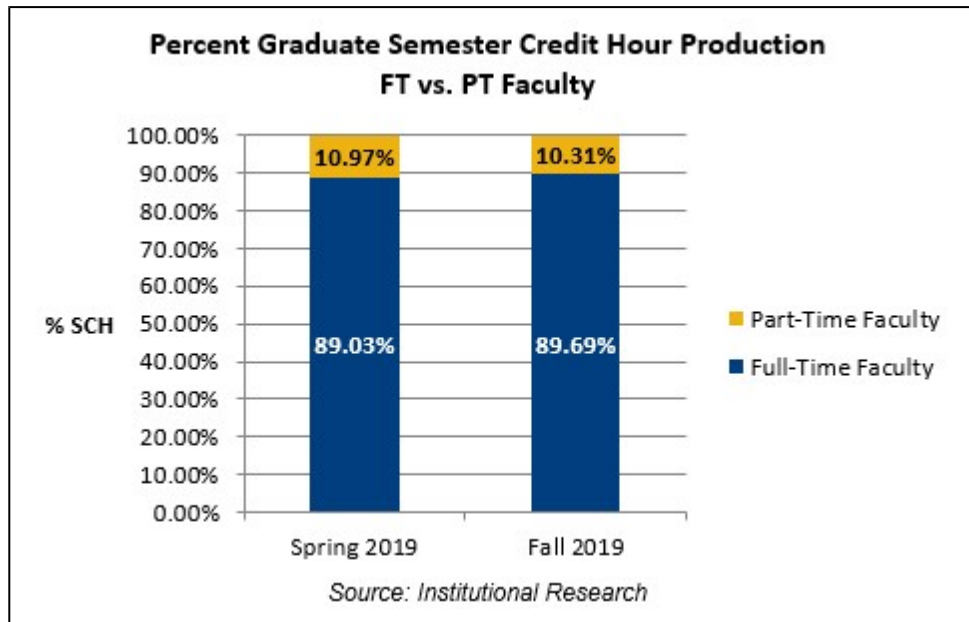
Source: Institutional Research

Full-Time Faculty Student Credit Hour Production

Full-time faculty accounted for almost 70% of undergraduate student semester credit hour (SCH) production in both spring 2019 and fall 2019. The charts below display full-time versus part-time SCH production during this time period.



For graduate courses, full-time faculty accounted for almost 90% of graduate semester credit hour production in both spring 2019 and fall 2019.



As it can be seen, the majority of semester credit hours are produced by full-time faculty. Academic colleges within the University restrict class sizes for graduate teaching assistants, and adjuncts are limited in the number of courses they can teach per term due to federal compensation and benefits rules governing percent time for part-time employees. The higher percentage of graduate semester credit hours taught by full-time faculty reflects the University's prioritization of learning in advanced

coursework. The undergraduate course data includes lower-level core curriculum courses, which are often taught by graduate teaching assistants to equip them with teaching experience as a part of their graduate programs. Utilization of part-time faculty for graduate course instruction, in most cases, represents the selection of instructors with special qualifications valuable to student learning, such as field or professional experience (please see University response under Standard 6.2.b for specific examples).

At the undergraduate level, qualified part-time faculty are also utilized to provide instruction in dual enrollment courses. Part-time faculty produced 62.59% of dual enrollment semester credit hours in spring and 84.84% in fall.

Table 2. Percent Dual Credit Semester Credit Hour Production, FT vs. PT Faculty

| | Number of SCH Taught by FT Faculty | Percent of SCH Taught by FT Faculty | Number of SCH Taught by PT Faculty | Percent of SCH Taught by PT Faculty |
|-------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Spring 2019 | 753 | 37.41% | 1260 | 62.59% |
| Fall 2019 | 432 | 15.16% | 2418 | 84.84% |

Source: Institutional Research

Current numbers for semester credit hours taught by full-time faculty are in line with past trends. The most recent fall 2019 term reflected a strong reliance on full-time faculty for instruction in keeping with and, in some cases, surpassing semester credit hour production by full-time faculty in prior academic terms.

Table 3. Percentage of Semester Credit Hours Taught by Full-Time vs. Part-Time Faculty

| Term | % UG SCH Taught by Full-Time Faculty | % UG SCH Taught by Part-Time Faculty | % G SCH Taught by Full-Time Faculty | % G SCH Taught by Part-Time Faculty |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Fall 2019 | 68.79% | 31.21% | 89.69% | 10.31% |
| Spring 2019 | 68.62% | 31.38% | 89.03% | 10.97% |
| Fall 2018 | 68.54% | 31.46% | 89.14% | 10.86% |
| Spring 2018 | 71.00% | 29.00% | 80.76% | 19.24% |
| Fall 2017 | 68.36% | 31.64% | 82.64% | 17.36% |
| Spring 2017 | 62.42% | 37.58% | 80.23% | 19.77% |
| Fall 2016 | 63.27% | 36.73% | 82.96% | 17.04% |

Source: Institutional Research

Student/Faculty Ratios

Student/Faculty ratios are calculated by dividing Full-Time Student Equivalents (FTSE) by Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) faculty. FTSE are derived by dividing the total number of undergraduate SCH by 15, master's level SCH by 12 and doctoral level SCH by 9. Full Time Equivalent faculty numbers include all FTE faculty, rank codes 1 through 5 (Table 2), with teaching responsibility and reported as instructor of record during the fall semester. Graduate teaching assistants are not used in calculation of Student/Faculty ratios.

Table 4. Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board faculty rank codes

| Faculty Rank | Rank Codes |
|--------------|------------|
| Professor | Code 1 |
| | |

| | |
|--|--------|
| Associate Professor | Code 2 |
| Assistant Professor | Code 3 |
| Instructor (Tenured only) | Code 4 |
| Non-Tenure Track (includes Professional Track, Lecturers, Temporary Full-time and Adjunct) | Code 5 |
| Graduate Assistants | Code 6 |

The table below shows the student/faculty ratio at A&M-Commerce, as reported by IPEDS, from 2015 through 2017 (the most recent term for which data is publicly available) in comparison to Texas public peer institutions (as defined by THECB[22]). The student/faculty ratio at A&M-Commerce has remained steady in recent years and is comparable to that of Texas peer institutions. Steps taken by the University to add faculty lines, such as an athletic fee increase sought in 2017 (described below) are anticipated to contribute to an improved student/faculty ratio in future years.

Table 5.
A&M-Commerce Student/Faculty Ratio Compared to Texas Peer Institutions

| | A&M-Commerce | Texas Public Peer Institutions Average | Large Enrollment Peers Average | Small Enrollment Peers Average |
|-----------|-------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Fall 2017 | 21 | 20 | 19 | 20 |
| Fall 2016 | 21 | 19 | 20 | 19 |
| Fall 2015 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 19 |

Source: IPEDS

Faculty Workload and Non-Instructional Assignments

In addition to instructional responsibilities, full-time faculty perform additional functions which help the University achieve its mission and goals. A review of data for faculty workload assignments for all faculty designated as full-time shows the following distribution of non-instructional assignments for terms spring 2019 and fall 2019, as reported for the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Table 6.
Full-Time Faculty Non-Instructional Appointment Counts and Percentages for Spring 2019 and Fall 2019

| Term | # Total Faculty | Administrative | | Academic Support | | Research | | Public Service, Student Services, Institutional Support, Operation and Maintenance of Plant, Auxiliary Enterprise Operations | |
|-------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|--|--------------------|
| | | # Faculty | % of Total Faculty | # Faculty | % of Total Faculty | # Faculty | % of Total Faculty | # Faculty | % of Total Faculty |
| Spring 2019 | 400 | 69 | 17.25% | 53 | 13.25% | 29 | 7.25% | 3 | 0.75% |
| Fall | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|------|-----|----|--------|----|--------|----|--------|----|-------|
| 2019 | 411 | 67 | 16.30% | 61 | 14.84% | 77 | 18.73% | 18 | 4.38% |
|------|-----|----|--------|----|--------|----|--------|----|-------|

Source: Institutional Research

THECB provides the following definitions for appointment categories[23]:

- Administrative: Administrative assignments which directly supplement the teaching functions, such as heads of teaching departments, coordinator of special programs or multi-section courses, etc. Any other professional assignments which an institution considers to be directly related to the teaching function.
- Academic Support: Academic support assignments include activities in the offices of academic and graduate deans; directors of major teaching department groupings such as colleges, schools, or divisions; and librarians.
- Research: Research assignments include faculty assignments for activities specifically organized to produce research outcomes.
- Public Service, Student Services, Institutional Support, Operation and Maintenance of Plant, Auxiliary Enterprise Operations: Assignments include activities associated with admissions and registration, financial aid, student affairs, executive direction and control, business and fiscal management, personnel, administrative data processing, campus security, purchasing, physical plant administration, and auxiliary enterprise operations.

Other traditional full-time faculty functions, such as preparation for instruction and student advisement, are considered to be part of the faculty member's instructional assignment. In support of the University's primary focus on teaching, instructional activities are the primary assignment for the majority of faculty members. Reassigned time is used to allow a smaller portion of full-time faculty to perform other key functions that support the University's mission and goals. As it can be observed from Table 6 above, 17% of full-time faculty in Spring and 16% of full-time faculty in Fall were utilized for administrative assignments. Similarly, 13% (Spring) and 15% (Fall) were utilized for academic support assignments. Combined, work constituted by these appointment categories represents work that supplements the core teaching mission of the institution and engages full-time faculty in service. Examples include release time granted to serve as department head, program or clinical coordinator or coordinator of assessment.

The percentage of full-time faculty receiving reassigned time for research assignments came to 7% in Spring and 19% in Fall. Research assignments help the University achieve its vision to advance knowledge and provide its faculty with opportunities to establish themselves as scholarly professionals in their individual fields, including the awarding of tenure. Teaching is further informed by research, thus contributing additionally to the quality of instruction within academic disciplines. Examples include reassigned time for scholarly research projects, development of grant proposals and faculty development.

In some cases, full-time faculty are granted release time for assignments in the category of Public Service, Student Services, Institutional Support, Operation and Maintenance of Plant, Auxiliary Enterprise Operations which otherwise contribute to the mission and goals of the institution. These occurrences are more limited but can contribute to the accomplishing of special projects serving other campus operations and support functions, for example, time assigned to work on a Financial Literacy project for the University.

The distribution of workload assignments for full-time faculty demonstrates that A&M-Commerce has adequate full-time faculty to perform not only its primary instructional mission but also other core functions that further support its mission to provide a transformative education that allows students to discover and achieve.

Determining Faculty Numbers and Adequacy

A&M-Commerce seeks to efficiently use its faculty resources to achieve the mission of the institution. In prioritization of instruction, metrics such as semester credit hour production and the student/faculty

ratio are able to provide a consistent picture of adequacy of full-time faculty over time. On-going management of faculty numbers is conducted by the Office of the Provost with attention to enrollment, accreditation and regulatory expectations and student success. As the University's first-time, full-time student numbers grow, full-time faculty are added to departments which serve the Core Curriculum. Additional full-time faculty hires may also be stipulated by external accreditors, such as AACSB accreditation for programs within the College of Business or State Board of Nursing requirements for programs in Nursing. Under the direction of academic deans, department heads are tasked with creation and monitoring of course schedules designed to provide a stable rotation of courses to meet the needs of students and to maximize instruction by full-time faculty. Part-time faculty are used to maintain manageable class sizes, allow for the offering of courses to meet course rotation needs and to ensure off-site instructional locations are able to fulfill their obligations to students.

A&M-Commerce has taken steps in recent years to respond to concerns regarding faculty adequacy and faculty workload. Beginning in 2009, the Budget Review and Development Council (BRDC) worked to best utilize available and newly realized funds for improvement across the University. The BRDC made frequent recommendations concerning addition of new faculty positions. The work of the BRDC resulted in funding of eighteen new positions over the 2014-2017 fiscal years. Furthermore, the recommendation and approval[24] of an athletic fee increase in 2017 provided additional funding for twenty-two new faculty lines[25]. As managed by the Office of the Provost, these additional monies have been used to support instruction by full-time faculty in areas such as developmental math and departments with heavy core curriculum involvement.

The University has recently re-visited its workload policy, resulting in a new rule approved in Spring of 2020 and now currently in place. Under the new workload policy[26], the normal expected teaching load for a tenured/tenure-track faculty member is four courses per semester, with each course representing 20% of workload. If there are no research or service expectations, a full workload is defined as 100% teaching or five courses taught per semester. A faculty member may receive workload credit for designated administrative, research or service assignments. Departments develop workload plans that define minimum expectations and establish parameters that set overload criteria. Through the revised guidelines, the combination of teaching, conducting research and performing service are incorporated into faculty workload expectations, thus empowering departments to further address workload and better reward traditional full-time faculty functions within evaluation processes, such as academic program supervision, curriculum development and participation in research and shared governance. With clarified expectations, the University is better positioned to manage teaching assignments as they relate to workload and the utilization of full-time faculty to support the mission and goals of the institution.

Conclusion

Texas A&M University-Commerce employs a sufficient number of full-time faculty to support its mission and goals and demonstrates compliance with Core Requirement 6.1. Deans and department heads, under the direction of the Office of the Provost, monitor full-time faculty numbers and workload. Current levels of semester credit hour production by full-time faculty compare favorably with prior years, and the Office of the Provost has put measures into place to ensure institutional resources for an adequate number of full-time faculty.

- 6.2.b** For each of its educational programs, the institution employs a sufficient number of full-time faculty members to ensure curriculum and program quality, integrity, and review. *(Program faculty)*

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Introduction

Texas A&M University-Commerce employs a sufficient number of full-time faculty members to ensure curriculum and program quality, integrity and review for each of its educational programs. Roles and

responsibilities assigned to both full-time and part-time faculty appropriately deliver academic programs at the main campus, off-site teaching locations and through an online delivery mode.

Oversight and Organization of Academic Programs

Educational programs at A&M-Commerce are organized[1] within six academic colleges overseen by deans and organized under the Office of the Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs. Within each of the six colleges, academic programs and their respective faculty are organized within departments under the direction of a department head. The deans, in consultation with department heads and other academic leaders, determine the number of faculty and the distribution of teaching assignments needed to support the mission and goals of each program and college. Faculty members are assigned to each of these areas based on their appointment responsibilities. The Office of the Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs provides further oversight of requests for new faculty and the monitoring of existing faculty. Decisions regarding the addition of faculty for new or existing programs take into consideration factors such as the requirements of external accreditors, the strategic goals of the A&M System and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and the mission and goals of A&M-Commerce.

An academic department typically holds two to five degree programs or major areas of study but may include more. The University follows definitions for academic programs and degrees as outlined by THECB, where an academic program is defined as an “instructional program leading toward an associate’s, bachelor’s, master’s, doctor’s, or first-professional degree or resulting in credits that can be applied to one of these degrees[2].” A list of degree programs offered by A&M-Commerce is provided in the Institutional Summary Form and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board’s Program Inventory[3]. A list of the University’s academic departments and degree programs as of the 2019-20 academic year, by college, is also provided[4] in evidence documentation.

Faculty Responsibilities for Curriculum and Program Quality, Integrity and Review

Full-time faculty at A&M-Commerce include the following categories: Tenured/Tenure-track; Professional track; Non-Tenure track and Clinical Faculty; Ad Interim Faculty. Part-time faculty at A&M-Commerce include those with teaching responsibilities of less than half-time teaching only and include the following categories: Adjunct Faculty, Graduate Assistant-Teaching (GAT). A full review of faculty definitions and roles is included under the narrative response for Core Requirement 6.1.

The mission of A&M-Commerce prioritizes teaching as demonstrated by its focus on providing a transformative education which allows students to discover and achieve. To reflect this priority, University Procedure *12.03.99.R1 Faculty Workload* states that, “teaching loads receiv[e] the first priority.”

Faculty members are evaluated on their performance in the areas of teaching/contributions to student learning; research or other scholarly and creative activities (RSCA); and service to the University, profession and community. To be awarded tenure at A&M-Commerce, a faculty member must display excellence in teaching, achievement in scholarly and/or creative contributions to the discipline, and a record of quality service to the University. Non-tenure track, temporary and adjunct faculty have no expectation of RSCA or service as part of their appointment, unless otherwise specified in their appointment letter[5]. Examples of appointment letters are provided in evidence documentation – Tenure Track Example[6]; Non-Tenure Track Example[7].

Responsibility for curriculum and program quality, integrity and review resides with the full-time faculty, working under the direction of deans and qualified department heads. University procedure *12.99.99.R0.08[8] Academic Department Heads and Program Coordinator Appointment and Responsibilities* outlines the responsibilities of academic department heads for curriculum and program quality, integrity, and review which include “reviewing existing programs for relevancy, initiating curriculum development when needed, developing new programs as the market requirements change, and maintaining program quality at all levels.” The procedure further outlines the responsibilities of program coordinators[9], when utilized. Faculty in these roles oversee the work of full-time faculty to

ensure program quality, integrity and review for all programs, including those offered in an online delivery mode or at an off-site location.

Working under the direction of department heads, full-time faculty are charged with primary responsibilities for teaching and contributions to student learning[10], which may include classroom and laboratory instruction; development of new courses, laboratories and teaching methods; measurement of the extent to which students meet course objectives or program learning outcomes and using the results to enhance student learning; publication of instructional materials; and supervision of graduate students.

Adjunct faculty and graduate assistants with teaching responsibilities work under the oversight of full-time faculty. Faculty providing instruction for online programs and programs delivered at off-campus locations are governed by the same policies and procedures applying to faculty providing instruction at the main Commerce campus.

Sufficiency of Full-Time Faculty for Academic Programs

Full-Time Faculty Student Credit Hour Production for Academic Programs

The sufficiency of full-time faculty for A&M-Commerce's academic programs can be demonstrated by a review of program delivery (number of semester credit hours, SCH, generated) by full-time versus part-time faculty by discipline, as documented in Tables 1 and 2 below for terms spring 2019 and fall 2019. Faculty data at the institution is maintained and reported at the departmental level. Programs represented in Tables 1 and 2 are aggregated within departments and data is reported under the department in which the program is housed. Semester credit hour production is reported here separately for undergraduate and graduate programs. Data for undergraduate semester credit hours includes content-specific courses for the major but excludes general education courses taught as part of the University's Core Curriculum[11] and includes all courses taught in all delivery modes and at all off-site instructional locations.

Table 1.
Number and Percent of Undergraduate Semester Credit
Hour Generation by Full-Time and Part-Time Faculty

| Discipline | Spring 2019 | | | | Fall 2019 | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|
| | # of UG SCH taught by Full-Time Faculty | Full-Time UG % taught | # of UG SCH taught by Part-Time Faculty | Part-Time UG % taught | # of UG SCH taught by Full-Time Faculty | Full-Time UG % taught | # of UG SCH taught by Part-Time Faculty | Part-Time UG % taught |
| Accounting* (Spring only) | 1674 | 83.53 | 330 | 16.47 | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Accounting and Finance* (Fall only) | -- | -- | -- | -- | 2610 | 81.69 | 585 | 18.31 |
| Ag Science & Natural Resources | 1996 | 77.82 | 569 | 22.18 | 2454 | 85.39 | 420 | 14.61 |
| Applied Sciences* (Spring only) | 1281 | 81.02 | 300 | 18.98 | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Art | 1001 | 53.22 | 880 | 46.78 | 1088 | 51.88 | 1009 | 48.12 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|------|--------|------|-------|------|--------|------|-------|
| Biological & Environmental Sciences | 1952 | 87.93 | 268 | 12.07 | 2026 | 83.48 | 401 | 16.52 |
| Chemistry | 605 | 95.88 | 26 | 4.12 | 807 | 91.91 | 71 | 8.09 |
| College of Innovation and Design* (Fall only) | -- | -- | -- | -- | 3426 | 58.65 | 2415 | 41.35 |
| Computer Science & Info Sys | 1664 | 96.30 | 64 | 3.70 | 3107 | 88.07 | 421 | 11.93 |
| Curriculum and Instruction | 4146 | 69.87 | 1788 | 30.13 | 4683 | 69.69 | 2037 | 30.31 |
| Economics and Finance* (Spring only) | 1929 | 86.66 | 297 | 13.34 | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Engineering & Technology | 2212 | 100.00 | 0 | .00 | 2267 | 100.00 | 0 | .00 |
| Health & Human Performance | 3417 | 75.26 | 1123 | 24.74 | 3855 | 76.05 | 1214 | 23.95 |
| Higher Edu & Learning Technology | 1095 | 39.80 | 1656 | 60.20 | 360 | 62.18 | 219 | 37.82 |
| History | 555 | 100.00 | 0 | .00 | 501 | 100.00 | 0 | .00 |
| Liberal Studies | 177 | 73.75 | 63 | 26.25 | 156 | 69.33 | 69 | 30.67 |
| Literature & Languages | 1293 | 76.69 | 393 | 23.31 | 1489 | 78.74 | 402 | 21.26 |
| Management* (Spring only) | 3480 | 85.23 | 603 | 14.77 | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Management & Economics* (Fall only) | -- | -- | -- | -- | 4854 | 86.52 | 756 | 13.48 |
| Marketing & Business Analytics | 2190 | 83.33 | 438 | 16.67 | 2952 | 87.70 | 414 | 12.30 |
| Mathematics | 1727 | 84.82 | 309 | 15.18 | 1564 | 75.01 | 521 | 24.99 |
| Music | 1086 | 44.60 | 1349 | 55.40 | 1488 | 54.59 | 1238 | 45.41 |
| Nursing | 761 | 86.67 | 117 | 13.33 | 644 | 68.00 | 303 | 32.00 |
| Physics and Astronomy | 646 | 57.83 | 471 | 42.17 | 615 | 54.81 | 507 | 45.19 |
| Political Science | 543 | 75.42 | 177 | 24.58 | 525 | 70.56 | 219 | 29.44 |
| Psychology & | 2999 | 68.67 | 1368 | 31.33 | 2391 | 62.48 | 1436 | 37.52 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|
| Special Ed | | | | | | | | |
| Social Work | 888 | 66.97 | 438 | 33.03 | 900 | 49.42 | 921 | 50.58 |
| Sociology & Criminal Justice | 1117 | 42.23 | 1528 | 57.77 | 1276 | 46.23 | 1484 | 53.77 |
| Theatre | 399 | 78.24 | 111 | 21.76 | 426 | 86.59 | 66 | 13.41 |

*Notes departments created or reorganized in that term.

Source: Institutional Research

Table 2.
Number and Percent of Graduate Semester Credit Hour
Generation by Full-Time and Part-Time Faculty

| Discipline | Spring 2019 | | | | Fall 2019 | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|---|-----------------------|
| | # of GR SCH taught by Full-Time Faculty | Full-Time GR % taught | # of GR SCH taught by Part-Time Faculty | Part-Time GR % taught | # of GR SCH taught by Full-Time Faculty | Full-Time GR % taught | # of GR SCH taught by Part-Time Faculty | Part-Time GR % taught |
| Accounting* (Spring only) | 2352 | 94.23 | 144 | 5.77 | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Accounting and Finance* (Fall only) | -- | -- | -- | -- | 2988 | 89.81 | 339 | 10.19 |
| Ag Science & Natural Resources | 295 | 92.48 | 24 | 7.52 | 238 | 78.03 | 67 | 21.97 |
| Art | 98 | 62.03 | 60 | 37.97 | 126 | 71.19 | 51 | 28.81 |
| Biological & Environmental Sciences | 326 | 98.19 | 6 | 1.81 | 364 | 99.18 | 3 | .82 |
| Chemistry | 117 | 100.00 | 0 | .00 | 83 | 98.81 | 1 | 1.19 |
| Computer Science & Info Sys | 1126 | 76.70 | 342 | 23.30 | 953 | 76.06 | 300 | 23.94 |
| Counseling | 985 | 82.22 | 213 | 17.78 | 1082 | 92.56 | 87 | 7.44 |
| Curriculum and Instruction | 1479 | 83.00 | 303 | 17.00 | 1464 | 88.57 | 189 | 11.43 |
| Economics and Finance* (Spring only) | 2193 | 97.73 | 51 | 2.27 | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Educational Leadership | 1332 | 94.47 | 78 | 5.53 | 1287 | 84.62 | 234 | 15.38 |
| Engineering & Technology | 276 | 100.00 | 0 | .00 | 126 | 100.00 | 0 | .00 |
| Health & Human | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------|--------|-----|-------|------|--------|-----|-------|
| Performance | 418 | 93.30 | 30 | 6.70 | 589 | 99.49 | 3 | .51 |
| Higher Edu & Learning Technology | 1314 | 84.88 | 234 | 15.12 | 1131 | 77.89 | 321 | 22.11 |
| History | 171 | 100.00 | 0 | .00 | 99 | 100.00 | 0 | .00 |
| Literature & Languages | 861 | 99.65 | 3 | .35 | 870 | 99.66 | 3 | .34 |
| Management* (Spring only) | 1263 | 94.82 | 69 | 5.18 | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| Management & Economics* (Fall only) | -- | -- | -- | -- | 2754 | 96.39 | 103 | 3.61 |
| Marketing & Business Analytics | 2079 | 98.86 | 24 | 1.14 | 1878 | 98.48 | 29 | 1.52 |
| Mathematics | 153 | 100.00 | 0 | .00 | 194 | 98.48 | 3 | 1.52 |
| Music | 105 | 70.00 | 45 | 30.00 | 135 | 87.10 | 20 | 12.90 |
| Nursing | 239 | 90.87 | 24 | 9.13 | 249 | 87.37 | 36 | 12.63 |
| Physics and Astronomy | 182 | 89.66 | 21 | 10.34 | 196 | 89.09 | 24 | 10.91 |
| Political Science | 27 | 90.00 | 3 | 10.00 | 21 | 100.00 | 0 | .00 |
| Psychology & Special Education | 675 | 92.98 | 51 | 7.02 | 739 | 91.80 | 66 | 8.20 |
| Social Work | 762 | 64.30 | 423 | 35.70 | 846 | 89.24 | 102 | 10.76 |
| Sociology & Criminal Justice | 396 | 70.59 | 165 | 29.41 | 288 | 80.67 | 69 | 19.33 |
| Theatre | 63 | 63.64 | 36 | 36.36 | 51 | 36.96 | 87 | 63.04 |

*Notes departments created or reorganized in that term.

Source: Institutional Research

For the time period in review, full-time faculty taught a high percentage of all programs offered at A&M-Commerce. In 21 out of 26 departments with academic programs, 60% or more of the undergraduate semester credit hours during spring 2019 were taught by full-time faculty. Similar results are shown in fall 2019 with 19 of 25 using full-time faculty to teach 60% or more of undergraduate SCH. Graduate programs for the same terms demonstrated an even higher reliance on full-time faculty. In 21 out of 26 departments with academic programs 75% or more of the graduate semester credit hours during spring 2019 were taught by full-time faculty. For fall 2019, 23 out of 25 used full-time faculty to teach 75% or more of graduate SCH.

Some areas of inconsistency were noted for undergraduate and graduate programs, as will be described below.

- **Art.** Utilization of full-time faculty in Art programs is influenced by the nature of instruction in Studio Art, which offers small class sizes taught by full-time faculty in a variety of studio areas and limits the number of students that can enroll in any given section. As a result, part-time faculty are relied upon to teach sections of larger lecture courses which generate more semester credit hours. During the spring 2019 semester, the departure of a full-time faculty member on

development leave contributed to a lower percentage of instruction by full-time faculty, as adjuncts were utilized to cover these duties. Furthermore, the Visual Communications (BFA and MA/MFA) offered at the off-site location Universities Center in Dallas-EI Centro offers students the benefit of access to internships and employment opportunities in their field in the downtown Dallas area as well as instruction by qualified adjunct faculty with experience in the field. Full-time faculty teaching at the EI Centro location are prioritized for instruction in studio, internship and practicum courses which serve smaller class sizes, thus contributing to a higher number of semester credit hours produced by part-time faculty in some cases.

- **Higher Education and Learning Technologies and the College of Innovation and Design.** In spring of 2019, the Department of Higher Education and Learning Technologies housed the University's competency-based Applied Arts & Sciences – Organizational Leadership (BAAS) degree program which is delivered in a 100% online delivery mode. Semester credit hour generation by full-time faculty for programs within the department amounted to 39.8% for the same term. The undergraduate ORGL program is delivered on its philosophical and practical tenets associated with competency-based education (CBE). Part-time adjunct instructors work in conjunction with regular full-time faculty possessing expertise in CBE and organizational leadership in order to ensure rigor, consistency and improvement. Full-time faculty members oversee decision making related to curriculum development, curriculum revisions and improvements and assessment. Part-time faculty teaching within the program work with a master syllabus for each course provided by full-time faculty. Additionally, the program benefits from part-time instructors who also hold full-time staff roles at the University and are available to provide additional programmatic support. Three out of twelve part-time faculty for spring 2019 represent full-time employees of the University. Beginning with fall 2019, the ORGL program was moved to be administratively housed within the newly created College of Innovation and Design. The College of Innovation and Design was created as an administrative unit^[12] beginning with academic year 2019-2020 and will consolidate administration of the University's degree completion and competency-based programs. This organizational change will enable the new position of Dean of the College of Innovation and Design to further monitor and allocate resources for the programs, including the hiring and assignment of full-time faculty. The University is taking steps to create independent faculty lines dedicated to the CID, whereas before, faculty teaching within the BAAS-Organizational Leadership competency-based program were shared with other programs in its originating department. Semester credit hour generation by full-time faculty for CID programs, including ORGL, in fall 2019 came to 58.65%.
- **Music.** In the case of the Department of Music, the highly specialized nature of instruction within the Music MM and Music BA/BM programs requires utilization of part-time faculty with qualifications more specialized, in some cases, than those of the programs' full-time faculty. Full-time music faculty are reserved for instruction in high-impact areas, such as large studios, ensemble direction and the core music curriculum. In 2018-2019 the department experienced an increase in part-time instruction in the core music curriculum due to the reassignment of one of two full-time theory faculty from a full teaching load to department head duties with a reduced teaching load. This resulted in a temporary increase in part-time instruction in an area that accounts for much of the total semester hour production. Semester credit hour generation by full-time faculty rose from 44.6% in spring to 54.59% the following fall at the undergraduate level and from 70% to 87.1% at the graduate level. The full-time faculty continue to exercise oversight of curriculum and instruction in the department, and student progress is assessed each semester by panels of full-time faculty in performance juries.
- **Physics and Astronomy.** Courses for the undergraduate Physics major are taught by full-time faculty. Qualified part-time faculty are primarily utilized by the department to teach Integrated Science courses offered in service of teacher preparation academic programs housed within the College of Education and Human Services. These courses are often offered at the University's off-site instructional locations, such as the Collin Higher Education Center and the Mesquite Metroplex, and benefit from being taught by adjunct faculty currently teaching in secondary education environments near the location. For the terms spring 2019 and fall 2019, full-time faculty taught 92% and 86%, respectively, of undergraduate semester credit hours offered face-to-face at the main campus.
- **Social Work.** In fall 2019, undergraduate semester credit hour production by full-time faculty in the BSW Social Work program totaled 49.42%, in part reflecting BSW students enrolled in a Field

Instruction course in that term weighted with six credit hours instead of three to reflect the requirement of increased contact hours in an agency setting. There is not an increase in the number of students for these courses, only in those credit hours generated (SWK 426). 66.97% of undergraduate SCH was produced by full-time faculty in the preceding spring. The School of Social Work has sufficient full-time faculty within the department to meet the needs of both the BSW and MSW programs. Council on Social Work Education mandates release time for the Director of Field Education, BSW Director and MSW Director to allow them the time and focus to engage in curriculum design, assessment of student learning outcomes and student advising, along with research and service. Additionally, CSWE mandates specific faculty-to-student ratios (1:25 for BSW and 1:12 for MSW). To ensure quality programming for students, adjuncts who are active practitioners in the field are employed to primarily provide field instruction in both BSW and MSW programs, allowing the department to leverage full-time faculty to teach core content courses and engage in program development.

- **Sociology & Criminal Justice.** Full-time faculty within the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice are shared by both the Criminal Justice and Sociology programs, and their assignment is prioritized for face-to-face undergraduate courses taught at the main Commerce campus as well as for graduate-level online courses serving the department's two fully online graduate programs. Full-time faculty are centrally located there and available for functions such as meeting with students and overseeing the program curriculum. For undergraduate programs in Criminal Justice and Sociology, full-time faculty are prioritized for assignment of required major core and support courses, such as CJ 320 and 326 or SOC 335 and 485. Adjuncts are utilized primarily to teach electives or courses in disciplines for which they hold a terminal degree. The Sociology (MS) program is taught exclusively by full-time faculty. The Applied Criminology (MS) program is characterized by a unique mix of academic and "applied" scholarship. Qualified adjuncts with experience in the field are utilized by the program to provide a unique curriculum for students, especially those in specialized tracks, such as Administrative or Homeland Security tracks. For further oversight of program quality, the Applied Criminology program's core and capstone courses are predominately taught by full-time faculty, and comprehensive exams are only graded by full-time faculty. The department has recently hired two additional full-time Sociology and two additional full-time Criminal Justice faculty members (one each in terms spring 2019 and fall 2019) to replace retired and previously unfilled positions and expects this to result in an increase of instruction by full-time faculty. Further, the online Criminal Justice (BS) program has adopted a degree track offered in a competency-based format which has been moved beginning with the 2019-2020 academic year to be administratively housed within the newly created College of Innovation and Design. This organizational change will enable the new position of Dean of the College of Innovation and Design to further monitor and allocate resources for competency-based programs, including the hiring and assignment of full-time faculty.
- **Theatre.** In fall 2019, 36.96% of total graduate semester credit hours were generated by full-time faculty. This represents 100% full-time faculty instruction at the main campus (51 total SCH) and 100% part-time faculty instruction online (87 total SCH). Part-time faculty in this term were utilized for instruction in survey courses offered in an online delivery mode (for example, THE 597 Survey of Musical Theatre) while full-time faculty were prioritized for face-to-face instruction in more applied courses (for example, THE 515 Scenic Design) and to be available on campus for meetings with students in the graduate program.

For additional review of semester credit hour generation by full-time faculty disaggregated for Core Curriculum, delivery mode and location, please see Table 3[13] provided in the evidence documentation.

A&M-Commerce employs a sufficient number of full-time faculty members to ensure curriculum and program quality, integrity and review for all of its academic programs. A high percentage of semester credit hours in each program are taught by full-time faculty members. As described above, in cases where part-time faculty are more heavily utilized, this often reflects disciplinary considerations for instruction by professionals active in the field (e.g., Music and Art). In other cases, the University is taking active steps to reduce reliance on part-time faculty (e.g., BAAS-Organizational Leadership).

Part-time faculty at off-campus locations are often employed to teach support courses for a degree

program offered at the location. For example, support courses from the departments of Physics and Astronomy and Theatre, which serve the BAIS/BSIS Interdisciplinary Studies program for teacher preparation, offered at multiple off-campus locations. (Departments offering courses but not programs at each location are noted on Table 3). In other cases, part-time faculty are utilized at these sites because of the benefits their professional experience working within the community of the location brings to students. This is true in the case of Art programs offered at the Universities Center at Dallas – El Centro location in downtown Dallas, which benefit from adjunct faculty working in the visual communications industry. Similarly, the Department of Curriculum and Instruction's Art of Teaching (MED) program at El Centro serves a community of students in the Texas Teacher Residency program which follows a cohort model and employs qualified adjunct faculty with experience in the field and who often work full-time in area school districts.

The University views online instruction as supportive of its mission, primarily through that modality's ability to promote greater access for students. Quality of online offerings, courses and programs is assured through faculty control over the curriculum and content. As shown in Table 3, online modality in core curriculum disciplines typically involves the use of part-time faculty in a manner akin to their utilization in face-to-face modality. They follow departmental guidance and student learning outcomes, and their students' performance is assessed through the University's core curriculum assessment process to ensure quality. Those academic programs leading to a degree, graduate and undergraduate, which have been approved for delivery 50% or more online have committed themselves through the internal curriculum change approval process to use full-time faculty in support of those online offerings. For example, 100% of online undergraduate courses in the Technology Management (BS) program were taught by full-time faculty in both spring and fall semester. Similarly, 99% of semester credit hours for online graduate programs in Marketing and Business Analytics were taught by full-time faculty in both spring and fall.

All programs, whether offered on the main campus, off-site or online, operate under the oversight of academic department heads (and program coordinators, where applicable), who provide further assurance of quality through careful vetting of syllabi and instructor credentials. Department heads and program coordinators further monitor assessment of student learning, stay current in their fields and then utilize current knowledge and data to engage in continuous improvement.

Faculty Workload and Non-Instructional Assignments

The faculty workload procedure defines the normal teaching assignment for tenured/tenure-track faculty members as 24 workload credits per academic year. Academic teaching load should not exceed 15 workload credits in any given long semester. For non-tenure-track faculty, teaching is the primary assignment. The normal academic teaching load for non-tenure-track faculty is 30 workload credits per year and should not exceed 18 workload credits in any given long semester. Faculty workload is guided by A&M-Commerce rule *12.03.99.R1*[14] *Faculty Workload*, A&M System Policy *12.03*[15] *Faculty Academic Workload and Reporting Requirements*, and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's *Faculty Workload Policy Guidelines*[16]. Approval for the assignment of overloads (semester credit hours taught beyond the normal teaching load) is granted by the Office of the Provost and often reflects situations of increased student demand, response to unexpected circumstances and attention to guidelines associated with programmatic accreditation requirements. The Provost[17], in consultation with deans and department heads, receives all faculty workload reports, monitors workload to ensure equity and submits final reports to the A&M System Chancellor and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in accordance with Section 51.402[18].

Workload assignments are the primary responsibility of the academic unit and its department or college head. In order to accommodate disciplinary, departmental and college differences, each college determines faculty load practices that follow guidelines established by the University policy.

In addition to instructional responsibilities, full-time faculty are also utilized for other assignments, which contribute to curriculum and program quality, integrity and review. Table 4[19], provided in evidence documentation, shows the distribution of non-instructional assignments for all faculty designated as full-time for terms spring 2019 and fall 2019, organized by department. Programs represented in Table

4 are aggregated within departments and data is reported under the department in which the program is housed.

THECB provides the following definitions for appointment categories[20]:

- Administrative: Administrative assignments which directly supplement the teaching functions, such as heads of teaching departments, coordinator of special programs or multi-section courses, etc. Any other professional assignments which an institution considers to be directly related to the teaching function.
- Academic Support: Academic support assignments include activities in the offices of academic and graduate deans; directors of major teaching department groupings such as colleges, schools, or divisions; and librarians.
- Research: Research assignments include faculty assignments for activities specifically organized to produce research outcomes.
- Public Service, Student Services, Institutional Support, Operation and Maintenance of Plant, Auxiliary Enterprise Operations: Assignments include activities associated with admissions and registration, financial aid, student affairs, executive direction and control, business and fiscal management, personnel, administrative data processing, campus security, purchasing, physical plant administration, and auxiliary enterprise operations.

A review of non-instructional assignments for full-time faculty across departments shows how this reassigned time supports program quality, though ensuring proper oversight of programs by full-time faculty in administrative and academic support capacities. For example, note that Educational Leadership's release of most of its full-time faculty for academic support is intended to ensure quality of its doctoral programs by releasing faculty from teaching expectations in order to fulfill dissertation advising and supervision functions. Similarly, the doctoral program in English within Literature and Languages is also supported by research release time for roughly 40% of its full-time faculty. Curriculum and Instruction's use of release time for administrative purposes reflects the sheer number of academic programs within this department requiring attention and leadership. Most of these are undergraduate EC-6 teacher preparation tracks requiring careful management not only of course quality, but also of the student experiential element attached to teacher training.

The University has recently re-visited its workload policy, resulting in a new rule approved in Spring of 2020 and now currently in place. Under the new workload policy[21], the normal expected teaching load for a tenured/tenure-track faculty member is four courses per semester, with each course representing 20% of workload. If there are no research or service expectations, a full workload is defined as 100% teaching or five courses taught per semester. A faculty member may receive workload credit for designated administrative, research or service assignments. Departments develop workload plans that define minimum expectations and establish parameters that set overload criteria. Through the revised guidelines, the combination of teaching, conducting research and performing service are incorporated into faculty workload expectations, thus empowering departments to further address workload and better reward traditional full-time faculty functions within evaluation processes, such as academic program supervision, curriculum development and participation in research and shared governance. Primary responsibility and authority for assigning workload credit resides with the academic department heads, thereby keeping these important decisions as close to the point of connection with the student. This ensures that the distribution of non-instructional assignments best reflects the needs of each program. College deans weigh in on releases, but do so with the recognition of the instructional needs and programmatic priorities of the college as a whole. With clarified expectations, the University is better positioned to manage teaching assignments as they relate to workload and the utilization of full-time faculty to support curriculum and program quality, integrity and review for each of its educational programs.

Conclusion

A review of semester credit hour production by full-time and part-time faculty demonstrates that A&M-Commerce has a sufficient number of full-time faculty to ensure curriculum and program quality, integrity and review for each of its educational programs. Qualified part-time faculty are appropriately

utilized to serve instructional needs and work under the oversight of full-time faculty and academic administrators. Teaching assignments and workload are managed by academic deans and department heads under the direction of the Provost to adequately meet both internal and external requirements. A&M-Commerce takes necessary steps to address concerns with sufficiency of full-time faculty, should they arise. As such, the University finds itself in compliance with Standard 6.2.b.

- 6.2.c** For each of its educational programs, the institution assigns appropriate responsibility for program coordination. (*Program coordination*)

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Introduction

Texas A&M University-Commerce assigns responsibility for program coordination for all undergraduate and graduate degree programs to persons academically qualified in the field. Responsibilities and qualifications for program coordination are governed by 12.99.99.R0.08, *Academic Department Head and Program Coordinator Appointment and Responsibilities*[1].

Process and Requirements

Primary program responsibility is placed with the department head. As described in 12.99.99.R0.08, *Academic Department Head and Program Coordinator Appointment and Responsibilities*, 1.3.2, department head academic program responsibilities include "reviewing existing programs for relevancy, initiating curriculum development when needed, developing new programs as the market requirements change, and maintaining program quality at all levels[2]". In departments with numerous programs, department heads are given freedom to place program coordination with faculty with strong subject matter expertise. If a program coordinator is not designated, the department head serves as the program coordinator.

Department heads may be selected as the result of either an internal or external search. Department heads must hold a Ph.D., Ed.D. or other terminal degree appropriate to the discipline and possess an excellent record of academic leadership; teaching effectiveness; evidence of scholarly or artistic achievement; verbal and written communication skills; interpersonal skills and professional service commensurate with departmental tenure standards. The appointment of the department head is completed through: 1) a departmental recommendation to the dean, 2) the dean's recommendation to the provost, and 3) the provost's recommendation to the president, who has responsibility for final approval. The deans at A&M-Commerce are selected by the provost and president based on their academic credentials and administrative qualifications. Deans provide direction and oversight for the academic programs of their colleges. The deans' qualifications are reviewed under the University's response to Standard 5.4.

The department head may appoint a faculty member to serve as program coordinator for one or more academic programs. All candidates for the position of program coordinator should hold a graduate degree in the discipline involved. As appropriate, candidates should also possess an excellent record of academic leadership; teaching effectiveness; evidence of scholarly or artistic achievement; verbal and written communication skills; interpersonal skills and professional service.

Department Heads and Program Coordinators

Academic departments function as basic organizational units within the colleges and are administered by department heads. An academic department typically has two to five degree programs or major areas of study, but may include more. Department heads are responsible for program coordination within their departments. Department heads work under the supervision of the college dean and

function as liaisons between departmental faculty and the dean. The general responsibilities of a department head include various duties related to academic program planning and coordination, curriculum development and review and program maintenance and evaluation.

A program coordinator, when utilized, reports to the department head in which the program is housed and serves as a liaison to the program faculty. The responsibilities of program coordinators may vary from department to department. Major responsibilities include providing direction of academic programs; serving as the public spokesperson and representative for the program; collaborating with the department head to ensure a self-perpetuating advisory board for the program; leading the program in setting goals and conducting assessment; promoting the attainment of program, college and university goals; submitting a review of the program's annual report to the department head; overseeing teaching and advising for the program; working with adjunct faculty; providing administrative support for programs/projects; developing funding proposals and preparing program materials[3].

The following presents a roster of department heads and program coordinators and their respective educational qualifications. Curriculum vitas for the department heads and program coordinators are provided as supporting documentation and linked to in the tables below for further review of qualifications. Programs with designated program coordinators are listed. In all other cases, responsibilities for program coordination are assigned to the department head, in accordance with 12.99.99.R0.08, *Academic Department Head and Program Coordinator Appointment and Responsibilities*. All information is included as of the academic semester spring 2020.

College of Business (COB)

| Name and Educational Qualifications | Title | Programs |
|---|---------------------------|--|
| James Hamill[4] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ph.D in Business Administration: Major area coursework in Accounting, minor area in Finance | Department Head | Accounting BBA Accounting MSA Finance BBA Finance MSF |
| Alma Mintu-Wimsatt[5] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ph.D. in Business Administration: Major Field in Marketing | Department Head (Interim) | Business Analytics BBA Business Analytics MS Marketing BBA Marketing MS |
| Alex Williams[6] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ph.D. in Management | Department Head (Interim) | Business Administration BS Business Administration MBA General Business BBA Management BBA Management MS |

College of Education and Human Services (COEHS)

Department Heads

| Name and Educational Qualifications | Title | Department/School |
|---|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Jennifer Dyer[7] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ph.D. in Integrated Teaching & Learning: Early Childhood | Department Head | Curriculum & Instruction |

| | | |
|---|-----------------|--|
| <p>David Tan[8]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration <p>Dr. Tan has extensive administrative and teaching experience with learning management systems; instructional evaluation and development using technology; technology- and data-driven decision-making; information and communication technologies; multimedia learning; web mastering skills and knowledge.</p> | Department Head | Higher Education & Learning Technologies |
| <p>Pam Winn[9]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ed.D. in Educational Leadership | Department Head | Educational Leadership |
| <p>DeMarquis Hayes[10]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in School Psychology | Department Head | Psychology & Special Education |
| <p>Zaidy MohdZain[11]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision | Department Head | Counseling |
| <p>Tara Tietjen-Smith[12]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D.A. in Health & Physical Education | Department Head | Health & Human Performance |
| <p>Carole McKenzie[13]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD in Allied Health Teacher Education and Administrative Leadership • MSN/CNM: Major: Maternal Newborn Nursing • Licensed RN (Texas) | Department Head | Nursing |
| <p>Rebecca Judd[14]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in Social Work | Department Head | Social Work |

Program Coordinators

| Name and Educational Qualifications | Title | Department | Program(s) |
|--|---------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <p>Juan Araujo[15]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in Reading • M.B.E in Bilingual Education, Concentration in Talented and Gifted <p>Dr. Juan Araujo has 13 years of experience teaching students at the undergraduate level. He has</p> | Program Coordinator | Curriculum & Instruction | Interdisciplinary Studies BAIS/BSIS (Field-based undergraduate teacher certification preparation program) |

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|--|---------------------|--|---|
| held the department role as assistant head since 2015. He holds degrees in literacy, bilingual and ESL education, and literature which make him knowledgeable of the undergraduate program. For the past five years he has collected, and analyzed certification exam data for all student teacher candidates in the department. | | | |
| Donna McCrary[16] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ph.D. in Education (Special Education & Early Childhood) | Program Coordinator | Curriculum & Instruction | Early Childhood Education MA/MED/MS |
| Gil Naizer[17] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ph.D. in Curriculum & Instruction (Science) | Program Coordinator | Curriculum & Instruction | Curriculum & Instruction MED/MS |
| Tami Morton[18] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ph.D. in Reading | Program Coordinator | Curriculum & Instruction | Reading MA/MED/MS |
| Joyce Miller[19] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ph.D. in Secondary Education | Program Coordinator | Curriculum & Instruction | Secondary Education MA/MED/MS |
| David Brown[20] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ph.D. in Early Childhood Education | Program Coordinator | Curriculum & Instruction | Supervision, Curriculum & Instruction EDD |
| Gil Naizer[17] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ph.D. in Curriculum & Instruction (Science) | Program Coordinator | Curriculum & Instruction | The Art of Teaching MED |
| Jo Hyun Kim[21] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ph.D. in Education Policy, Organization & Leadership | Program Coordinator | Higher Education & Learning Technologies | Higher Education MS |
| Kibum Kwon[22] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ph.D. in Workforce Education and Development | Program Coordinator | Higher Education & Learning Technologies | Learning & Technology BS Organization, Learning & Technology MS |
| Mary Jo Dondlinger[23] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ph.D. in Educational Computing | Program Coordinator | Higher Education & Learning Technologies | Educational Technology Leadership MA/MED/MS |
| Anjum Najmi[24] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ph.D. in Educational Computing MS in Library and Information Science MS in Learning Technologies | Program Coordinator | Higher Education & Learning Technologies | Educational Technology Library Science MA/MED/MS |
| Seung Won Yoon[25] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ph.D. in Education Policy, Organization & Leadership | Program Coordinator | Higher Education & Learning Technologies | Higher Education Ed.D. |

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|--|---------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| Dr. Yoon's research has been focused on connecting leadership, technology, learning and knowledge, and organizational behaviors in higher education and other organizational settings. | | | |
| Melissa Arrambide[26] • Ed.D. in Educational Administration | Program Coordinator | Educational Leadership | Educational Administration MED/MS |
| Chuck Holt[27] • Ed.D. in Educational Leadership | Program Coordinator | Educational Leadership | Educational Administration EDD |
| Maria Carlson[28] • Ph.D. in Psychology | Program Coordinator | Psychology & Special Education | Psychology BS |
| Sean Lauderdale[29] • Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology | Program Coordinator | Psychology & Special Education | Psychology MS, Applied Emphasis |
| DeMarquis Hayes[10] • Ph.D. in School Psychology | Program Coordinator | Psychology & Special Education | Specialist in School Psychology SSP |
| Curt Carlson[30] • Ph.D. in Psychology | Program Coordinator | Psychology & Special Education | Educational Psychology Ph.D. Psychology MS, General |
| Beth Jones[31] • Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction (Concentration in Special Education) | Program Coordinator | Psychology & Special Education | Special Education MED/MS |
| Sam Bore[32] • Ph.D. in Counselor Education | Program Coordinator | Counseling | Counseling MS, School Counseling |
| Chris Simpson[33] • Ph.D. in Counseling | Program Coordinator | Counseling | Counseling MS, Clinical Mental Health |
| LaVelle Hendricks[34] • Ed.D. in Counseling, Minor in Secondary Education & Higher Education | Program Coordinator | Counseling | Counseling MED, Student Affairs |
| Erika Schmit[35] • Ph.D. in Counselor Education | Program Coordinator | Counseling | Counseling Ph.D. |
| Clay Bolton[36] • Ed.D. in Higher Education Administration • MS in Sport Management | Program Coordinator | Health & Human Performance | Sport and Recreation Management BS |
| Co-coordinators: • Sandy Kimbrough[37] • Ph.D. in Kinesiology • Vipa Bernhardt[38] • Ph.D. in Biomedical Sciences | Program Coordinator | Health & Human Performance | Kinesiology and Sport Studies BS |

| | | | |
|---|---------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Elizabeth Wachira[39] • Ph.D. in Health Studies | Program Coordinator | Health & Human Performance | Public Health BSPH |
| Co-coordinators: • Sarah Mitchell[40] • Ph.D. in Kinesiology • M.S. in Exercise Physiology • Dean Culpepper[41] • Ph.D. in Kinesiology-Human Performance | Program Coordinator | Health & Human Performance | Health, Kinesiology and Sport Studies MS |
| Carole McKenzie[13] • PhD in Allied Health Teacher Education and Administrative Leadership • MSN/CNM: Major: Maternal Newborn Nursing • Licensed RN (Texas) | Program Coordinator | Nursing | Nursing BSN |
| Debra Mahoney[42] • Ph.D. in Nursing • M.S. in Nursing | Program Coordinator | Nursing | Family Nurse Practitioner MSN |
| Lyndsey L. Norris[43] • M.S. in Social Work | Program Coordinator | Social Work | Social Work BSW |
| Marcella Smith[44] • Ph.D. in Social Work | Program Coordinator | Social Work | Social Work MSW |

College of Humanities, Social Sciences and Arts (CHSSA)

| Name and Educational Qualifications | Title | Programs |
|--|---------------------------|--|
| David Scott[45] (Interim) • PhD in Music Education Dr. Scott previously served as Department Head of the Department of Art and Music at Angelo State University, from 1998 to 2012. This experience qualifies him for this interim appointment. Art faculty with terminal degrees provide additional curricular oversight for programs and a search for a qualified department head is active. | Department Head (Interim) | Art BA/BS Art MA/MFA, Studio Art Studio Art BFA Photography BFA |
| Lee Hackett[46] • MFA in Design Communication | Program Coordinator | Visual Communications BFA Art MA/MFA, Visual Communications |
| Sharon A. Kowalsky[47] • Ph.D. in History | Department Head | History BA/BS History MA/MS |
| Mark Menaldo[48] | Department Head | Liberal Studies BA/BS |

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|---|---------------------|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in Political Science <p>Dr Menaldo's interdisciplinary research interests and teaching experience qualify him to oversee the university's Liberal Studies program. Other program faculty who contribute to curriculum development include Dr. Brad Klypchak[49], who holds a Ph.D. in American Cultural Studies and Dr. Emily Newman[50], who holds a Ph.D. in Art History.</p> | | |
| <p>M. Hunter Hayes[51]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in English | Department Head | English BA |
| <p>Susan Stewart[52]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in English Studies | Program Coordinator | English MA/MS |
| <p>Karen Roggenkamp[53]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in English | Program Coordinator | English Ph.D. |
| <p>Flavia Belpoliti[54]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in Spanish Linguistics | Program Coordinator | Spanish BA Spanish MA |
| <p>Lucy Pickering[55]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics | Director | Applied Linguistics MA/MS |
| <p>Tony DeMars[56]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in Communication | Program Coordinator | Mass Media & Journalism BA/BS |
| <p>Stephen Furlich[57]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in Higher Education • M.A. in Communication Studies | Program Coordinator | Communication Studies BA/BS |
| <p>David Davies[58]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D.M.A. in Composition | Department Head | Music BA/BM Music MM |
| <p>Jeffrey C. Herndon[59]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in Political Science | Department Head | Political Science BA/BS Political Science MA/MS |
| <p>April Pitts[60]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J.D. in Law | Director | Paralegal Studies BA/BS |
| <p>Elvira White-Lewis[61]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J.D. in Law • Ph.D. in Juvenile Justice <p>Dr. White-Lewis's research interests overlap criminal justice, criminology, ethnicity,</p> | Department Head | Sociology BA/BS Criminal Justice BA/BS |

| | | |
|---|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| youth identity and other areas informed by the discipline of sociology. | | |
| Amny Shuraydi[62] • Ph.D. in Criminology | Program Coordinator | Applied Criminology MS |
| Jiaming Sun[63] • Ph.D. in Sociology | Program Coordinator | Sociology MS |
| Michael Knight[64] • M.F.A. in Lighting Design | Department Head | Theatre BA/BS Theatre MA/MS |

College of Science and Engineering (COSE)

| Name and Educational Qualifications | Title | Programs |
|--|-----------------|---|
| DongWon Choi[65] • Ph.D. in Microbiology | Department Head | Biological Sciences BA/BS Biological Sciences MS Environmental Science BS Wildlife and Conservation Science BS The Wildlife and Conservation Science BS program is shared by the College of Science and Engineering and the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources and overseen by Department Head Dr. DongWon Choi (COSE) and Assistant Dean Dr. Douglas LaVergne (CASNR). Additional contributors to program coordination and curriculum development for the program include Dr. Jeffrey Kopachena[66], who holds a Ph.D. in Zoology, and Dr. Kelly Reyna[67], who holds a Ph.D. in Biology and an M.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences. |
| Thomas P. West[68] • Ph.D. in Biochemistry | Department Head | Chemistry BS Chemistry MS |
| Meikang Qiu[69] • Ph.D. in Computer Science | Department Head | Computer Science BS Computer Science MS Computational Science MS Computer Information Systems BSCIS |
| Andrea M. Graham[70] • Ph.D. in Industrial | Department Head | Construction Engineering BS Industrial Engineering BS |

| | | |
|---|-----------------|---|
| Engineering | | Technology Management BS Technology Management MS Electrical Engineering BS |
| Tingxiu Wang[71] • Ph.D. in Mathematics | Department Head | Mathematics BA/BS Mathematics MS |
| Kent Montgomery[72] • Ph.D. in Astronomy Dr. Montgomery oversees programs in the Department of Physics and Astronomy, which include the BS Physics with emphasis in Astrophysics and the Astronomy minor as well as the Planetarium and University Observatory. Dr. Montgomery has more than 20 years of experience as a Planetarium Director at two different institutions. One of the 5 Research areas in the department, is Astronomy & Astrophysics, of which Dr. Montgomery is actively engaged. | Department Head | Physics BA/BS Physics MS |

College of Innovation & Design (CID)

| Name and Educational Qualifications | Title | Programs |
|--|--|---|
| Yvonne Villanueva-Russell [73] • Ph.D. in Sociology Dr. Yvonne Villanueva-Russell holds a PhD in Sociology and brings 5 years of higher education administration experience including in the roles of Sociology & Criminal Justice Department Head, Assistant Dean of the Honors College and Associate Dean of the College of Humanities, Social Sciences and Arts. She brings extensive experience with curriculum development including past experience overseeing the Core Curriculum, redeveloping curriculum for the MS Applied Criminology program and developing the University's | Dean, College of Innovation and Design | Applied Arts and Sciences BAAS Applied Arts & Science – Organizational Leadership BAAS (CBE) Criminal Justice BS (CBE) General Studies BGS |

second competency-based bachelor's program, the BS Criminal Justice (a recipient of the THECB's Texas Affordable Baccalaureate program grant). Her publication history includes areas of interdisciplinary research. The staff director of BAAS and BGS programs, Misty Lair, has been with the program since its inception, holds interdisciplinary degrees in MS Agricultural Science and MS Management and provides advising for the program. The staff coordinator of the BSCJ CBE program, Louis Lufkin, has been with this program since its launch in March 2019, holds an MS in Applied Criminology and has 20+ years of law enforcement experience. The interdisciplinary background of the administrative team is well qualified to oversee the degree programs in the College of Innovation & Design.

College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR)*

| Name and Educational Qualifications | Title | Programs |
|--|----------------------------|--|
| <p>Kelly Reyna^[67]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. in Biology (Quail Physiology) • M.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences • B.S. in Wildlife Biology | <p>Program Coordinator</p> | <p>Wildlife and Conservation Science BS</p> <p>The Wildlife and Conservation Science BS program is shared by the College of Science and Engineering and the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources and overseen by Department Head Dr. DongWon Choi (COSE) and Assistant Dean Dr. Douglas LaVergne (CASNR). Additional contributors to program coordination and curriculum development for the program include Dr. Jeffrey</p> |

| | | |
|--|---------------------|--|
| | | Kopachena[74], who holds a Ph.D. in Zoology, and Dr. Kelly Reyna, who holds a Ph.D. in Biology and an M.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences. |
| Douglas Eborn[75] • Ph.D. in Animal Science | Program Coordinator | Animal Science BA/BS |
| Jose Lopez[76] • Ph.D. in Agricultural & Applied Economics | Program Coordinator | Agribusiness BA/BS |
| Nathan Wells[77] • M.S. in Animal Science Nathan Wells has more than fifteen years of academic and industry experience, including teaching equine and animal science curriculum at two community colleges as well as at Arkansas State University. | Program Coordinator | Equine Studies BS |
| Derald Harp[78] • Ph.D. in Horticulture | Program Coordinator | Agricultural Science & Technology BA/BS, Ornamental Landscape |
| Keith Frost[79] • Ph.D. in Agricultural Communications and Education | Program Coordinator | Agricultural Science & Technology BA/BS, Teacher Certification |
| Robert Williams[80] • Ph.D. in Family & Consumer Sciences Education Dr. Williams has taught more than three years in public secondary education as an Agricultural Science teacher, over five years at a community college, as well as served as a high school administrator in both east and west Texas schools. This is coupled with twenty years of experience teaching and conducting research at Texas A&M Commerce in Agricultural Education as the teacher trainer, and curriculum in Food Systems. | Program Coordinator | Agricultural Sciences MS |
| Curtis Jones[81] • Ph.D. in Agronomy | Program Coordinator | Agricultural Sciences BA/BS |

**Programs within the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources are housed together, rather than organized into separate departments under separate department heads. Programs within the College are*

*overseen by
Dean, Dr. Randy Harp, Assistant Dean, Dr. Douglas LaVergne[82], and program coordinators as designated
above.*

All academic programs at A&M-Commerce have assigned appropriate responsibility for program coordination to department heads or program coordinators qualified to oversee the designated programs.

Conclusion

Department heads, and in some cases designated program coordinators, are assigned responsibility for program coordination for all A&M-Commerce academic programs. A review of educational qualifications and curriculum vitae demonstrates that those assigned these responsibilities for their respective programs are academically qualified to do so. The institution finds itself in compliance with Standard 6.2.c.

Section 8 Student Achievement

8.1 The institution identifies, evaluates, and publishes goals and outcomes for student achievement appropriate to the institution's mission, the nature of the students it serves, and the kinds of programs offered. The institution uses multiple measures to document student success. (Student achievement) [CR]

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Introduction

Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance with Core Requirement 8.1. The University identifies appropriate goals and outcomes for student achievement internally, but also in conjunction with goals and outcomes established by the State of Texas and its agencies. The University evaluates its progress towards those goals and outcomes, and it publishes those results on the University's Student Achievement web page (screenshot[1]) which can be accessed through its Accreditations web page[2]. These goals and outcomes reflect A&M-Commerce's mission and the needs of its students. Internally-developed thresholds of acceptability guide the University in taking action when student achievement falls short of benchmarks, while stretch goals and benchmarks set by the Texas A&M University System and the State of Texas identify areas for future achievement.

A&M-Commerce strives to provide students with a transformative education that allows them to discover and achieve[3]. Its institutional vision includes providing "an excellent, relevant and personalized education to diverse learners." A&M-Commerce measures student achievement in the context of this mission and vision. Four key indicators help the University determine student achievement: 1) retention and graduation, 2) completions for economically disadvantaged students, 3) student success in the job market or post-baccalaureate study, and 4) the University's ability to maintain affordability of educational opportunity.

These four factors animate the institution's strategic plan, goals and outcomes set by Texas state agencies tasked with coordinating and managing higher education, and University data collection efforts that inform its operational decisions to promote achievement.

Retention and Graduation

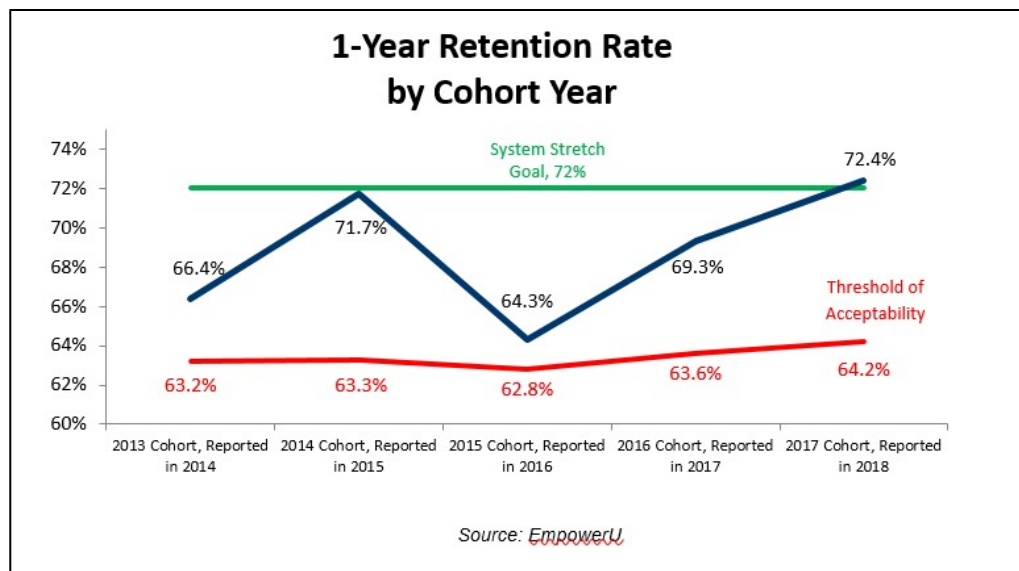
Texas A&M University-Commerce serves a diverse population, with a high representation of first-generation and economically disadvantaged students. The University serves a large, diverse region in the state of Texas, encompassing the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area as well as

surrounding rural regions, and also attracts international students from over forty foreign countries and domestic students from ten other states. The University's service area has educational, economic and workforce needs that an educated population can meet, and A&M-Commerce plays a role in making that happen. The University tracks student achievement through use of key metrics established by the institution's governing board and state leadership.

In 2010, the Texas A&M University System established its EmpowerU website to serve as a guide to students and their families looking at System universities as options for higher education[4]. EmpowerU publishes student success metric data from all System member institutions. The website is configured to allow comparison among System member institutions, and these success metrics were selected by a System-wide committee. Chief among these metrics are those involving retention/persistence of first-time, full-time students by cohort and the four and six-year graduation rates[5].

For these metrics, the University evaluates itself against a threshold of acceptability set at the prior five years' average rate for the eight similar System regional universities[6]. The A&M System additionally monitors performance in comparison to "stretch goals" established by each institution for institutional performance on each metric. The "stretch goals" represent target levels of performance for attainment by 2020[7]. Documentation of disaggregated results for these measures is provided, shown by ethnicity, gender and by economic status (economic disadvantage as defined by students receiving Pell grants).

The chart below shows Texas A&M University-Commerce's first-time, full-time student fall-to-fall retention rate beginning with the 2013 cohort.



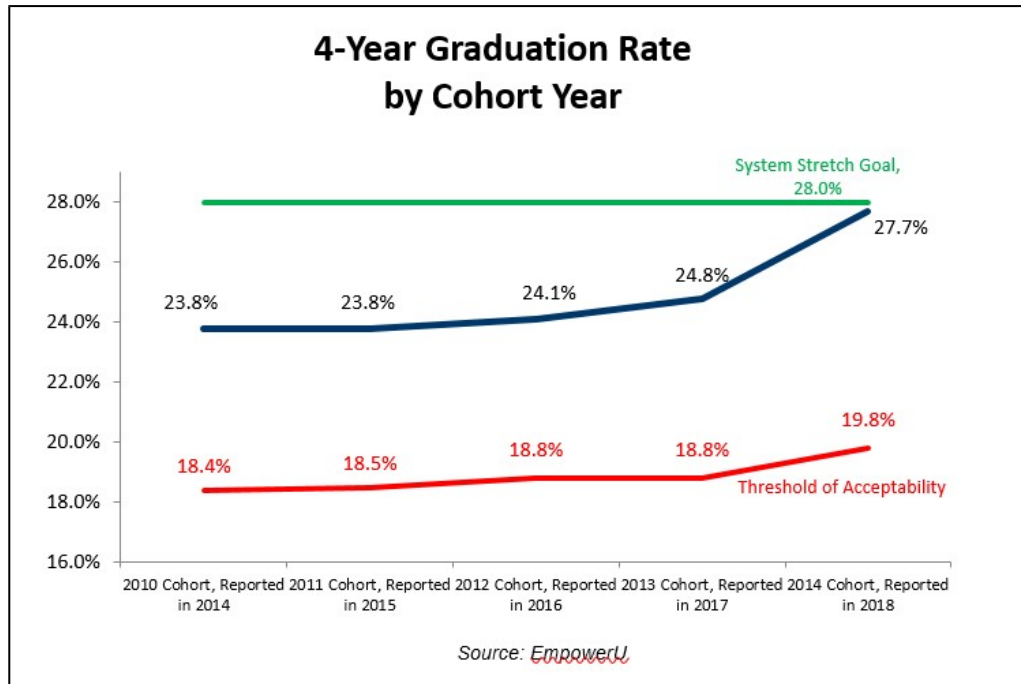
For the time period shown, A&M-Commerce noted a significant decline in retention with the 2015 cohort, approaching nearer to the threshold of acceptability than previous fluctuations in retention. In response, University College was charged with collaborating with campus partners to develop the University's first integrated first-year experience program: the First Year TRAC[8] (Transforming Relationships and Academic Connections). The retention rate for subsequent cohorts has rebounded, and for the 2017 cohort, actually exceeded the University's System Stretch Goal.

Results for this measure disaggregated by ethnicity, gender and economic status are provided in Table 1[9] of the evidence documentation. Disaggregated retention data for the same period demonstrates the critical role played by historically underrepresented populations in institutional enrollment patterns. Black enrollment for the period shown averages 29.6% of the FTFT cohort; Hispanic enrollment has averaged 20.1%. Retention for underrepresented males has presented the greatest challenge based on the data. The University, with the support of external grants, developed two living and learning

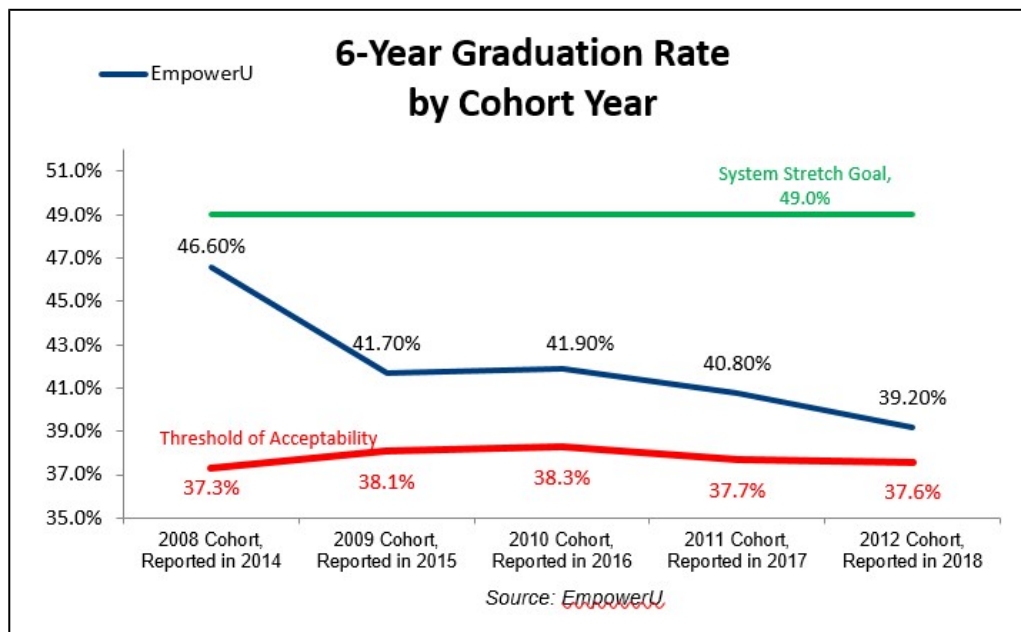
communities aimed at support of minority male students. Such efforts have stabilized Hispanic male retention since the 2013 cohort. Retention of African American males continues to fluctuate. Similar living and learning communities to support minority females have also been undertaken in recent years.

EmpowerU also tracks four-year and six-year graduation rates. A&M-Commerce established stretch goals of 28% and 49%, respectively, for those metrics. EmpowerU data is available through cohort year 2014 for four-year and 2012 for six-year graduation rates. The University has also selected the IPEDS six-year graduation rate as its undergraduate student completion indicator and tracks this measure against the same stretch goal and a threshold of acceptability set at the 2010 cohort baseline of 43%, as selected for SACSCOC.

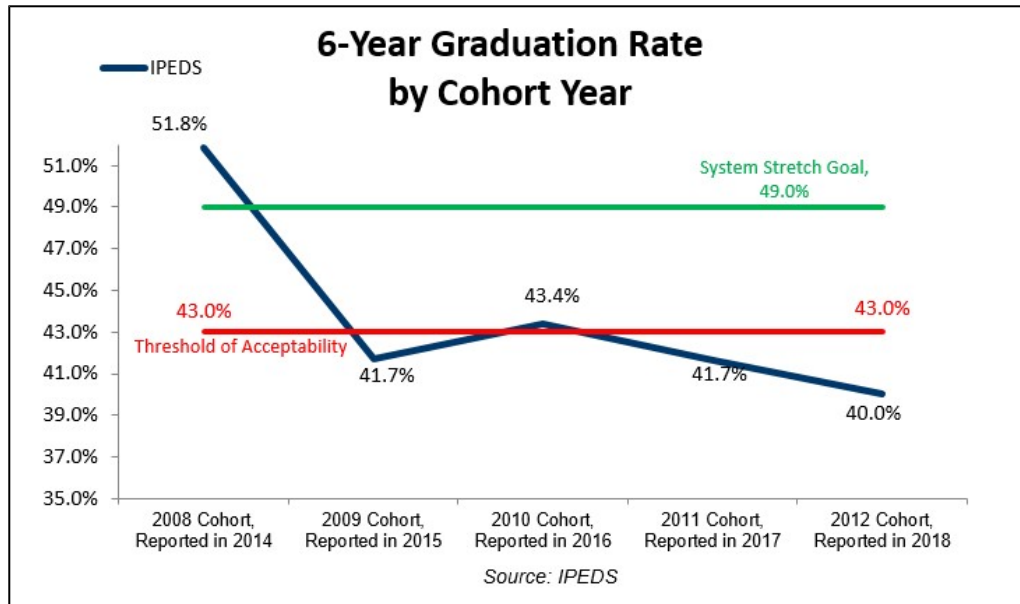
Below see the four-year rate chart:



Following, see the six-year graduation rate chart as tracked by EmpowerU:



Following, see the six-year graduation rate chart as tracked by IPEDS:

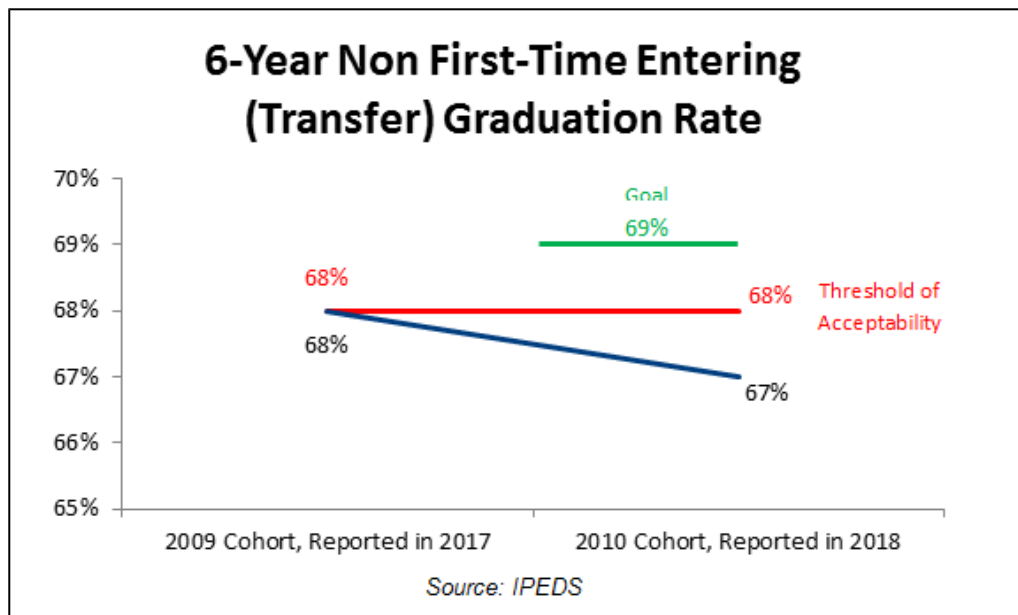
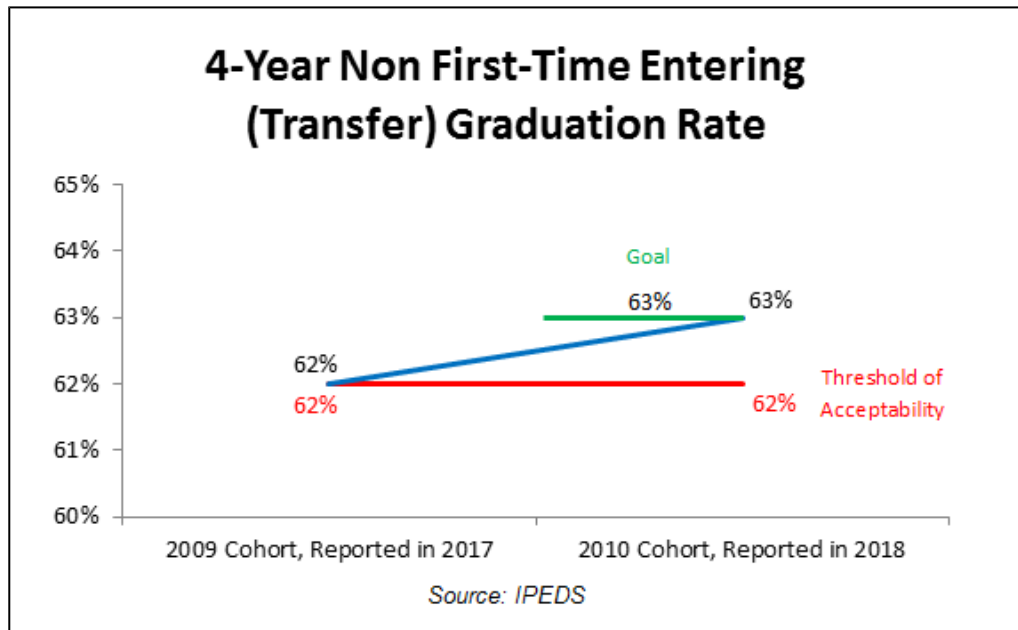


The 2008 first-time full-time cohort was the smallest in the last fifteen years. It also had an unusually high level of college readiness among its students. These two characteristics make it an outlier in institutional history. The next year began a period of sustained growth with the result that the 2014 cohort was 79% larger than that of 2008. The University responded to that growth with new approaches to first-year advising and worked to improve success rates in first-year courses in mathematics and English. These changes have helped improve four-year graduation rates. The growth of the cohort led to the building of new residence halls and other facilities to support student life. Significant growth in room and board costs, despite institutional efforts to hold overall student costs in check relative to competitors, contributed to a decline in students returning to complete their degrees as reflected in the declining six-year graduation rate from 2008-2012 cohorts.

In 2018, A&M-Commerce identified the IPEDS six-year graduation rate as the University's student completion indicator, to be monitored in respect to the 2010 cohort baseline of 43%, as identified by SACSCOC. This measure largely tracks with the EmpowerU rate but shows a spike for the 2008 cohort (51.8%) beyond that of the EmpowerU rate (46.6%) due to a variance in how the cohort number for that year was reported to IPEDS and the THECB. A decline in both rates can be observed for cohort years 2011 and 2012, remaining above the average rate of A&M System regional universities, but falling below the 43% baseline for the IPEDS measure.

Results for these measures disaggregated by ethnicity and economic status are provided in Tables 2 [10] and 3[11] of the evidence documentation. Disaggregated four- and six-year graduation data shows a 24% improvement in the four-year rate for black students, and a 26% improvement for Hispanic students. That improvement is driven by graduation of female students from these underrepresented groups. The six-year graduation rate for both minority groups declined after the unusually small cohort of 2008. This is in keeping with the decline shown on the six year rate for 2009-2012 cohorts earlier. The University acted to address the challenge of costs, which disproportionately affects students of color, by altering its institutional merit scholarship policy with the 2017 cohort. The new merit scholarship policy raised amounts, but also tied awards to class rank rather than test scores. An analysis of University data revealed that high school class percentile ranked in the top five most powerful predictors of student success for first-time freshmen[12]. Reorienting scholarship practices toward these students has resulted in a broadening and diversification of scholarship recipients and allowed awards to flow to students most likely to succeed academically. Specifically, analysis indicates that these practices may result in the awarding of scholarships, on average, to as many as 45% more minority students in each first-time freshman cohort, reaching a particularly large number of new Hispanic students. The University will monitor the impact of these efforts on retention and continues to research factors which may be contributing to the decline.

Reflective of its student population's inclusion of the many transfer students the University serves, A&M-Commerce has also chosen to track graduation rates for non-first-time entering (transfer) students who attend full-time. In most fall semesters, entering transfer students represent roughly a third of new students. During spring semesters, that proportion is considerably larger. As will be developed later, State of Texas higher education strategic planning imperatives have heightened the importance of transfer students to the University's overall mission. The 2009 transfer cohort was composed of 909 (40%) non-first time entering, full-time students, representing a substantial part of the University's overall student population (Source: IPEDS). A comparison of IPEDS data for four- and six-year graduation rates for this group appears below:



Tables 4[13] and 5[14] provided in evidence documentation include disaggregated results for these measure by ethnicity, gender and economic status.

The 2009-2010 cohort is the first year for which IPEDS tracked and made publicly available the graduation rate for non-first-time entering (transfer) students. Although additional years of reporting will best allow for a meaningful review of success on this measure, the institution has set the 2009 cohort rate as a baseline threshold of acceptability for both the four-year and six-year transfer graduation rate. A target goal is established as a 2% increase over the average of prior (up to five) years' performance.

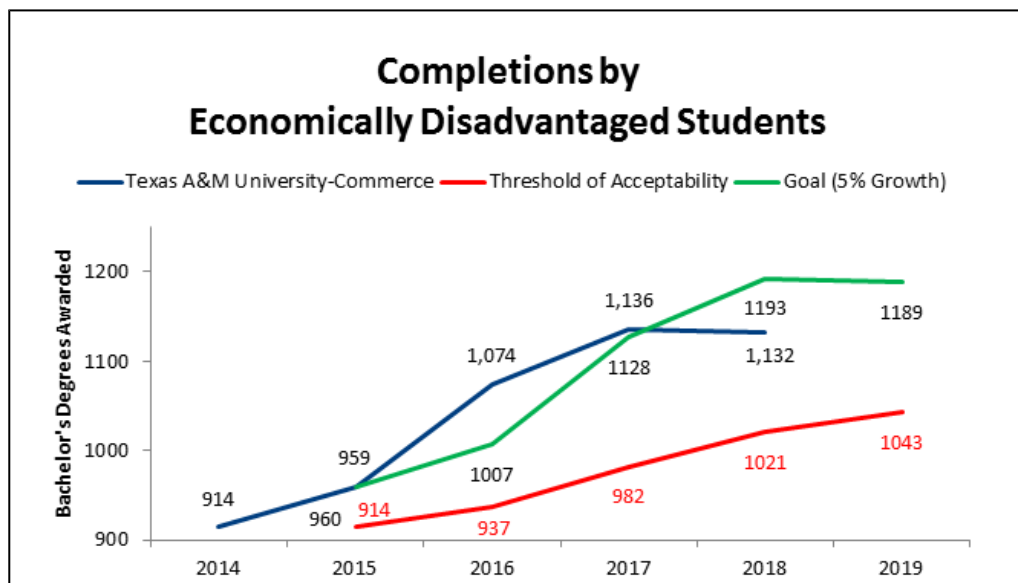
This target will be adjusted over time. Results for the 2010 cohort show improvement over the baseline for the four-year rate but not the six-year. The institution has demonstrated its support for transfer students in recent years through attention to scholarship award practices for transfer students[15] and facilitating ease of transfer[16]—preventing the loss of credits and increased expense that can accompany unused transfer credits.

Completion

As a State of Texas higher education institution, Texas A&M University-Commerce provides data regularly to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) demonstrating progress toward various accountability measures. These accountability measures emerge from the THECB strategic plan, a document intended to lay out state-wide goals for higher education. The period covered by this fifth-year report has seen the conclusion of one such plan and the beginning of a second. “Closing the Gaps” drove higher education policy from 2000-2015. It had four essential emphases: participation, success, excellence and research[17]. The current THECB strategic plan, “60x30TX,” represents a departure from “Closing the Gaps.” Under the plan, by 2030 at least 60% of Texans aged 25 to 34 will have either a certificate or degree[18].

As part of the THECB’s strategic plan, the University tracks degree completion overall and for specific populations. In accordance with 60x30TX goals and as a reflection of the institution’s commitment to serve the Northeast Texas region and a diverse community of learners, A&M-Commerce has chosen completions for economically disadvantaged students as a key student achievement metric. The THECB defines completions as the number of undergraduates who received a certificate, associate degree or bachelor’s degree from the institution. Economically disadvantaged students are further defined by the THECB as students who receive Pell grants at any time. These students make up a significant portion of the A&M-Commerce undergraduate population. For example, in the year 2017, 49% of A&M-Commerce undergraduates received Pell grants as compared to 51% who did not (Source: THECB Accountability System). First-generation students are also heavily represented as a part of A&M-Commerce enrollment, as are historically underrepresented groups. Self-reported first-generation students amount to 26% of fall 2018 enrollment (Cohort Source: CBM1). Since this figure depends on student self-reporting on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and prompts can sometimes be unclear, the percentage may be undercounted. In addition, not all first-generation qualified students file a FAFSA. The A&M-Commerce 2018 Alumni survey suggests 44% of graduates were first-generation students. Through its work with these students and others who go unreported, the University promotes social mobility and supports the economic development of its region and state.

Following, see the number of bachelor’s degrees awarded to students defined as economically disadvantaged for the years 2014-2018:



Source: Texas Higher Education Accountability System

Over a four-year time period the University has increased completions for economically disadvantaged students by 24%. The year 2016 saw the most significant growth, with an increase of 12% over the prior year. In contrast, numbers of bachelor's degrees awarded in 2017 and 2018 were largely consistent. Allowing for a six-year graduation window, this spike in completion stems from the start of a period of rapid growth for the University that began in 2009. That year, enrollment grew 7.3%, followed by growth of 17.2% in 2010 and 5.3% in 2011. The flattening of the completions trend from 2017 to 2018 coincides with less robust growth from 2012 to 2014[19].

A&M-Commerce has set institutional completion targets for the years 2020, 2025 and 2030, which include all bachelor's and master's degrees earned by all students[20]. In accordance with these goals as well as the overall 60x30TX established benchmarks for the state specifically for economically disadvantaged students, the University has selected as its goal for this metric a target of five percent growth each year. A threshold of acceptability is set at the average number of completions from the prior five years (as available). The University has seen increases in completions for this student population with yearly results tracking above the threshold of acceptability and in some cases, exceeding the established goal of five percent growth annually.

Currently, A&M-Commerce is working to support this student population through changes to the University's scholarship policies and through continued implementation of a guaranteed tuition rate, making it more possible for economically disadvantaged students to afford their degrees and persist to graduation. Institutional scholarships for first-time students are now tied to high school class rank percentile, a more reliable predictive measure than test scores, to broaden access to institutional support[21]. The University continues to invest in transfer scholarships[15], but also is focusing upon the ease of transfer—preventing the loss of credits and increased expense that can accompany unused transfer credits[16]. Efforts to support first-generation students also include specialized living and learning communities providing mentoring for male and female students, as well as those from historically underrepresented populations[22]. The University earmarked resources for more personalized and intensive provision of veterans services[23] and added a full-time social worker and staff to assist students who face food scarcity, homelessness or other life issues.

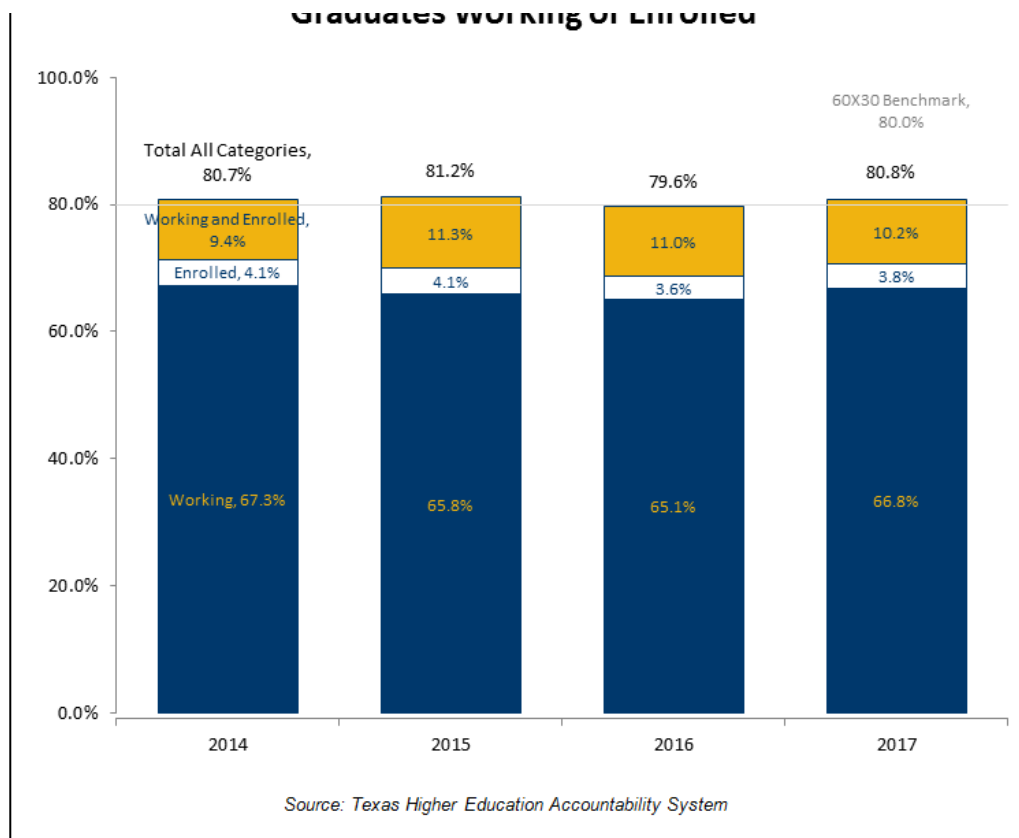
Student Post-Graduation Outcomes

A&M-Commerce has chosen student post-graduation outcomes as a key student achievement metric because of the institution's first-generation student body and in response to increased interest in these outcomes on the part of policymakers. The new alignment of state higher education priorities to student achievement and the assimilation of marketable skills meshes with the University's historical role as a springboard for social mobility and opportunity within its service region. The State's 60x30TX strategic plan outlines that by 2030, at least 60% of Texas aged 25 to 34 will have either a certificate or degree and that those credentials would impart "identifiable marketable skills" to graduates[24].

Accordingly, A&M-Commerce has aligned its student achievement metrics with accountability measures established by the THECB in pursuit of the "60x30TX" strategic plan. The THECB tracks post-graduation outcomes within one year of the award of a credential. Institutions track students and report the percentage of those working, enrolled or working *and* enrolled within a year of completion. This information is reported via the THECB accountability system website, and an aggregated percentage of all three categories is also reported[25]. A&M-Commerce has taken as both its goal and threshold of acceptability the 80% benchmark set by the state of Texas as an achievement target for years 2020, 2025 and 2030.

Below see 2014-2017 percentages of graduates working, enrolled or working and enrolled, as well as the total for all categories compared with the goal. Disaggregated results for this state-reported measure are not available.

Graduates Working or Enrolled



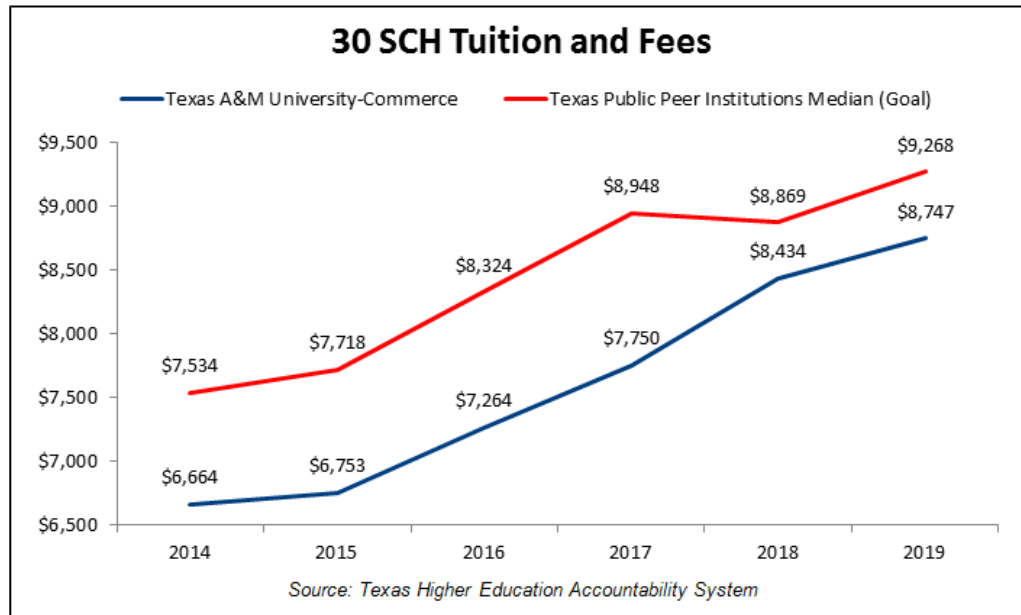
The “total all categories” line has slightly exceeded the goal for three of the past four years, even as there has been some downward movement in the “working” and “enrolled” proportions within that measure. The growth in the working and enrolled percentages in 2015-2016 was influenced by targeted University graduate recruiting efforts through roll-over scholarships for our undergraduates. While the dip in 2016 falls within rounding range of the 60x30 benchmark, A&M-Commerce students come to the University for degrees that will allow them competitive entry into the employment marketplace. The University has become more responsive to this reality in the last two years as it works to comply with state higher education strategic planning priorities. Two developments in particular indicate this new awareness and focus. First, the University is exploring the possibility of developing a second-year experience element to help buttress not only retention, but also major/career focus for students who are undecided about their future plans. At the university-level, partnerships with firms that can provide work experience and marketable skills through short-term employment are being explored. Secondly, in August 2019, the University created the College of Innovation and Design^[26], tasked in part with sharpening institutional focus upon market-ready graduates beginning with academic year 2019-2020.

Maintaining Affordability

The accountability measures mandated under “60x30TX” have also sharpened focus upon affordability as a statewide priority. “60x30TX” measures affordability by tracking metrics relating to tuition and fees and student debt^[27]. A&M-Commerce is committed to remaining affordable as a part of its mission to serve a diverse community of learners and its historical commitment to serving northeast Texas. A&M-Commerce seeks to rein in student costs but also attend to the relative value of a student’s degree vs. those costs.

Texas public higher education has seen a steady decline in state funding as a percentage of student costs since the 1990s. When the state of Texas deregulated tuition in 2003, A&M-Commerce held back on tuition increases out of concern that it might negatively affect student outcomes. That caution did not yield either improved graduation rates or greater enrollments. As a result, A&M-Commerce began a series of gradual tuition increases that has only just now brought its tuition and fee costs more in line with the other regional institutions of the Texas A&M University System. However, as shown below,

those gradual increases still leave A&M-Commerce significantly below the median undergraduate tuition and fees for the University's state public peer institutions, as defined by the THECB[28]. This median serves as both a goal and threshold of acceptability for tuition costs and will be monitored internally to inform decisions regarding future tuition and fee increases. Increases are proposed by University leadership but must be vetted for public and student comment. A&M-Commerce, like other A&M System institutions, relies upon System guidance and approval for increases. The University remains acutely aware and respectful of legislative and stakeholder concerns about the rising cost of higher education.



True to its heritage, A&M-Commerce continues to hold the line on student costs. The University joined the rest of the A&M System in 2015 in offering students the option of locking in a tuition rate for four years for undergraduates and two years for graduates, and this rate has since become the preferred rate of the majority of the student body. These measures help ensure the financial sustainability of the University's pursuit of its mission, while helping families afford an A&M-Commerce education.

Conclusion

A&M-Commerce has complied with Core Requirement 8.1 by identifying student achievement outcomes and goals. These outcomes derive from both external and internal stakeholder needs and are consistent with institutional mission. These are published on the University website, and performance on these metrics is monitored and evaluated so that efforts for improvement can be implemented in response to challenges as they arise. Current evaluation of identified outcomes reflects strength in student achievement relative to established goals for one-year retention and four-year graduation of both first-time, full-time and transfer students as well as post-graduate outcomes for students (working and enrolled) and educational affordability. A&M-Commerce effectively works to control tuition costs to ensure affordability for students and to support timely degree completion leading to employment or further educational attainment. However, the University's six-year graduation rate for both first-time, full-time and transfer students as well as the number of completions by economically disadvantaged students merit further study. These outcomes reflect challenges inherent for regional universities with student populations with the characteristics of A&M-Commerce's student body. The University looks forward to the opportunity to focus institutional attention on these areas and develop interventions leading to positive improvements in student outcomes.

8.2.a The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results in the areas below:

- a. student learning outcomes for each of its educational programs.
(*Student outcomes: educational programs*)

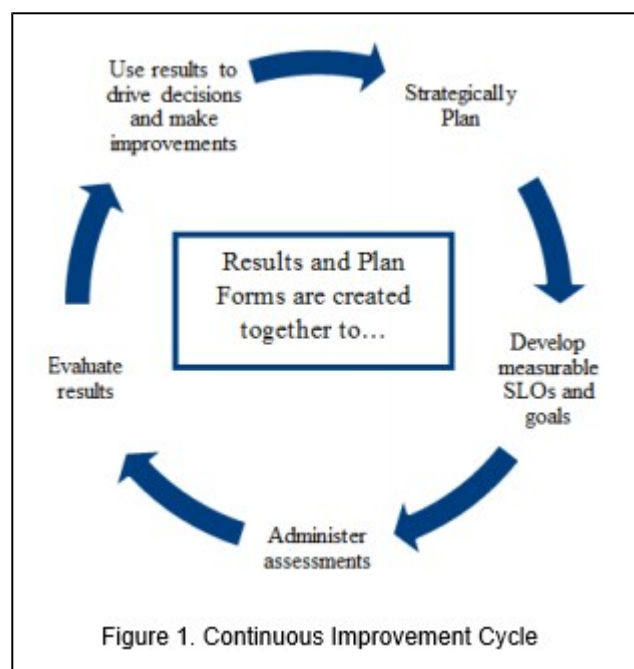
Compliance Status: Compliant**Narrative****Introduction**

Texas A&M University-Commerce identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results for each of its educational programs. These assessment practices are overseen through a university-wide institutional effectiveness (IE) process governed by University procedure *03.01.99.R0.03 Institutional Effectiveness*. The process of planning and evaluation is a continuous activity which occurs at all levels of the University and is guided and shaped by the institution's mission to provide students with a transformative education which allows them to discover and achieve[1].

Outcomes Assessment Structure and Process**The Institutional Effectiveness Process at A&M-Commerce**

The University engages annually in a systematic process of collection, review and use of outcomes data for the continuous improvement of student learning. University procedure *03.01.99.R0.03[2] Institutional Effectiveness* provides guidance on this annual process. Every year, each academic program engages in a continuous improvement cycle characterized by the following steps:

1. Annual Institutional Effectiveness Plans[3] are created that include program mission, statement of connection to the University Strategic Plan, identified student learning outcomes (SLOs) and related goals appropriate to the program, identified assessment methods and identified standards of success (performance targets)
2. Annual Institutional Effectiveness Results[4] are reported which include assessment results and findings (including comparison to prior years' results, when available) related to the achievement of the articulated standard of success for each identified outcome. Recommendations for modifications based on use of the results are also documented and implemented as outlined by each academic program

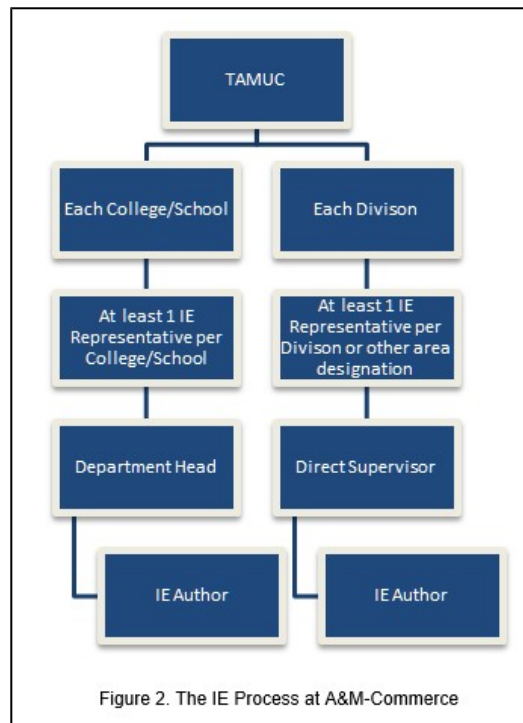


Results of outcomes assessment are used in an ongoing fashion to inform assessment planning as well as changes to curriculum and pedagogy, operating on an annual cycle. Student learning outcomes

are defined as what students are able to demonstrate in terms of knowledge, skills and attitude upon completion of a program.

The University follows definitions for academic programs and degrees as outlined by THECB, where an academic program is defined as an “instructional program leading toward an associate’s, bachelor’s, master’s, doctor’s, or first-professional degree or resulting in credits that can be applied to one of these degrees[5].” A list of academic programs offered by A&M-Commerce is provided on the Institutional Summary Form. Students in academic programs offered at off-campus instructional sites and via an online-delivery mode are also assessed as part of the annual Institutional Effectiveness reporting cycle. Assessment of certificates is embedded within corresponding degree program assessment.

Under the direction of the Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research, the Department of Institutional Effectiveness and Research accomplishes planning for effectiveness by overseeing the Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Leadership Team[6], which facilitates the annual creation of IE Results and Plan Forms. Within each of the colleges and divisions, at least one faculty member-designated IE Author has been assigned per academic program to fill out the Results Form documenting assessment findings from the previous academic year and Plan Form documenting assessment plans for the upcoming academic year. Each college and division is represented on the IE Leadership Team by at least one IE Representative. The IE Representative coordinates the efforts of the IE Authors and provides guidance in the process of completing annual IE Results and Plan reports.



The review, approval and signature process for academic programs is multi-layered and systematic. After preparation by the faculty IE Author, stages of review and approval for academic program assessment plans and results include the department head or direct supervisor, college or division-level IE Representative, the Institutional Effectiveness office, the college or division-level dean or vice president, the Office of the Provost and the SACSCOC Liaison[7]. The Leadership Team meets semi-annually to provide guidance and consultation on university assessment practices and initiatives. (Examples 1[8], 2[9], 3[10])

In addition to the annual collection of assessment (IE) results, all academic programs go through a full academic review with external evaluators from the discipline. These occur at a minimum once every ten years as part of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) requirement[11] and as described in University procedure 11.99.99.R0.04[12] *Academic Program Review*. While THECB only requires review of graduate programs, A&M-Commerce includes both graduate and undergraduate

programs in the review process. Program review includes a study of planning and evaluation processes for the program, including a review of annual assessment reports (IE Plans and Results) from recent years. This provides another external examination of programmatic learning outcomes and use of results from experts in the discipline. For examples of completed program reviews, please refer to the additional detail and examples provided in the narrative response for Core Requirement 9.1 Program Content.

The Department of Institutional Effectiveness and Research

Housed under the division of Academic Affairs and within the Department of Institutional Effectiveness and Research (IER), the Institutional Effectiveness unit serves as the support and resource center for strategic planning and continuous data-driven improvement. It is the mission of the office to assist and coordinate assessment, facilitate accreditation, assist in the development of new academic programs and communicate information that supports strategic continuous improvement[13]. In fulfillment of this mission, the office provides resources and support for assessment activities on campus. Guiding documents for the development of student learning outcomes[14] and the selection of assessment methods[15] as well as guidelines[16] for the completion of assessment documentation are made available to faculty and staff on the department's web page along with information about the University's strategic planning and institutional effectiveness processes[17].

The IE area provides direct assistance with assessment documentation in active workshop settings offered as come-and-go or available for reservation by departments or programs. A series of professional developmental opportunities[18] is also offered[19] throughout each year on topics related to assessment and continuous improvement for academic programs and support units. These events are designed to provide training in assessment for the purpose of increasing involvement by faculty and the overall quality of assessment efforts on campus and are facilitated by IE staff as well as faculty and other campus subject matter experts. Examples of training topics covered include the development of student learning outcomes[20], selection of assessment methods, results reporting[21], making modifications for continuous improvement and curriculum mapping[22]. The IER Department, in conjunction with the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, has also initiated the annual hosting of a "Quality Day" event for IE Authors, IE Representatives and University administration to provide a dedicated space for training and for conversations around the topic of planning for quality (2017[23]) (2018[24]) (2019[25]). Beginning in 2017, this annual event has offered targeted training on quality assessment practices including rubric development, peer review of assessment and curriculum and strategic mapping (2017[26]) (2018[27]) (2019[28]).

In an effort to evaluate the quality of assessment practices at the University as well as the effectiveness of institutional effectiveness reporting processes, the IE office utilizes a meta-assessment tool – the Institutional Effectiveness Self-Appraisal. The IE Self-Appraisal[29] was adapted from a quality of assessment rubric[30]. The questions included in the Self-Appraisal have been adapted to reflect IE processes on the A&M-Commerce campus and are posed to provide IE Authors an opportunity to think about their program's growth in the process of collecting assessment results and using those results to create a new plan. Eleven questions are asked covering five content areas for academic programs – Student Learning Outcomes, Curriculum Map, Assessment Methodology, Assessment Results and Recommendations for Modifications. For each of these areas, IE Authors rate their programs' participation in each described component of the Institutional Effectiveness process on a scale of Absent (assessment is occurring at a beginning level) to Exemplary (assessment is occurring at an advanced level). The IE Self-Appraisal has been distributed for four IE cycles beginning with 2016-17 and continuing through 2019-20. Results are collected and shared with the IER Department as well as other IE Leadership. Analysis of self-reported results over time suggests that academic programs identify most confidence in the strength of the specificity of their student learning outcomes, in their SLO-method of assessment alignment and in their data collection. The same historical comparison suggests that academic programs identify areas with more room for improvement to include the utilization of curriculum maps, communicating student learning outcomes and purposeful reflection and plan for modifications[31].

An Institutional Effectiveness Feedback Survey distributed at the close of the annual reporting cycle

collected feedback from faculty, staff and administrators on assessment reporting and institutional effectiveness resources and processes at A&M-Commerce. Results of the survey[32] have been used to recommend improvements in the facilitation of assessment reporting and to suggest resources and support offered to the University community on topics related to outcomes assessment and continuous improvement. Ongoing evaluations of trainings facilitated by the Department of Institutional Effectiveness and Research collect feedback which is also used to improve services (Examples 1[33], 2[34]).

Academic Program Assessment

Each academic program at A&M-Commerce has expected student learning outcomes that are assessed and evaluated as part of the University-wide ongoing continuous improvement process. The faculty has responsibility for the oversight of the curricular content and the development of the Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Plan in their program area. Faculty develop learning outcomes in conjunction with stakeholders' input, including accrediting organizations, professional societies, educator certification requirements, curricula benchmarks, industry professionals and advisory boards.

Assessment and evaluation of the learning outcomes are conducted by the faculty using methods appropriate to the discipline. Examples include state or national examinations, student portfolios, performance rubrics, and embedded test questions. Some programs may use multiple assessment methods to assess the same Student Learning Outcome, including a combination of direct and indirect measures.

Results guide revision and/or enhancements to the curriculum. Faculty meet to review the assessment data annually. When the trend data indicates an issue faculty develop and implement modifications to their program. Programs are assessed to determine if the changes made the positive impact that was expected. If not, the modifications are re-evaluated and either continued and/or replaced. Besides program faculty, the department head, college Institutional Effectiveness Representative, and dean review the assessment results report. The department head must approve all IE Plans and IE Results documents. The dean ensures the curriculum development and/or revisions align with the mission of the University and college. The dean also has the resources and capacity to implement and/or revise an academic program. The dean must approve all IE Plans and IE Results documents.

The following examples illustrate the process for using results of assessment of student learning outcomes to inform changes to curriculum and pedagogy and seek improvements in student learning. For a representative sampling of assessment Plans and Results which document expected outcomes, assessments and evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of results for academic programs across all levels, colleges and departments, please see the samples provided in evidence documentation and linked to below in the section "Annual Assessment IE Plans and Results."

Examples of Seeking Improvements Based on Analysis of Results

- Agricultural Sciences and Technology – Ornamental Horticulture emphasis (BS): In 2016 the assessment of the Agricultural Sciences and Technology – Ornamental Horticulture emphasis (BS) program noted student deficiencies in the areas of plant health on both internship responses and graduate surveys. Faculty recommended the addition of plant health related information into several plant science classes. This was put forth as the recommendation from the program coordinator and approved by the associate director, IE Representative and interim director, at the time. Subsequent years have seen scores in these areas rise and exceed the standard set. [35] [36] [37]
- Agricultural Sciences and Technology – Teacher Certification emphasis (BA/BS): Changes made to the Agricultural Sciences and Technology – Teacher Certification emphasis (BA/BS) program within the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources have led to development of new courses, such as AMC 423 Natural Resource Management and PLS 303 Floral Design, in response to changes in state requirements that would have led to program deficiencies if left unaddressed. [38] [39] [40] [41] [42] [43]
- Undergraduate Business Core: In fall 2013, the College of Business recognized from direct data

a deficiency in problem solving, one of its common learning outcomes for undergraduate business students. This deficiency was noted specifically in the areas of “generating alternatives” and “developing an action plan.” In spring 2014, faculty implemented changes which included introducing cases earlier in the semester and additional in-class practice with case analysis. An evaluation of these changes found that students achieved the standard for success in “generating alternatives,” but were still deficient in “developing an action plan.” This represents a closed loop. The problem solving outcome was assessed again in fall 2017. Results for “generating alternatives” and “developing an action plan” exceeded expectations for face-to-face courses; online results showed much improvement (up to 73% from 46%) but were still below expectations. It is important to note that there were two professors teaching the online course. One professor administered the measurement instrument (a case study) around the semester midterm; the other professor made it their final. By factoring out the midterm-based assessments, the results were higher and met program expectations. Based on these results, faculty did not recommend any specific changes. Following the Fall 2016 implementation of the simulation exercise (adopted Fall 2016, measured Fall 2017), the faculty were still discovering better ways to deliver and utilize the simulation. It was recommended that they discuss best practices for delivery and standardize the timing of the case assignment, moving it closer to the end of the semester. [44] [45] [46]

- **Marketing (MS):** In spring 2015, the Assurance of Learning (AOL) Committee found that Marketing (MS) students did not meet the standards for success on the student learning objective relating to the development of a marketing strategy and how the marketing strategy addresses internal/external environments. Upon careful examination by faculty evaluators, it became evident that the assessed course assignment did not effectively capture students’ understanding of a marketing strategy and the internal/external factors that impact the strategy. As a result, students could not develop and apply the concepts to marketing practice. Moreover, it also appeared that the expectations presented were vague. As a result, the marketing faculty recommended the assignment be redesigned along with a specific rubric on the necessary requirements for the assignment’s analysis. During the implementation phase in spring 2016, the instructor also decided to divide the project into three different sections to be submitted at different times during the semester rather than requiring the entire project to be submitted at the end. Each section was submitted and promptly graded with feedback. Consequently, students were able to build on each section following the directions of the instructor. This also allowed student questions regarding the assignment to be addressed right away, rather than at the end of the semester. Assessment outcomes during the next two testing periods (spring 2016 and 2018) show that Marketing (MS) students continue to demonstrate the ability to provide a comprehensive and integrated analysis of an international marketing strategy as a result of the faculty’s diligence in providing explicit details on expectations and timely assignment feedback. [47] [48]
- **Nursing (BSN):** In academic year 2018-2019, the method of assessment changed for one of the program’s student learning outcomes. Previously SLO #5 (Demonstrate activities that promote self-awareness, self-growth, professional role development, ethical accountability, and legal responsibility in the practice of nursing) was assessed using scores on a combination of required papers. One paper consistently exceeded the expected standard while results for the second paper varied. When results for SLO #5 from the Ethical Issues papers consistently fell below the standard of success, even when combined with the Disciplinary Action paper, the program worked to revise, refine and make the grading rubric more understandable for students. In addition, an expert on debate was brought in to teach the students the rudiments of debate—seeing both the pros and cons of an ethical dilemma. [49] [50] [51]
- **Psychology (BS):** The undergraduate psychology program added a basic statistics course as a prerequisite course for the required psychological statistics course to help better prepare students in the major for more advanced statistics. Disaggregated data has allowed for analyses across campus locations (Commerce vs. CHEC) and modalities (face-to-face vs. online), and these comparisons have led to a discussion of faculty course assignments. [52] [53] [54]
- **Special Education (MA/MEd and MS):** Assessment planning has guided the special education faculty in the development of a curriculum map to ensure that required coursework addresses all competencies. Program faculty noted a lack of data generated by existing assessment tools on students in the program’s generic track who take the certification exam, the TExES 161. After

- reviewing the required competencies/alignment of program SLOs, program faculty added two measures to the masters of special education IE Plan beginning in 2017-18—the case study and microteaching assignment linked to SPED 583. Assessment results in the same year showed student performance which met the standard of success for the associated student learning outcomes (SLOs 1 and 3). [55] [56]
- **Paralegal Studies (BA/BS):** Students in the Paralegal Studies program are required to participate in a 160-hour internship as a paralegal. Results collected in 17-18 indicated performance below the standard of success for SLOs 2 (Students will demonstrate practical skills necessary to perform substantive legal work under the direction of an attorney) and 3 (Students will demonstrate competency in legal research and writing) when assessed by internship sponsors through use of an evaluation form. Evaluation items which specifically showed deficits in student learning related to writing skills. In response, the director added a requirement to the PSCI 223 Legal Research course to require students to attend appointments at the Writing Center on campus to further develop their writing skills beyond the writing instruction delivered in the course. Results in the following assessment cycle showed improved performance. [57] [58]
 - **Theatre (MA/MS):** Results collected for the Written Comprehensive and Oral Comprehensive Exams were used to inform changes to how information regarding the exams is delivered to students. After performance on SLOs 1 and 4 fell below the desired level in 15-16, program faculty implemented a series of meetings with students outlining parameters and effective strategies for studying for the comprehensive exam. Changes to the assessment method also included the removal of the time limit for the Written Comprehensive Exam. Student performance on SLOs 1 and 4 in subsequent cycles improved. [59] [60]
 - **Physics (BS):** Results from the standardized ETS Major Field Test, used as an assessment tool in past years, indicated students were not attaining or retaining basic concepts in the University Physics I and II courses. As a result of the assessments, the program faculty researched potential solutions and ultimately implemented Studio Mode Physics. Baseline data were collected in fall 2014 and spring 2015 in the traditional-taught courses. The Studio model was used in fall 2015 and spring 2016. A pre- and post-survey using the Force and Motion Conceptual Evaluation (FMCE) tool, was given to students in Physics 2425. In addition, the Brief Electricity & Magnetism Assessment (BEMA) was conducted in Physics 2426. The tools are a concept inventory of classical mechanics, electricity and magnetism topics. Paired t-tests were conducted and the mean normalized learning gain was calculated for each semester. Results indicate the Studio model implemented in foundational physics courses at A&M-Commerce is effective in improving students' understanding and retention of fundamental physics concepts. [61] [62]
 - **Computer Science (BS):** Results from the Senior Capstone Project show a favorable trend for all student learning outcomes assessed. Past assessment reports discuss the major issues that occupied the departmental effort to bring up scores in CSCI 440. Earlier recommendations included better coordination between CSCI 359 and CSCI 440, as these two courses were created to be a two-semester sequence but had drifted apart. The emphasis on coordination between these two courses is now in place and apparently is a reason for improved scores. Another past issue related to this Capstone Project concerned whether the makeup of student teams should include either Computer Science (CS) or Computer Information Systems (CIS) members or a mixture of both CS and CIS members. Separating CS and CIS does make it easier to assess the CS and the CIS program separately. However, it was determined that mixing CS and CIS members within the same team allows for a better learning environment among members. This issue has been resolved by those currently teaching 359-440. A CS and CIS mixture is allowed and encouraged. However, team selection is largely left up to the students. Assessment techniques of this Capstone Project have evolved to allow the assessment of not only the projects, but also the individual students within each project. Thus CS and CIS students continue to be assessed separately. Also, previous assessment reports raised the question of emphasis on system tools used in 440. It was reported that students seemed to be overwhelmed by the large number of system tracking and documentation tools that were required. This has now been resolved and is apparently another reason for higher scores. All SLOs measured by the Capstone Project met the Standard of Success in 2017-18. While there are no additional

recommendations for pedagogy modifications at this time, the faculty is currently focusing on the issue of how to improve student programming skills, which is directly related to this assessment. [\[63\]](#) [\[64\]](#) [\[65\]](#)

Annual Assessment IE Plans and Results

Samples of program-specific assessment IE Plans and Results are provided in evidence documentation and linked to in the tables below for both undergraduate and graduate programs across all six academic colleges.

College of Science and Engineering (COSE)

| Also approved for Online (O) or Off-site (OS) Delivery | Academic Program | 2017-18 IE Plan | 2017-18 IE Results | 2018-19 IE Plan | 2018-19 IE Results | 2019-20 IE Plan |
|--|-----------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| | Undergraduate | | | | | |
| O, OS | Computer Science (BS) | X[66] | X[67] | X[68] | X[69] | X[70] |
| OS | Environmental Science (BS) | X[71] | X[72] | X[73] | X[74] | X[75] |
| | Industrial Engineering (BS) | X[76] | X[77] | X[78] | X[79] | X[80] |
| | Mathematics (BA/BS) | X[81] | X[82] | X[83] | X[84] | X[85] |
| O | Technology Management (BS) | X[86] | X[87] | X[88] | X[89] | X[90] |
| | Graduate | | | | | |
| | Chemistry (MS) | X[91] | X[92] | X[93] | X[94] | X[95] |
| O | Computer Science (MS) | X[96] | X[97] | X[98] | X[99] | X[100] |
| O | Physics (MS) | X[101] | X[102] | X[103] | X[104] | X[105] |

College of Innovation and Design

| Also approved for Online (O) or Off-site (OS) Delivery | Academic Program | 2017-18 IE Plan | 2017-18 IE Results | 2018-19 IE Plan | 2018-19 IE Results | 2019-20 IE Plan |
|--|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| | Undergraduate | | | | | |
| O | Applied Arts & Sciences - Organizational Leadership emphasis (BAAS) | X[106] | X[107] | X[108] | X[109] | X[110] |
| O | General Studies (BGS) | X[111] | X[112] | X[113] | X[114] | X[115] |

College of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Arts (CHSSA)

| Also approved for Online (O) or | Academic Program | 2017-18 IE | 2017-18 IE | 2018-19 IE | 2018-19 IE | 2019-20 IE |
|---------------------------------|------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|---------------------------------|------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|

| Off-site (OS) Delivery | | Plan | Results | Plan | Results | Plan |
|------------------------|---|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| | Undergraduate | | | | | |
| OS | Visual Communications (BFA) | X[116] | X[117] | X[118] | X[119] | X[120] |
| | History (BA/BS) | X[121] | X[122] | X[123] | X[124] | X[125] |
| | Liberal Studies (BA/BS) | X[126] | X[127] | X[128] | X[129] | X[130] |
| | Paralegal Studies (BA/BS) | X[131] | X[132] | X[133] | X[134] | X[135] |
| | Spanish (BA) | X[136] | X[137] | X[138] | X[139] | X[140] |
| | Graduate | | | | | |
| O | Applied Criminology (MS) | X[141] | X[142] | X[143] | X[144] | X[145] |
| OS | Art – Studio Art emphasis (MFA) | X[146] | X[147] | X[148] | X[149] | X[150] |
| OS | Art – Visual Communications emphasis (MA) | X[151] | X[152] | X[153] | X[154] | X[155] |
| O | English (PhD) | X[156] | X[157] | X[158] | X[159] | X[160] |
| | Music (MM) | X[161] | X[162] | X[163] | X[164] | X[165] |
| | Theatre (MA/MS) | X[166] | X[167] | X[168] | X[169] | X[170] |

College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR)

| Also approved for Online (O) or Off-site (OS) Delivery | Academic Program | 2017-18 IE Plan | 2017-18 IE Results | 2018-19 IE Plan | 2018-19 IE Results | 2019-20 IE Plan |
|--|--|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| | Undergraduate | | | | | |
| | Agricultural Science & Technology – Teacher Certification emphasis (BA/BS) | X[171] | X[172] | X[173] | X[174] | X[175] |
| O, OS | AgriBusiness (BA/BS) | X[176] | X[177] | X[178] | X[179] | X[180] |
| | Graduate | | | | | |
| O | Agricultural Sciences (Thesis) (MS) | X[181] | X[182] | X[183] | X[184] | X[185] |
| O | Agricultural Sciences (Non-Thesis) (MS) | X[186] | X[187] | X[188] | X[189] | X[190] |

College of Education and Human Services (COEHS)

| Also approved for Online (O) or Off-site | Academic Program | 2017-18 IE Plan | 2017-18 IE Results | 2018-19 IE Plan | 2018-19 IE Results | 2019-20 IE Plan |
|--|------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|
|--|------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| (OS) Delivery | | | | | | |
| | Undergraduate | | | | | |
| | Kinesiology & Sports Studies – Human Performance emphasis (BS) | X[191] | X[192] | X[193] | X[194] | X[195] |
| | Learning and Technology (BS) | X[196] | X[197] | X[198] | X[199] | X[200] |
| | Nursing (BSN) | X[201] | X[202] | X[203] | X[204] | X[205] |
| OS | Psychology (BS) | X[206] | X[207] | X[208] | X[209] | X[210] |
| OS | Social Work (BSW) | X[211] | X[212] | X[213] | X[214] | X[215] |
| | Graduate | | | | | |
| OS | Counseling (Ph.D.) | X[216] | X[217] | X[218] | X[219] | X[220] |
| O, OS | Curriculum and Instruction (MEd) | X[221] | X[222] | X[223] | X[224] | X[225] |
| O | Educational Administration (MEd) | X[226] | X[227] | X[228] | X[229] | X[230] |
| O | Health, Kinesiology & Sports Studies (MS) | X[231] | X[232] | X[233] | X[234] | X[235] |
| O | Higher Education (Ed.D.) | X[236] | X[237] | X[238] | X[239] | X[240] |
| OS | Psychology – Applied emphasis (MS) | X[241] | X[242] | X[243] | X[244] | X[245] |
| O, OS | Social Work (MSW) | X[246] | X[247] | X[248] | X[249] | X[250] |

College of Business (COB)

| Also approved for Online (O) or Off-site (OS) Delivery | Academic Program | 2017-18 IE Plan | 2017-18 IE Results | 2018-19 IE Plan | 2018-19 IE Results | 2019-20 IE Plan |
|---|-------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| | Undergraduate | | | | | |
| O, OS | Business Administration (BS) | X[251] | X[252] | X[253] | X[254] | X[255] |
| O, OS | General Business (BBA) | X[256] | X[257] | X[258] | X[259] | X[260] |
| O | Management (BBA) | X[261] | X[262] | X[263] | X[264] | X[265] |
| O, OS | Business Analytics (BBA) | X[266] | X[267] | X[268] | X[269] | X[270] |
| | Graduate | | | | | |
| O, OS | Accounting (MSA) | X[271] | X[272] | X[273] | X[274] | X[275] |
| O, OS | Business Administration (MBA) | X[276] | X[277] | X[278] | X[279] | X[280] |
| O | Marketing (MS) | X[281] | X[282] | X[283] | X[284] | X[285] |

Outcomes Assessment at A&M-Commerce

In addition to the efforts within its academic colleges and to further support the development of assessment practices, the University is taking steps designed to strengthen and build capacity for a culture of continuous improvement, which include:

- The purchase of an assessment management system[286] offering a centralized repository for assessment results which can be used to manage reporting, facilitate quality review and align program-level outcomes with University strategic planning components and externally-guided learning outcomes from the Texas A&M University System or Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.
- The development and adoption of an institutional rubric for the direct assessment of assessment plans and results produced by academic programs which can be used to provide feedback for quality improvements to identified learning outcomes, assessment methodology and use of results for improvement[287].
- The creation of a Senior Research Analyst position[288] within the Department of Institutional Effectiveness and Research which can be utilized to analyze aggregated assessment results reported within the centralized assessment management system and identify areas for the modeling or seeking of evidence-based improvement.

The University anticipates that these steps, along with the continued, systematic collection of annual assessment results by academic programs through processes described in this narrative, will continue and improve an authentic culture of assessment at A&M-Commerce.

Conclusion

The University's Institutional Effectiveness process ensures that each academic program annually identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which they achieve those outcomes and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on the analysis of those results. These processes are faculty-driven within each academic college and have been used to implement modifications for the further enhancement of program quality. Reports provided for a sampling of programs across disciplines (linked to in tables above) demonstrate A&M-Commerce's compliance in Standard 8.2.a. Through ongoing monitoring of the achievement of identified programmatic student outcomes and use of results to seek improvements in academic programs, A&M-Commerce supports its mission to provide students with a transformative education which will allow them to discover and achieve.

Section 9 Educational Program Structure and Content

9.1 Educational programs (a) embody a coherent course of study, (b) are compatible with the stated mission and goals of the institution, and (c) are based upon fields of study appropriate to higher education. (*Program content*) [CR]

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Introduction

Texas A&M University-Commerce offers degree programs that are coherent and that align with the University's mission[1] to "Educate. Discover. Achieve." The University's vision further states that A&M-Commerce strives to transform lives, advance knowledge, serve an inclusive community and foster collaboration. A&M-Commerce is a regional comprehensive university that serves a large, diverse region in the state of Texas, encompassing the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area as well as surrounding rural regions. The University's educational programs are selected to meet the anticipated needs, both professional and educational, of those living within its service area. The A&M-Commerce Strategic Plan[2] provides the framework that sets high expectations and goals for students, faculty and staff to maximize learning, career and personal development. The strategic priority of Student Preparedness specifically targets strategies which include preparing students for a rapidly changing

world, increasing student career readiness and pursuing “new and enhanced programs, innovative pedagogies and an engaging environment for learning to increase student retention and success.” In support of this, the University offers programs which allow students to acquire the knowledge that will assist in their intellectual, cultural and social development so as to contribute to the economic vitality of Texas and beyond. Additionally, A&M-Commerce offers many programs in a traditional, face-to-face format, as well as hybrid (face-to-face and online) and fully or 100% online.

A&M-Commerce is authorized by the State of Texas, through the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), and governed by The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents, to offer baccalaureate, masters and doctoral degrees. Regular processes for the approval and review of academic programs as conducted by University faculty and under the oversight of applicable external agencies ensure its academic programs embody a coherent course of study, are compatible with the stated mission and goals of the institution and are based upon fields of study appropriate to higher education.

Educational Programs

A&M-Commerce offers bachelor's degrees, masters degrees, a specialist degree and doctoral degrees through the University's six academic colleges – the colleges of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR); Business (COB); Education and Human Services (COEHS); Humanities, Social Sciences and Arts (CHSSA); Innovation and Design (CID); and Science and Engineering (COSE).

Program Approval Processes

Each degree program at A&M-Commerce is approved by University faculty and administrative bodies following University procedures, by The Texas A&M University System and Board of Regents[3], and by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB)[4]. THECB oversees all public post-secondary education and determines which public institutions are permitted to start or continue degree programs. New degree programs which represent a significant departure are reported to SACSCOC for substantive change approval.

Changes to existing programs, including the offering of programs in an online delivery mode or as a competency-based program, and the creation of new programs begin with the faculty and are reviewed by faculty prior to final approval by the University and other appropriate governing bodies. Academic approval processes for programs are governed by University procedures *03.02.99.R0.01*[5] *Academic Approval Procedure for Programs* and *03.02.99.R0.03*[6] *Programmatic and Administrative Substantive Changes Approval Process (SACSCOC)* which ensures that proposed changes are reviewed by faculty at the departmental, college and university levels and that the appropriate governing bodies are notified, when applicable.

The approval process for any new degree program requires proof of the rigor and substance of the program and the courses included in it. New program proposals begin at the faculty/department level, working with the respective dean to request permission from the Provost prior to proceeding with the planned program development. All actions are to be reviewed and approved by the appropriate University faculty and administrative bodies (internal) in addition to applicable external bodies--the A&M System, THECB and SACSCOC. Faculty Senate review and approval is required on all new program development and curriculum changes. Graduate Council review and approval are required on all new graduate programs and curriculum changes. Academic Department Heads Council review and approval are required on all new undergraduate programs and curriculum changes. Teacher Education Committee review and approval are required of all new programs leading to teacher and/or educational administrative certifications.

During review, faculty are directed to “follow standards of good practice and the guidelines established by this procedure, the A&M System, THECB, and SACSCOC[7]”. Approving bodies are further instructed to review proposals for curriculum alignment, appropriateness of delivery method, alignment with any specialized accreditation, capacity of the department to accommodate the proposal and fit with university, college, and departmental mission and goals. The template for program proposals[8]

requires information regarding degree requirements, curriculum and educational objectives as well as a statement of fit with the institution's strategic plan. All degree programs at A&M-Commerce have been approved by the THECB and can be found on the THECB's website in its list of approved programs[9]. The University is also required to send a list of proposed new programs to the A&M-System on an annual basis to ensure that the University's strategic curricular goals are aligned with the strategic goals of the A&M System. [10] [11] [12] [13]

The following examples are provided of educational programs recently approved to be offered by the University. Proposal documents are included in the supporting documentation as evidence of coherence of course of study, alignment with institutional mission and goals and appropriateness of field of study for higher education.

Family Nurse Practitioner (MSN). The proposed Master's of Science in Nursing degree program was approved by internal bodies at A&M-Commerce[14] and submitted to and subsequently approved by the A&M System Board of Regents[15] on April 27, 2016, by the THECB[16] on May 18, 2016 and by SACSCOC[17] on February 20, 2017. Proposal documents include the following: Example 1[18], Example 2[19], Example 3[20].

Electrical Engineering (BSE). The proposed Bachelor's of Science in Electrical Engineering program was approved by internal bodies at A&M-Commerce[21] and submitted to and subsequently approved by the A&M System Board of Regents[22] April 27, 2016, by SACSCOC [23] June 28, 2016 and by the THECB[24] on April 10, 2017. Proposal documents include the following: Example 4[25], Example 5[26], Example 6[27].

Competency-Based Programs and Programs Offered in an Online Delivery Mode

In adherence to A&M University Commerce procedure *03.02.99.R0.01 Academic Approval Procedure for Programs* and Texas Administrative Code *Rule 4.261[28] Standards and Criteria for Distance Education Programs*, to offer a program in an online delivery mode, A&M-Commerce must seek approval from the Texas A&M University System and provide notification to the THECB. The institution must certify each program as meeting the criteria of the THECB's *Principles of Good Practice[29] for Academic Degree and Certificate Programs and Credit Courses Offered Electronically*, which includes meeting the criteria that "A degree or certificate program or course offered electronically is coherent and complete." An example is provided for the Master's of Science in Computer Science (Example 1) [30] (Example 2)[31].

Competency-based education programs offered in an online delivery mode at A&M-Commerce follow the same approval procedures for changes to existing programs or the creation of new programs as all degree programs at A&M-Commerce (as described above). Students are able to transfer into the program traditionally-acquired general education and elective credit hours, or complete this lower-division coursework in an online, competency-based format. Program faculty are responsible for the development and implementation of a structured process for identifying student learning outcomes and competencies which are mapped to major courses[32].

Curriculum and Catalog Review

Degree requirements for all programs at A&M-Commerce are available in the Undergraduate Catalog and Graduate Catalog. Updates to the curriculum and subsequent catalog information are governed by the institution's policies and procedures *03.02.99.R0.01[5] Academic Approval Procedure for Programs*, *03.02.99.R0.04[33] Academic Approval Procedures for Courses* and *03.02.99.R0.03[6] Programmatic and Administrative Substantive Changes Approval Process (SACSCOC)*. The Registrar's Office issues a yearly Official Call[34] for curriculum changes. Curriculum and course changes are proposed by the department faculty and reviewed by their respective department curriculum committees and heads, college curriculum committees, deans, Educator Certification committees, Graduate Council, Deans' Council, Institutional Effectiveness, and Faculty Senate, as

applicable and consistent with procedure. Upon completion of the curriculum cycle, notification is sent from the Registrar's Office[35] and the Graduate School[36] to all University stakeholders to update the catalogs to reflect any changes to course and degree requirements.

Documentation is provided for the following examples as evidence of the approval process for curriculum changes:

Mathematics MS[37]
Equine Studies BS[38]

External Peer Review

A periodic peer review process exists for all academic programs at A&M-Commerce. The University's academic program review process for academic programs occurs on a ten year schedule as required by the THECB[39] and outlined in University procedure 11.99.99.R0.04[40] *Academic Program Review*. A&M-Commerce evaluates undergraduate programs along with their corresponding graduate degrees and conducts a separate review of standalone undergraduate programs. Academic program review has as its primary goal enhancing the quality of academic programs and includes a review of programmatic mission statements and their alignment with institutional goals.

Documentation is provided of reviews for the following programs as evidence:

Physics BS/BA and MS[41]
The Art of Teaching MEd[42]
Mass Media and Journalism BS/BA[43]

In addition, numerous programs are accredited by specialized accrediting bodies as documented on the University's Accreditations web page[44] and in section 5 of Part II: Institutional Summary Form. These professional and external organizations provide an additional level of review to ensure that A&M-Commerce's programs are appropriate to higher education and embody a coherent course of study aligned with national standards.

The University annually reviews academic programs for the achievement of student learning outcomes through its institutional effectiveness process[45] in which each academic program is required to include a statement of the program's mission and its connection to and support of the University's Strategic Plan. Examples are provided for the following programs:

Visual Communications BFA[46]
Construction Engineering BS[47]
Accounting MS[48]
Counseling PhD[49]

The narrative for Standard 8.2.a provides additional discussion of learning outcomes assessment for educational programs.

Conclusion

Texas A&M University-Commerce offers educational programs that embody a coherent course of study, are compatible with the stated mission and goals of the institution and are based upon fields of study appropriate to higher education. Regular processes for the approval and review of academic programs and curricular changes as conducted by University faculty and under the oversight of applicable external agencies ensure the continued quality and alignment of program content.

9.2 The institution offers one or more degree programs based on at least 60 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the associate level; at least 120 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the baccalaureate level; or at least 30 semester credit hours or the equivalent at the post-baccalaureate, graduate, or professional level. The institution provides an explanation of

equivalencies when using units other than semester credit hours. The institution provides an appropriate justification for all degree programs and combined degree programs that include fewer than the required number of semester credit hours or its equivalent unit. (Program length) [CR]

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Introduction

Texas A&M University-Commerce's degree requirements align with the expectations of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) policies and regulations concerning baccalaureate, master's and doctoral program length. A&M-Commerce publishes its degree requirements in its *Undergraduate* [1] and *Graduate* catalog (Master's/Specialist[2]) (Doctoral[3]). A&M-Commerce does not award associate's degrees. All programs at A&M-Commerce are based on the semester credit hour. The university's *Academic Approval Procedure for Programs* (03.02.99.R0.01[4]) states that the Department Head is responsible for reviewing program proposals for any impact on required semester credit hours and that administrative changes to existing programs which include a change to a program's minimum semester credit hours require careful review and approval by the appropriate A&M-Commerce faculty and administrative bodies, as well as approval by applicable external bodies (A&M System, THECB and SACSCOC).

Undergraduate Degree Programs

Texas Education Code (TEC) Title 3, Subtitle B, Chapter 61, Subchapter C, Section 61.0515[5] limits all baccalaureate degree programs at Texas state "general academic teaching" institutions to "the minimum number of semester credit hours required for the degree" by SACSCOC, "unless the institution determines that there is a compelling academic reason" to require more. Enforcement of the "120-Hour Rule" resides with the THECB, as does authority to approve institutional justification for longer baccalaureate programs.

All A&M-Commerce baccalaureate programs are based on the semester credit hour, including competency-based programs, and require 120 semester credit hours (SCH) or more. Each student must complete the 42 SCH Texas Core Curriculum[6], the parameters of which are established by the Legislature[7] in statute and regulated in process by the THECB[8]. The Dean of the College of Innovation and Design and the University Studies Council have curricular oversight and administrative responsibilities for the Texas Core Curriculum at A&M-Commerce[9].

The *Undergraduate Catalog* stipulates that an academic major must be a minimum of twenty-four hours, including twelve advanced (300 or 400-level) hours. Broadfield majors primarily serve the function of including content courses for a given major along with requisite courses for teacher certification and must be at least 48 hours, including 18 advanced. A minor must be at least 18 hours with six hours being advanced. A&M-Commerce requires that at least 36 hours of any baccalaureate degree be advanced hours, and that 25% of any baccalaureate degree be completed at A&M-Commerce[1].

While most A&M-Commerce baccalaureate degree programs require only 120 SCH, multiple departments offer baccalaureate degrees that surpass that minimum. These exceptions usually are in response to outside accrediting or professional licensure expectations regarding program length. In addition, support courses for teacher certification programs can also lengthen programs beyond the minimum. Below, please see, listed by college, baccalaureate programs that exceed 120 SCH.

College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR)

| College | Program | Program Length (SCH) |
|---------|--|----------------------|
| CASNR | BA/BS-Animal Science, Pre-Vet Concentration | 122[10] |
| CASNR | BS-Wildlife and Conservation Science | 120-123[11]† |

†Program shared with Biological and Environmental Sciences (see below).
Additional hours to 123 possible due to optional 3-6 hour length of internship requirement.

College of Education and Human Services (COEHS)

| Department | Program | Program Length (SCH) |
|----------------------------|--|----------------------|
| Curriculum and Instruction | BSIS/BAIS-Interdisciplinary Studies, Teacher Certification, EC-6 Generalist | 123[12] |
| Curriculum and Instruction | BSIS/BAIS-Interdisciplinary Studies, Teacher Certification, 4-8 English/Language Arts/Reading | 123[13] |
| Curriculum and Instruction | BSIS/BAIS-Interdisciplinary Studies, Teacher Certification, 4-8 ESL English/Language Arts/Reading | 123[14] |
| Curriculum and Instruction | BSIS/BAIS-Interdisciplinary Studies, Teacher Certification, 4-8 ESL Science | 128-129[15] |
| Curriculum and Instruction | BSIS/BAIS-Interdisciplinary Studies, Teacher Certification, 4-8 Science | 122-123[16] |
| Curriculum and Instruction | BSIS/BAIS-Interdisciplinary Studies, Teacher Certification, 4-8 Math/Science | 131[17] |

College of Humanities, Social Sciences and Arts (CHSSA)

| Department | Program | Program Length (SCH) |
|------------|--|--|
| Art | BFA-Studio Art, All-Level Certification | 137[18] |
| Art | BFA-Visual Communication† | 126 (Direction[19], Design[20], New Media[21]) |
| Music | BM-Music Performance | 127[22] |

†BFA in Visual Communication has three areas of emphasis which require 126 SCH.

College of Science and Engineering (COSE)

| Department | Program | Program Length (SCH) |
|--|--|----------------------|
| Biological & Environmental Sciences | BS-Biological Sciences- Secondary Certification, 7-12 Life Science | 120-123[23]† |

| | | |
|--|--|---------------|
| Biological & Environmental Sciences | BS-Wildlife and Conservation Science | 120-123[11]‡ |
| Chemistry | BS-Chemistry | 124[24] |
| Chemistry | BS-Chemistry, ACS Option | 127-128[25]* |
| Chemistry | BS-Chemistry, ACS Option with a Biochemistry Concentration | 127-129[26]* |
| Chemistry | BS-Chemistry, Teacher Certification Option | 120-122[27]** |
| Engineering and Technology | BS-Construction Engineering | 126[28] |
| Engineering and Technology | BS-Electrical Engineering | 127[29] |
| Engineering and Technology | BS-Industrial Engineering | 126[30] |
| Computer Science and Information Systems | BS-Computer Information Systems, Teacher Certification | 122[31] |
| Mathematics | BA/BS-Mathematics, 7-12 Teacher Certification | 122-123[32] |

†Stipulates 3-6 hours for teaching residency. ‡Additional hours to 123 possible due to optional 3-6 hour length of internship. *Additional courses mandated by American Chemical Association for their certification of the BS.

**Additional hours to 122 possible due to options among required courses.

Graduate Programs

Graduate program degree length is determined through deliberative curriculum processes applying “standards of good practice” in compliance with University procedures, program accreditor, A&M-System, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and SACSCOC guidelines. University policy requires a minimum of 30 SCH beyond the bachelor’s for a master’s[33], and two-thirds of those hours must be earned in residence. Doctoral degrees[34] require a minimum of 90 SCH beyond the bachelor’s or 60 SCH past the master’s. Though some graduate certificates exist (see below), there are no graduate degrees of less than 30 SCH.

Graduate Certificates

Graduate certificates are planned courses of study intended to meet academic and career needs of graduate students and employed professionals. Students holding a bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited institution, who are not seeking a degree, may enroll in graduate courses in the Graduate Certificates. Graduate certificate programs[35] must have a minimum of 12 SCH and no more than 24 SCH. Course substitutions are not permitted, and all courses within a graduate certificate course of study must be earned from Texas A&M University-Commerce. Examples of some currently offered graduate certificates can be found in the table below.

| Certificate Name | Department | College | Program Length (SCH) |
|--|----------------------------------|---------|----------------------|
| Public History | History | CHSSA | 12[36] |
| Holocaust Studies | Political Science | CHSSA | 12[37] |
| All Level Gifted and Talented Certification | Curriculum and Instruction | COEHS | 12[38] |
| Psychology of Gerontology and Positive Aging | Psychology and Special Education | COEHS | 15[39] |

| | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------|------|--------|
| Environmental Sciences | Biological and Environmental Sciences | COSE | 13[40] |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------|------|--------|

Master's Programs

All A&M-Commerce master's programs[41] require a minimum of 30 SCH. Master's degrees must include a major of at least 18 SCH, with additional electives to total 30 SCH for the degree program. A minor, when applicable, must be 12 SCH. Broadfield master's degrees primarily serve the function of including requisite courses for teacher certification and must have a major of 24 SCH distributed across three fields in the following pattern: 12-6-6 SCH. A complete list of master's programs can be found at the Graduate School's program listing in the *Graduate Catalog*[42]. Examples of these programs are listed in the table below.

| College | Department | Degree | Program Length (SCH) |
|---------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| CASNR | Agricultural Sciences | MS-Agricultural Sciences | 30 or 36[43] SCH (thesis or non-thesis option) |
| COB | Marketing and Business Analytics | MS-Business Analytics | 30 or 33[44] SCH (without minor or with minor) |
| COEHS | School of Social Work | MSW-Social Work | 36 or 60[45] SCH (without or with Foundation courses) |
| CHSSA | Art | MFA-Art | 60[46] SCH |
| COSE | Computer Science | MS-Computer Science | 31 or 37[47] SCH (thesis or non-thesis option) |

Doctoral Programs

A&M-Commerce offers both Ph.D. and Ed.D. doctoral degrees. Doctoral programs[48] must consist of at least 90 SCH beyond the bachelor's degree or 60 SCH beyond the master's. At least 45 SCH, not including dissertation, must be earned in residence. Doctoral program majors must be at least 36 SCH, excluding dissertation hours. A minor of 30 SCH is required for those not bearing the master's degree for all doctoral programs except Counseling, Educational Psychology and English.

A&M-Commerce offers doctoral degrees in the following fields: Counseling[49] (Ph.D.), Educational Administration[50] (Ed.D.), Educational Psychology[51] (Ph.D.), English[52] (Ph.D.), Higher Education [53] (Ed.D.) and Supervision, Curriculum and Instruction[54] (Ed.D.).

Conclusion

The University's baccalaureate programs are all at least 120 SCH in length. All master's programs are at least 30 SCH in length, and all doctoral programs are at least 60 SCH beyond the master's degree and/or 90 SCH beyond the baccalaureate.

Section 10 Educational Policies, Procedures, and Practices

10.2 The institution makes available to students and the public current academic calendars, grading policies, cost of attendance, and refund policies. (*Public information*)

Compliance Status: Compliant**Narrative****Introduction**

Texas A&M University-Commerce makes the institution's academic calendars, grading policies, cost of attendance and refund policies available to students and to the public. These are described in specific sections of the *Undergraduate* and *Graduate* catalogs and maintained and regularly updated on the University's website, which is accessible to all students, including students in online courses and at off-campus locations. The information is readily accessible in a timely fashion for downloading, reviewing, printing or emailing.

Academic Calendars

The academic calendar can be accessed from the main Texas A&M University-Commerce website[1], the Registrar's web page[2], the Admissions web page[3], in the *Undergraduate*[4] and *Graduate*[5] catalogs and within a student's myLeo[6] portal. The Registrar's web page[7] provides easy access to both the *Undergraduate* and *Graduate* catalogs and information therein regarding the academic calendar. The University website also provides a copy of the *Student Guidebook*, found on the undergraduate admissions[8] web page. The *Student Guidebook* is updated annually with additional information regarding the academic calendar[9], campus resources, services and rules and procedures. Links to the academic calendar, important academic deadlines, such as drop/add and withdrawal deadlines, and schedules for final examinations and registration are located on the Registrar's web page. In addition, the Graduate School web page includes a link titled "Resources for Students[10]" which links to the academic calendar.

Grading Policies

Grading policies are published in the *Undergraduate Catalog*[11], the *Graduate Catalog*[12] and on the Registrar's web page[13]. Each location provides descriptions of the grades and grading system employed by the University, as well as important rules involving grades such as the "3-peat" rule, the "6 drop" rule regarding maximum number of drops allowed, class attendance requirements, computation of grade point average, numbering of academic courses, academic honors and distinctions, academic probation, suspension and dismissal, student overloads and withdrawal. Students may also be directed to University procedures 13.99.99.R0.05 *Student Appeal of Instructor Evaluation*[14], 13.99.99.R0.06 *Computation of Grade Point Averages*[15] and 13.99.99.R0.07 *Grade Changes*[16]. All University rules and procedures are published on the A&M-Commerce Rules and Procedures web page[17] and are developed and revised according to University procedure 01.01.01.R0.02 *Development and Maintenance of University Rules and Procedures*[18].

Cost of Attendance

Information regarding tuition and fees and the cost of attendance[19] is located on the Cost and Assistance web page for both undergraduate[20] and graduate[21] students. Two online net price calculators are available to students through the University website. An in-house tuition estimation calculator uses current term data for tuition/fees, housing and meal plan charges and allows students to self-report anticipated credit hours, housing assignments and meal plans as well as expected financial aid. Students can also utilize the Net Price Calculator[22] for estimating tuition. The College for All Texans[23] website, provided by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, is the source for the net price calculator. Based on user-provided data, the College for All Texans calculator provides an estimate for costs and estimates for financial aid eligibility. Tuition/fee schedules for the past three years are available online through the University admissions[24] web page. The University charges \$50/hr for all online classes through a distance-learning fee. The distance-learning fee is on top of standard tuition/fees. Students taking courses at off-campus locations are assessed a program delivery fee[25] of \$20/hr for those classes. Information about the program delivery fee and distance-learning fee is located through the admissions web page[26]. Financial aid cost of attendance estimates are

calculated annually and are available through the admissions[19] and financial aid[27] web pages. Estimates for undergraduate (on-campus residents[28] and nonresidents[29] as well as off-campus residents[30] and nonresidents[31]) and graduate[32] students (on-campus residents and off-campus residents) are provided.

Tuition Refund Policies

Both the Registrar's web page[33] and University catalogs (Undergraduate[34]) (Graduate[35]) describe the defined schedule for receiving a percentage refund [36]of tuition/fees when withdrawing at specific times in the semester. The percentages range from 100% for withdrawals prior to the first day of the term to no refund for withdrawals after classes have been in session for a defined period, typically the twentieth class day in a long semester. Refund percentages[37] are adjusted for seven differing term lengths, including summer and mini sessions. Refund policies are guided by Texas Education Code Sec. 54.006 *Refund or Adjustment of Tuition and Mandatory Fees for Dropped Courses and Student Withdrawals*[38] and reviewed annually by the Registrar's office as part of the yearly catalog update.

Conclusion

The University provides information to students and the general public concerning academic calendars, grading policies, cost of attendance and tuition refunds. This information is accessible to all students, including students in online courses and at off-campus locations.

- 10.3** The institution ensures the availability of archived official catalogs, digital or print, with relevant information for course and degree requirements sufficient to serve former and returning students. (*Archived information*)

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Texas A&M University-Commerce ensures the availability of both *Undergraduate* and *Graduate* catalogs, which publish course offerings and degree requirements. The Registrar's Office and the Graduate School are responsible for producing and archiving the University catalogs in conjunction with CourseLeaf[1], an online curriculum and catalog management system.

The curriculum (CIM[2]) system is a course inventory and curriculum management system that tracks, modifies and approves new and existing courses and programs through automated workflows. Approved changes are then synced with the catalog. The catalog (CAT[3]) system also integrates and syncs with the student information system and is the tool used to produce both the *Undergraduate* and *Graduate* catalogs. The Registrar's Office is responsible for producing the *Undergraduate Catalog*[4] and the Graduate School produces the *Graduate Catalog*[5].

Previous catalogs through summer 2008 are available in print and are archived at Gee Library and in the Registrar's Office. A catalog or course description request form[6] is available on the University Catalog and Course Description[7] page of the Registrar's web page. Beginning with fall 2008, catalogs are made available to former and current students as well as the public online[8]. Current and past catalogs are accessible on the Registrar's Office[9] web page or via links on the University's home page[10].

Updates to the curriculum and subsequent catalog information are governed by the institution's policies and procedures including a) 03.02.99.R0.01 *Academic Approval Procedure for Programs*[11]; b) 03.02.99.R0.03 *Programmatic and Administrative Substantive Changes Approval Process*[12]; and c) 03.02.99.R0.04 *Academic Approval Procedures for Courses*[13]. Details regarding the CourseLeaf system, expected changes, approval processes and timelines are included in the yearly Official Call[14]

for catalog changes from the Registrar's Office. Upon completion of the curriculum cycle, notification is sent from the Registrar's Office[15] and the Graduate School[16] to all University stakeholders to update the catalogs to reflect any changes to course and degree requirements.

A student entering the institution must meet the degree requirements of the catalog which they are admitted under or those of a subsequent catalog. However, a student who fails to graduate within five years after admission will be required to meet the degree requirements of a subsequent catalog that is within five years of currency at the time of his or her graduation[17]. All work for the master's/specialist degree must be completed during the six years immediately preceding the date on which the degree is to be awarded. Credit earned over six years prior to graduation requires specific written departmental justification and approval by the dean of the Graduate School to be counted toward a master's/specialist degree. The discipline in which the course(s) was taken shall be involved in the validation of an old course. In no case may courses more than 10 years old be applied toward the master's/specialist degree[18].

Updated program requirements for current students are included in their degree audits through the undergraduate[19] and graduate[20] DegreeWorks[21] software program. DegreeWorks is informed by information in the University's curriculum and catalog management systems, as maintained by the Registrar's Office. Current students access their degree audit through the myLeo[22] student portal.

- 10.5** The institution publishes admissions policies consistent with its mission. Recruitment materials and presentations accurately represent the practices, policies, and accreditation status of the institution. The institution also ensures that independent contractors or agents used for recruiting purposes and for admission activities are governed by the same principles and policies as institutional employees. (*Admissions policies and practices*)

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Introduction

Texas A&M University-Commerce publishes admissions policies that are consistent with the University's mission[1] to Educate, Discover and Achieve . A&M-Commerce considers itself to be an agent of opportunity, particularly for those persons residing in the northeast Texas region, and seeks to provide a transformative educational experience which allows students to pursue academic excellence and opportunities to achieve distinction. Accordingly, the admission standards and policies of the University have been designed to identify students who show a potential for academic success.

Texas Education Code Section §51.803[2] *Automatic Admission: All Institutions* provides guidance in the development of admission standards at the University. The Texas A&M University System Policy 11.04[3] *Admissions Standards* also establishes parameters. This policy requires that all members of the A&M System prepare and submit their admissions standards to the chancellor and the Board of Regents for approval according to an established schedule. Any changes must be submitted for review and approval. A&M-Commerce Procedure 11.04.99.R0.01[4] *Undergraduate Admissions* details steps to and eligibility for admission to undergraduate programs of study at the University. A&M-Commerce Procedure 11.04.99.R0.11[5] *Admission to Graduate School* outlines the requirements for admission to the Graduate School. The A&M-Commerce's admissions process is selective, and the criteria used in selecting students vary according to the individual's classification, as well as the particular program for which the student seeks entrance. Criteria also depend upon whether the applicant is seeking admission as a freshman, as a transfer student or as a graduate student.

Undergraduate admissions policies are published in the *Undergraduate Catalog*[6] and on the University's Admissions web page[7]. The web page for the undergraduate application[8] also includes the option to visit the ApplyTexas[9] website and complete an ApplyTexas application. The ApplyTexas application offers a single application form which can be used to apply for admission to any public

two-year or four-year institution in the state of Texas. Admissions policies for master's programs and doctoral programs are published in the *Graduate Catalog*[\[10\]](#) and on the University's Graduate School web page[\[11\]](#). Both catalogs are available online[\[12\]](#) for access by students in online programs, at off-site instructional locations and at the main Commerce campus. All admissions policies are applicable for both the main Commerce campus, the University's off-site locations and for programs in all delivery modes.

All recruitment materials and presentations accurately represent the institution's practices, policies and accreditation status and reflect the University's mission to Educate, Discover and Achieve. The work of independent contractors or agents is governed by the same principles and policies as the work of University employees.

Recruitment Materials and Admission Activities

Texas A&M University-Commerce recruitment materials and presentations accurately represent the institution's practices, policies and accreditation status. They also reflect the University's mission to provide a transformative educational experience that allows students to discover and achieve.

Recruitment Materials

Design Process. Recruitment materials and presentations are designed to accurately represent the practices, policies and accreditation status of A&M-Commerce and exist in both hard copy and electronic formats for all students. The Office of Marketing Communications (MARCOM), in collaboration with the offices of Undergraduate and Graduate Admissions, the Office of Hispanic Outreach and Retention and the Enrollment Management and Retention Division, determines what type of recruitment publication, design and image are best suited for each particular initiative.

MARCOM first has an initial discussion with these offices to prepare a marketing plan, which includes establishing project specifications, the identification of deliverables, desired timeline and distribution methods. Once a design draft is complete, the review and approval process begins and is managed by the department's project management software. An example of the workflow[\[13\]](#) is provided. The internal departmental review of both the content and the design are conducted to ensure that the written accuracy and the proposed design align with the project purpose and request.

Upon completion of the internal review by MARCOM, the design proof for undergraduate admissions is routed to the Vice President for Enrollment Management and Retention's office and other required areas for review and approval. The Office of Undergraduate Admissions reviews any information regarding admission policies to ensure that it accurately represents the institution's practices and policies regarding admissions. The Department of Institutional Effectiveness and Research must review any marketing material that contains language representing academic programs[\[14\]](#) or accreditation status[\[15\]](#).

Upon completion of the internal review by MARCOM, the design proof for graduate admissions is routed to the Graduate School and appropriate Graduate Recruiter for review and approval. The Graduate School reviews all information regarding graduate admission policies to ensure that it accurately represents the institution's practices and policies regarding graduate admissions. The Department of Institutional Effectiveness and Research (IER) must review any marketing material that contains language representing academic programs or accreditation status. IER review ensures that A&M-Commerce recruitment and admissions materials and advertising reflect SACSCOC policies and the institution's own commitment to integrity in its communications to potential students.

Representation. To ensure recruitment materials accurately and consistently represent the institution, MARCOM governs the process regarding the utilization of approved logos, taglines, fonts, colors and typefaces. Examples of these can be found on the Marketing Communications web page under brand toolkit[\[16\]](#). In addition, recruitment publications and the A&M-Commerce website are designed to appropriately represent the University's student body. Student testimonials, stories, profiles and pictures are of real students, not actors, and are selected to accurately portray the student body's

diversity by age, gender, ethnicity, program, geographical origin, activities and interests. These authentic examples are evidenced in the Honors College Brochure featuring Sara Diaz, along with other Honors College student photos[17].

Examples of Recruitment Materials. Examples of recruitment materials for prospective students include the following:

Undergraduate Recruitment Materials:

- Freshman Quick Guide[18]
- Transfer Quick Guide[19]
- Housing Brochure[20]
- Middle School Flyer[21]
- Cumby ISD Pledge[22]
- Transfer Flyer[23]
- Mane Event Preview Day Poster[24]
- Hispanic Outreach Brochure[25] – Spanish/English

Graduate Recruitment Materials:

- Agricultural Sciences Postcard[26]
- Business Analytics Postcard[27]
- College of Business General Information[28]
- Curriculum and Instruction Postcard[29]
- Graduate School Programs Information[30]
- Family Nurse Practitioner Postcard[31]
- Chemistry Postcard[32]

Recruitment Personnel and Admissions Activities

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions employs and maintains appropriately qualified staff to meet the needs of the diverse prospective students that A&M-Commerce serves. A sample job description for Admissions Counselor II[33] is provided. Admissions counselors are trained[34] to accurately promote the University, to provide exceptional customer service and to effectively present to small or large groups. The institution's recruitment presentations have been created to meet the needs and interests of a variety of student populations and for those who serve them. The presentations are updated annually (or when changes occur) by Admissions, Hispanic Outreach and the Financial Aid & Scholarships staff members to include all program and departmental updates.

Sample presentations are provided:

- Hispanic Outreach Preview Day Open House Presentation[35]
- Freshman Counselor Update Presentation[36]
- Transfer Counselor Update Presentation[37]

Graduate recruiters are trained by the Graduate School regarding graduate programs and admissions processes and procedures. A graduate recruiter is employed by each academic college. Each recruiter is trained to provide top-quality customer service and to promote A&M-Commerce, their academic college and its programs. Recruiters work with Marketing Communications to develop recruitment materials that accurately reflect the University's practices, policies and accreditation status.

Independent Contractors or Agents

For the academic year 2019-2020, A&M-Commerce contracted with Blackboard, Inc.[38] for marketing and enrollment services. To ensure that the work of Blackboard was governed by the same policies and practices as A&M-Commerce employees, recruitment materials prepared by Blackboard followed the same review and approval process with MARCOM and other institutional departments as described above for internally produced materials. Furthermore, the Graduate School worked with Blackboard to

provide information and training related to University admissions policies and practices, as outlined in the contract. This information was provided to Blackboard only so that they could answer student questions.

The Blackboard Process Map[39] included in evidence documents that once an application is completed, it is reviewed by A&M-Commerce for an admission decision (see page 3). If the applicant is admitted, this information is then passed back to Blackboard for enrollment coaching. A&M-Commerce is responsible for the collection of all application documents and all admissions decisions. Questions from the contractor regarding admissions policies and practices are directed to the institution.

Undergraduate Admissions

A&M-Commerce has carefully established undergraduate admissions policies that are consistent with the University's mission. These policies are described below.

Freshman Admissions

First-time freshmen may be admitted to A&M-Commerce in one of three ways: 1) graduate from an accredited Texas high school in the top 30% of their graduating class, 2) have an SAT combined math and evidence-based reading/writing score of 1060 or higher, and/or 3) an ACT score of 21 or higher. All applicants, including those in the top 30% of their class, are required to submit either SAT or ACT scores for admission[40]. Individual departments may have additional admissions requirements, which are described later in the narrative. A report is used to monitor and document student admission status [41].

Minimum Course Requirements. Freshman applicants must meet the current high school graduation requirements as outlined by the State of Texas in House Bill 5: Foundation High School Program[42]. Students who have not completed one of the programs outlined in House Bill 5 must demonstrate completion of a high school curriculum more rigorous than what is required for the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) Minimum High School Graduation Plan.

Freshman applicants who do not meet the minimum House Bill 5: Foundation High School Program must: 1) complete the program that was presented to them, if their high school does not participate in the recommended program; 2) complete a program equivalent in content and rigor to the recommended program; or 3) satisfy the College Readiness Benchmarks on SAT (1500 out of 2400, including writing) or ACT (18 English, 21 Reading, 22 Mathematics, and 24 Science)[Policy[40]].

Exceptional Admission Categories[43]. Applicants with a GED, a diploma from a non-accredited school or who have been home schooled are considered under exceptional admission categories. First-time freshman applicants with a GED are considered only when: 1) their high school senior class has graduated, 2) the applicant has reached the age of 18, and 3) the applicant has scored with a minimum of 21 on the ACT or SAT combined math and evidence-based reading/writing score of 1060 or higher. Freshman applicants graduating from a non-accredited school or who were home schooled must meet SAT or ACT requirements. First-time freshman applicants who graduated from high school five or more years prior must submit a score of 237 or higher on the ACCUPLACER Reading Comprehension test and must meet otherwise published SAT and/or ACT minimum scores.

Appeals[44]. Applicants who do not meet admissions standards will have their application reviewed by the Admissions Appeal Committee. The committee considers other factors such as academic performance in high school, class rank and standardized test scores. When making the appeal, these applicants are also asked to submit an Educational Goals statement explaining their educational goals at A&M-Commerce by answering three prompt questions: 1) What are your career goals and what degree programs do you intend to pursue? 2) What motivates you or why did you choose this career goal/degree plan? 3) What experience(s) and academic strengths will help you achieve these goals? The Admissions Appeal Committee is comprised of four faculty and university staff members from

student support services offices. The committee will review each appeal and make a decision to accept [45] or deny [46] the student's appeal. The table below represents a total number of appeals submitted, accepted and denied for the time period spring 2017 through fall 2019.

| Semester | Appeals Submitted | Accepted | Denied |
|-------------|-------------------|----------|--------|
| Spring 2017 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Fall 2017 | 125 | 74 | 51 |
| Spring 2018 | 7 | 5 | 2 |
| Fall 2018 | 131 | 100 | 31 |
| Spring 2019 | 8 | 4 | 4 |
| Fall 2019 | 187 | 109 | 78 |

Source: Office of Undergraduate Admissions

Concurrent Enrollment [47] for High School Seniors. High school seniors may enroll in college-level courses beginning with the summer session following their junior year. These students must:

1. Qualify for standard admission with a minimum of 21 on the ACT or SAT combined math and evidence-based reading/writing score of 1060 or higher and have a grade average of "A" (90%) in high school work through the junior year, including selected core courses in English, math, history, and laboratory science.
2. Qualify for college-level courses by being exempt from Texas Success Initiative (TSI) Assessment through high ACT, SAT or TAKS scores, or by passing all sections of the TSI assessment. Students who do not pass all parts of the TSI assessment may not take college-level classes related to portions of the test that have not been passed.
3. Submit a letter of recommendation from the principal and/or counselor.

Information about the application process for dual credit is also communicated to students in the Dual Credit Handbook [48] for each dual credit site.

Freshman Profile. A&M-Commerce's admissions policy has resulted in strong freshman classes that have the potential to succeed. In 2019, 77% of the students in the freshman class were in the top half of their high school graduating class, 43% were in the top 25% of their high school graduating class and 16% were in the top 10% of their high school graduating class (Source: CHECK Report, Office of Undergraduate Admissions).

Transfer Undergraduate Students

Texas A&M University System Policy 11.05 *Recruitment and Admission of Transfer Students* [49] guides A&M-Commerce's admission of transfer students. A transfer student is defined as a student seeking first-time admission who previously attended an accredited institution of higher learning and is eligible to return to that institution. A transfer student must have 12 or more hours (excluding developmental courses) and must meet the following requirements before admission: 1) filed application for admission, 2) submitted official transcripts, and 3) have a cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher (on a 4.0 scale) on all college work attempted. Individual departments may have additional requirements. Students with fewer than 12 hours will be considered for admission on the basis of their ACT or SAT test scores, rank in high school class and must have a cumulative GPA of 2.0 (on a 4.0 scale) on all college work attempted.

To facilitate transfer admissions and the ease of transferability of credits, A&M-Commerce participates in the Texas Common Course Numbering System (TCCNS) [50].

Transfer Second Chance Admission

Transfer students who do not meet the regular transfer admission requirements may be considered

under the Second Chance[\[51\]](#) policy. The student must have attended a four-year institution and must provide an official high school transcript or GED equivalent along with official transcripts from each previous college or university attended. Students must meet the freshman admissions requirements to be considered for the Second Chance program. If admitted[\[52\]](#), students will be assigned a success coach, will be monitored their first semester and will be required to re-take any core curriculum-related classes to replace failed grades to improve their overall GPA.

International Admissions[\[53\]](#)

International applicants must meet all current academic admissions requirements for freshmen or transfer students, as applicable. If a freshman international applicant has attended high school outside the U.S., they must submit a formal evaluation of their transcript verifying that their high school diploma is equivalent to a U.S. high school diploma. They must also submit proof of English proficiency as demonstrated by a TOEFL score of at least 550 (PBT) or 79 (IBT) or IELTS score of 6.0 or higher. If a transfer international applicant has completed college-level coursework from outside the U.S., they must submit a formal, detailed course-by-course, semester-by-semester evaluation of their transcript to the Undergraduate Admissions Office. They must also submit proof of English proficiency as demonstrated by a TOEFL score of at least 550 (PBT) or 79 (IBT) or IELTS score of 6.0 or higher.

Examples of Special Admission Requirements

A&M-Commerce admits freshman and transfer students to special programs that have additional requirements beyond the standards for general admission to the University. These special programs include the Honors College, Regents Scholars and First Year Leadership Class. In some cases there are also requirements for acceptance into specific academic degree programs, including the Bachelors of Fine Arts in Visual Communication, Bachelors of Science in Nursing, Bachelors of Social Work and all degree programs in the Department of Music.

Honors College Requirements. Students accepted into the Honors College[\[54\]](#) have a class rank within the top 10% of their high school class and a 27 ACT score or 1200 SAT score (verbal and quantitative reasoning). Each student must complete the Honors Program application, essay and interview with the selection committee. Fifty students are selected for this program each year.

Regents Scholars Program Requirements. These students go through the Honors College application process, and 20 students are selected for the Regents Scholars[\[55\]](#) program. The same admissions criteria are used for both the Honors College and Regents Scholars Program.

First Year Leadership Class[\[56\]](#) Requirements. These students must have a minimum high school grade point average (GPA) of 3.3 (on a 4.0 scale) or 85 (on a 100 point scale), rank in the top 30% of their class, have an ACT score of 21 or SAT score of 1060 and demonstrate evidence of high school excellence in both leadership and academics. Each student must complete an application and submit a high school transcript, two 300-500 word essays, a résumé and two letters of recommendation. Students who may not meet all of the requirements are still encouraged to apply with an increased focus on writing meaningful essays and finding references that can provide clear insights and knowledge about the student in their letters of recommendation.

BFA Visual Communication Requirements. A portfolio review is required for entry into the advanced courses in the visual communication undergraduate degree program. Information about the portfolio review[\[57\]](#) can be found on the VisCom Undergrad Admissions web page [\[58\]](#) for the Department of Art. Many college art programs employ portfolio reviews as a component of the freshman admissions process or as an instrument of evaluation to assess a student's progress in the later stages of a baccalaureate program.

The guiding principle behind portfolio reviews is to evaluate the student's ability to express creative concepts through the technical mastery of various art media, such as drawing, painting, sculpture and graphic design. Portfolio reviews thus consider key aspects of art-making such as innovation, problem solving and technical skills. At A&M-Commerce, admission to the Department of Art does not require an initial portfolio review. However, to be admitted into the advanced curriculum in visual communication (art direction, design or new media), students must submit a portfolio of work in three basic categories: (1) an essay demonstrating the ability to analyze and discuss works of art in historical context; (2) art works produced in freshman and sophomore-level art classes representing foundational skills in drawing, design and photography; and (3) original work meeting expectations of creativity and problem-solving.

Through this review, the visual communication faculty assesses the readiness of applicants to proceed in advanced classes. In cases of extreme and evident deficiencies in the portfolio, a student may be denied admission into the advanced curriculum. Minor deficiencies are normally overcome by asking students to practice and develop their skills, either independently or through taking additional courses, in areas of their work deemed inadequate.

Music Department Requirements. Music department entry includes a successful audition as prescribed by the National Association of Schools of Music[59]. Information about the audition requirement can be found on the Admissions & Scholarships web page[60] for the Department of Music.

BSN Nursing Requirements. Acceptance into the Bachelors of Science in Nursing program is highly competitive. Admission criteria can be found on the Admission Criteria web page[61] for the Department of Nursing and are in compliance with state and national accreditation standards for nursing as well as comparable to the admission standards of other regional programs. Applicant GPA on prerequisite science support courses are emphasized in addition to preadmission testing.

BSW Social Work Requirements. Students who intend to pursue a Bachelor's of Social Work degree must apply in the spring semester for the upcoming fall semester admission. New students are only admitted in fall semesters. Admission criteria can be found on the Admissions web page for the BSW Program[62] and are in compliance with accreditation standards for the Council on Social Work Education (CSE) as well as comparable to the admission standards of other regional programs. Applicant GPA of 2.5 or better and academic performance in the required prerequisite courses are emphasized in the admission process.

Special Admission Conditions

Academic Fresh Start. Texas A&M-Commerce also admits students under special conditions, per state law. The catalog provides information about Academic Fresh Start[63], by which Senate Bill 1321 entitles Texas residents to seek admission to public institutions of higher education without consideration of courses undertaken ten or more years prior to enrollment. It gives students the option of electing to have coursework taken ten or more years prior to the starting date of the semester in which the applicant seeks to enroll either counted as usual or ignored for admission purposes.

Special Admission Policy. Texas A&M University-Commerce also admits students under its Special Admission policy, designed to admit students whom the University wants to support because of their special talent or readiness to overcome potentially limiting factors. Students admitted under this policy are required to be sponsored by a recognized University department and to receive academic support services under a Special Admission Academic Plan[64], as seen in the example provided. Decisions [65] regarding admission are made by the Vice President of Enrollment Management in consultation with the student's department sponsor.

Graduate Admissions

A&M-Commerce has carefully established graduate admissions standards[5] that allow a student to enroll in graduate courses; however, this enrollment does not guarantee admission to a specific master's, specialist or doctoral program. General admissions criteria for graduate studies at A&M-Commerce are published in the *Graduate Catalog*[10] and on the Graduate Admissions web page [11]. Specific admissions criteria are published on each Graduate Program web page. Departments may set specific program admission requirements that are higher than those set by the Graduate School. Specific departmental requirements[66] for master's and specialist programs are found by visiting the master's and specialist program admissions web page[67]. Specific departmental requirements for doctoral programs are found by visiting the doctoral admissions requirements web page. Students apply using the ApplyTexas[9] website.

Each applicant to a master's, specialist or doctoral program is subject to departmental approval, and each department may have specific requirements. Graduate Services Coordinators[68] are in place to answer questions and assist students with the application processes and are listed with contact information at the bottom of the Graduate Admissions webpage and on each program webpage.

A&M-Commerce provides admission to degree programs, graduate certificate programs, educator certification and non-degree status.

Non-degree Admission Status

Domestic applicants who hold a bachelor's degree from a regionally-accredited institution, but who are not seeking a graduate degree, may enroll in graduate courses for career enhancement, a graduate certificate, educator certification or personal development.

The minimum admissions requirements and documents for domestic non-degree applicants are described on the website[69] and in the catalog[70] and include:

1. an application for admission,
2. a non-refundable \$50 application fee,
3. all official transcripts, including bachelor's transcript from a regionally-accredited institution and a transcript from any school at which the student has completed master's level courses.

International students are not eligible for non-degree status. Additional admission requirements for educator certification can be located on the website[71].

Master's/Specialist Program Minimum Admission Documents and Requirements

For domestic master's/specialist applicants, minimum admission documents and requirements are described on the website[66] and in the catalog[72] and include:

1. an application for admission,
2. a non-refundable \$50 application fee,
3. all official transcripts, including bachelor's transcript from a regionally accredited institution and a transcript from any school at which the student has completed master's level courses.
4. GRE/GMAT scores. Some departments have alternative options for meeting the GRE/GMAT requirements.

Domestic applicants with bachelor's degrees from institutions not recognized by a regional accrediting body must have their applications reviewed by the dean of the Graduate School. Materials must be submitted at least 30 days in advance of enrollment.

The minimum admissions requirements and documents for International master's/specialist applicants are described on the website[66] and in the catalog[73] and include:

1. an application for admission;

2. a non-refundable \$75 application fee;
3. all official transcripts and copies of diplomas from each college or university attended, and the bachelor's degree earned must be equivalent to an accredited U.S. institution's bachelor's degree, as established by the World Education Services;
4. a sponsor's statement with a current bank balance of at least \$26,024.82 (required after admission is granted and before an I-20 can be issued); and,
5. if the applicant's native tongue is not English, a TOEFL score of at least 550 (paper test), 213 (computer test), or 79 (internet based testing), an IELTS score of 6.0, or completion of all years of a bachelor's degree or higher degree at a U.S. regionally-accredited university.

Levels of Master's/Specialist Admission

Domestic Applicants[\[74\]](#): For domestic applicants at the master's/specialist level, A&M-Commerce has three different levels of admission: full, conditional and provisional.

1. Full admission is granted to applicants who have submitted a completed application packet with a GPA of 2.75 or higher on a 4.0 scale or a 3.0 or higher on the last 60 semester credit hours and where all departmental requirements are satisfied.
2. Conditional admission is granted to applicants who have submitted a completed application packet and did not satisfy all of the requirements for full admission. Applicants admitted with conditional admission must have a GPA of 3.0 or higher after completion of their first 12 hours of course work. Failure to do so will result in a three-year suspension.
3. Provisional admission allows a student with missing documentation to enroll for one semester. Provisionally admitted students must receive full or conditional admission prior to enrolling in any subsequent semesters.

International Applicants: International applicants at the master's/specialist level may be admitted as either full or conditional admission status (described above).

Doctoral Program Minimum Admissions Documents and Requirements

Each applicant to a doctoral program is subject to departmental approval, and each department may have additional admission requirements beyond the minimum admission requirements. The Doctoral Degree Coordinator answers questions and assists with the application process and is listed with contact information at the bottom of the Graduate Admissions webpage[\[68\]](#) and on each doctoral program webpage.

In addition to the *Graduate Catalog*[\[75\]](#), doctoral admissions guidelines for domestic students and for international students are available online[\[76\]](#). Applications that meet these requirements will be forwarded to the major department for review. The department will review each application and make a recommendation to the dean of graduate studies. Applicants must also meet all departmental requirements, such as letters, statement of goals, resumes, writing samples, interviews, etc. Only full admission is available for doctoral students.

For domestic doctoral applicants, minimum admission documents and requirements include:

1. an application for admission,
2. a non-refundable \$50 application fee,
3. all official transcripts, including bachelor's transcript from a regionally accredited institution and a transcript from any school at which the student has completed master's level courses.
4. official GRE scores.
5. an overall GPA of 2.75 or higher on a 4.0 scale, or a 3.0 or better on the last 60 undergraduate hours, or a 3.40 for a master's degree and work completed beyond the master's level.

The minimum admissions requirements and documents for international doctoral applicants are described on the website[\[76\]](#) and in the catalog[\[73\]](#) and include:

1. an application for admission;
2. a non-refundable \$75 application fee;
3. all official transcripts and copies of diplomas from each college or university attended, and the bachelor's degree earned must be equivalent to an accredited U.S. institution's bachelor's degree, as established by the World Education Services;
4. a sponsor's statement with a current bank balance of at least \$26,024.82 (required after admission is granted and before an I-20 can be issued); and,
5. if the applicant's native tongue is not English, a TOEFL score of at least 550 (paper test), 213 (computer test), or 79 (internet-based testing), an IELTS score of 6.0, or completion of all years of a Bachelor's degree or higher degree at a U.S. regionally accredited university.

Graduate Certificate Minimum Admission Documents and Requirements

The minimum admissions requirements for domestic graduate certificate applicants are described in the catalog[\[77\]](#) and on the website[\[78\]](#) and include:

1. an application for admission,
2. a non-refundable \$50 application fee,
3. all official transcripts, including bachelor's transcript from a regionally accredited institution and a transcript from any school at which the student has completed master's level courses.

Domestic applicants seeking only a graduate certificate are admitted to non-degree status.

International applicants seeking a graduate certificate are admitted to a graduate certificate program within their master's/specialist program.

Examples of Admissions Policies for Academic Programs

Admissions policies for graduate programs are determined by the departments, approved by the Graduate Council and are based on widely accepted standards appropriate to the academic disciplines. Departments recommend admission decisions, including admission or denial, to the dean of the Graduate School, who grants admission. Admissions decisions are reviewed and documented using the University's student information system. An example is provided for a decision regarding admissions to a master's program[\[79\]](#) and a doctoral program[\[80\]](#).

Examples of specific departmental requirements are included below.

English (MA) Requirements. In addition to the minimum master's program admission documents listed above, the MA in English program requires the following:

- Portfolio of written work including a statement of goals and a writing sample. The portfolio should include a writing sample and statement of goals. The department prefers a writing sample from a previous course (no more than 20 pages). The statement of goals should identify the prospective student's area of interest (Film Studies, Linguistics, American Literature, British Literature, Composition Studies, etc.) and the reason for the degree
- One (1) Letter of Recommendation

The admission requirements in English ensure applicants are qualified to pursue the MA degree. Admission into the MA in English program is competitive. Admission requirements are located on the English program web page[\[81\]](#) and are comparable to the admission standards of other regional programs.

Business Administration (MBA) Requirements. In addition to the minimum master's program admission documents listed above, the MBA in Business Administration program requires one letter of recommendation. The recommendation is provided using a form that requests specific information about the applicant.

The admission requirements for the MBA ensure applicants are qualified to pursue an MBA degree. Admission into the MBA in Business Administration program is highly competitive. Admission requirements are located on the Business program webpage[82], are in compliance with the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) accreditation standards and are comparable to the admission standards of other regional programs.

Family Nurse Practitioner (MSN) Requirements. In addition to the minimum master's program admission documents listed above, the MSN in Family Nurse Practitioner program requires the following:

- Bachelor of Science in Nursing from a regionally-accredited institution and a nationally accredited nursing program with at least a 2.75 GPA or higher overall
- Basic undergraduate statistics course
- Unencumbered, unrestricted license to practice as a Registered Nurse in the State of Texas or a compact state
- Three letters of reference from academic and/or professional sources using the MSN Reference Form, sent directly to the Graduate School
- Personal Statement Letter detailing reasons for pursuing the master's in nursing degree and include professional goals
- Resume (Vita)

The admission requirements for the MSN ensure applicants are licensed and eligible to pursue the MSN degree. Admission into the MSN in Family Nurse Practitioner program is highly competitive. Admission requirements are available on the Family Nurse Practitioner program webpage[83], are in compliance with state and national accreditation standards and are comparable to the admission standards of other regional programs.

Counseling (PhD) Requirements. In addition to the minimum doctoral admission documents listed above, the PhD in Counseling program also requires the following:

- a counseling essay to be completed by addressing a specific topic
- Four letters of recommendation
- A statement of goals form with resume

The admission requirements for the PhD ensure applicants are eligible to pursue the PhD degree. Admission requirements are available on the Counseling program webpage[84] are in compliance with state and national accreditation standards (Counseling for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs) and are comparable to the admission standards of other regional programs.

Conclusion

A&M-Commerce publishes admissions policies that are consistent with the mission of the institution. These policies align with the need for access to higher education present in northeast Texas. They are tailored to support admission, retention and graduation of a diverse pool of potential students. All undergraduate and graduate students at A&M-Commerce may easily access and view the admissions policies through the online copies of the *Undergraduate* and *Graduate* online catalogs, the University undergraduate admissions web pages and through the graduate program web pages. Any independent contractors or agents used for recruiting purposes will be governed by the same practices and policies as University employees. Recruitment materials and admissions activities accurately represent the institution's practices, policies and accreditation status. These policies encourage a diverse student body that is consistent with the University's mission to Educate, Discover and Achieve.

- 10.6** An institution that offers distance or correspondence education:
- a. ensures that the student who registers in a distance or correspondence education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the credit.

- b. has a written procedure for protecting the privacy of students enrolled in distance and correspondence education courses or programs.
- c. ensures that students are notified in writing at the time of registration or enrollment of any projected additional student charges associated with verification of student identity. (*Distance and correspondence education*)

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Introduction

Texas A&M University-Commerce ensures that the student who registers in a distance education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the credit by utilizing a secure login and password to verify student identity, among other levels of control. This confidence comes from an identity assurance program that begins at the moment of application and which uses a combination of administrative and technical controls. Additionally, all entering students are given the University's Student Code of Conduct[1] to read and adhere to and are regularly reminded of their responsibility regarding academic integrity through course syllabi. Texas A&M-University Commerce has policies and procedures that protect student privacy. These published policies and procedures apply to all A&M-Commerce students, including those enrolled in distance and online education courses and programs. The University has taken additional steps to ensure that students in distance education courses or programs requiring additional verification of student identity through the utilization of proctoring services are notified in writing at the time of enrollment if any charges may apply.

Verifying Student Identify for Distance and Correspondence Education

Technical Controls

Verification of student identity begins with the application process. Applicants must apply to Texas A&M University-Commerce through the ApplyTexas[2] website. The ApplyTexas process requires a significant amount of personally-identifying information such as email, mailing addresses, phone numbers, names of relatives, etc. Outside of ApplyTexas, the University requests further identifying information such as transcripts. Transcripts utilized in the University application process must be official and submitted in a sealed envelope or be a secure digital transmittal by the other educational institution. The student is not involved in the documentation process after the request is originally made, and the transaction is handled as a direct communication between institutions.

Digital. By using a secure login and password to verify student identify, A&M-Commerce demonstrates that the student who registers in a distance education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the credit. All students admitted to A&M-Commerce receive an Active Directory username and a password. The initial password is assigned to students in an email and is accompanied by communications from the admissions office of the standardized password makeup. Students are then charged to change their password in order to control access and add to the security of their accounts and information. The username and password are used to authenticate access to all of the electronic systems students must utilize over the course of their academic careers with Texas A&M University-Commerce. The password must conform to the University's passwords standards[3], as described in its Texas Administrative Code Standards for Authentication[4].

The key elements of the University password procedures are:

- Must not contain all or part of the user's assigned account name
- Be at least eight characters in length
- Contain characters from the three of the following four categories:
 - English uppercase characters (A through Z)

- English lowercase characters (a through z)
- Base 10 digits (0 through 9)
- Non-alphabetic characters (!, \$, #, %)
- Passwords must be treated as confidential information. Passwords should not be revealed to anyone
- Passwords expire after 120 days.
- Stored passwords are hashed with an appropriate algorithm.

Beginning in 2019, Texas A&M University-Commerce implemented two-factor authentication[5] (DUO Security[6]) for faculty, staff and student logins and computer access, following the Texas A&M University System compliance guidelines[7]. Two-factor authentication is used to reduce the incidence of online identity theft and online fraud by requiring confirmation of user identity by multiple factors. This second layer of security further helps to verify student identity. Texas A&M University-Commerce remains one of the early adopters of the DUO Sign-In system for the A&M University System.

All distance education students enrolled in a distance or correspondence education course or program must use their secure username and password and DUO two-factor authentication to verify identity when logging into courses via the University's myLEO portal[8]. The login screen provides a warning to students outlining unauthorized use and access[9]. By logging into the myLEO portal, students are acknowledging agreement to applicable A&M-Commerce policies and guidelines. These guidelines are provided to students in the *Student Guidebook*[10] and are outlined in University procedure 29.01.03.R0.02[11] *Electronic Information Security* as well as procedure 29.99.99.R0.01[12] *Email for University Communication*. These guidelines and procedures also address falsification or misuse of identity and technology. Upon login, the student's myLEO portal displays a tracking log showing the last login attempt, whether successful or not. This information can be used to monitor security concerns and serves to alert a student to any unauthorized access or attempts to unlawfully access their myLEO account.

Authentication to the University's Learning Management System, Desire2Learn (D2L) is accomplished through a centralized system that uses a combination of assigned usernames and passwords unique to each user. Furthermore, access to D2L requires two-factor authentication through DUO security. D2L networks are continually monitored and protected by redundant firewalls, intrusion prevention devices, access control lists, VLAN and additional custom security controls. D2L conducts independent system security testing and risk assessments[13] that include but are not limited to the following:

- Third party external/internal risk assessments
- Third party vulnerability scanning with validation
- Employee interviews
- External/internal vulnerability scans
- Custom house penetration testing covered by a third party testing

Desire2Learn (D2L) is managed by Amazon Web Services[14], a cloud based service platform. The SOC2 Summary Report[15] as well as the ISO27001 Certification of Registration[16] state that a third party security firm has reviewed and verified that the program and its operations are secure.

The University's Testing Center offers proctoring services[17] for distance and correspondence education. The Testing Center is equipped with individual cameras that allow testers' hands to be monitored while testing. In addition, proctors are physically present to monitor test taking and can assist with students' needs while taking exams. If a student enrolled in a distance or correspondence education course or program takes tests off campus, arrangements can be made to secure the site by personnel or an external proctoring service as necessary. Each department on campus handles its own off-site testing security when the situation arises.

Physical. University photo ID cards, called Lion Cards[18], are available to all students currently enrolled at A&M-Commerce. A student must supply a government-issued photo ID or comparable credential(s) in order to receive their university photo ID card. Additionally, students are assigned a Campus Wide ID (CWID) at the time they apply for admittance at Texas A&M University-Commerce. These CWIDs are unique to each student and are not reused. Students use their CWID for

identification with faculty, for logging into secure University webpages and services, and for recovering secure information such as passwords. Since these numbers are not reused or reassigned, they serve as not only an identifier for each student that has interacted with the University but also as another layer of security in that only the student and faculty/staff with the University should know the CWID for a particular student. Students taking at least one class face-to-face on campus are required to attend on-campus orientation; online students are required to complete an online orientation. Students attending the on-campus orientation receive their Lion Card during orientation. Through the Lion Card, the use of individual Campus Wide ID numbers, and required orientation sessions, A&M-Commerce continually takes action to ensure student identification is authenticated and protected.

Administrative Controls

Texas A&M University-Commerce, like all Texas state institutions of higher education, are bound by the Texas Administrative Code, Section 202[19] "Information Security Standard," which requires the development, documentation and implementation of an information security program and the accompanying "Security Control Standards Catalog". Responsibility for administering the TAC Information Security Standards is delegated to the Chief Information Officer.

The Security Control Standards Catalog, in Section AC-3[20], states that:

Each user of information resources shall be assigned a unique identifier except for situations where risk analysis demonstrates no need for individual accountability of users. User identification shall be authenticated before the information resources system may grant that user access.

At the Texas A&M System level, the Information Resources Access Standard[21] states that:

An access management process must incorporate guidelines to:

- a. *Create uniquely identifiable accounts for all users, including those created for use by outside vendors or third parties.*
- b. *review, remove, and/or disable accounts at least annually, or more often if warranted by risk, and which reflect current user needs or changes of user role or employment status.*

The University's Texas Administrative Code Standards for Authentication V 1.3[4] forbids the sharing of passwords with other System members, accepting the password of another, or logging into a system with the password of another. Furthermore, these policies impose on all users an affirmative duty to report such violations to administration. If caught going against these procedures, any violator will have to immediately change their password and retake the Information Security Awareness[22] training. Additional penalties may be imposed by the department head or supervisor. In some cases, incidents may be reported to the provost or president of the University. Violation of University procedures and rules can result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment for faculty and/or staff or expulsion of students.

Technical and Administrative controls do much to ensure that the student who enrolls in a distance education or correspondence course or program is the same student who participates in, completes and receives credit for the courses or programs. However, the University must still rely on the integrity and honesty of its student body. All students are introduced to the *Student Guidebook* during their initial orientation to the University. Students are also reminded of expectations related to academic integrity and technology honesty through statements on course syllabi. (English[23]) (Early Childhood[24]) (Marketing[25]) (Chemistry[26]) accessible through the University's online listing of the schedule of classes[27].

Privacy Procedures and Policies

Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedure 13.99.99.R0.02[28] *Confidentiality of Student Academic Records and Test Scores* protects the privacy of all students, including those enrolled in correspondence and/or distance education courses or programs. A&M-Commerce's written procedure is based on guidelines outlined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which

applies to all students, including distance students. All University rules and procedures are published on the A&M-Commerce Rules and Procedures web page[29] and are developed and maintained according to University procedure 01.01.01.R0.02[30] *Development and Maintenance of University Rules and Procedures*. Student FERPA rights are provided to students in the *Student Guidebook*[31].

Student privacy is also protected from public information requests by Section 5.1 of Texas A&M System Policy 61.01.02[32] *Public Information*, without seeking a decision from the office of the Attorney General of Texas. Student privacy is further described by the Registrar on their Confidentiality of Student Records and the Family Educational Rights web page[33]. Additional guidelines for faculty and staff can be found on the associated page[34], as well as a specific description of student and parent rights[35].

University procedure 29.01.03.R0.02 *Electronic Information Security* provides further guidance for the management and oversight for information security processes, in compliance with the Texas Administrative Code's "Information Security Standards for Institutions of Higher Education[19]". One of these system safeguards is protecting the privacy of usernames and passwords, as described in the narrative above. Another safeguard is continued oversight of the use of the University's Student Information System, BANNER. Twice annually, there is a campus meeting to review access to the BANNER Student Information System and 1) remove or delete those whose access is no longer needed and 2) limit access of individuals to certain non-necessary functions of the SIS system. Attendees of these meetings are typically department heads and program directors as well as primary stakeholders in Financial Aid, Financial Services, the Registrar's Office and Undergraduate and Graduate Admissions. These individuals are aware of who within the University should have access to student and program data and take steps to ensure all such information is controlled and safeguarded. The Texas Administrative Code 202 imposes additional requirements to ensure the security of confidential information trusted to third parties, such as the requirement to encrypt all shared student data.

In accordance with FERPA and in compliance with the Texas A&M University System policy 33.05.02 [36] *Required Employee Training*, A&M-Commerce faculty are required to keep student academic records confidential, and faculty and staff receive training in Information Security Awareness[37] every two years. All new Texas A&M University-Commerce network users must complete the course within 30 days of being assigned and granted access to the network. The assigned courses include a module about FERPA[38] and the importance of the protection of student data.

Notification of Charges Associated with Student Identity Verification

Charges associated with verification of student identity are not included in student fees at Texas A&M University-Commerce. Information about student fees is published on the Admissions web page[39] and students are notified at the time of registration of all fees charged. Academic departments and programs may require that an examination within a distance or correspondence education course or program be proctored. These determinations are made by the academic department and communicated to students in the course syllabi and other course policy documents provided at the start of each semester (Finance[40]) (Business Analytics[41]). This information is also provided by academic advisors at the time of enrollment and on program web pages. The University has also taken steps to provide notification of any associated charges for proctoring within the registration process. Beginning in Spring 2020, students enrolling in a course with a proctoring requirement will be notified when registering for the course. The Division of Academic Affairs works with the Division of Enrollment Management to ensure this information is requested[42] from academic departments and represented within the schedule of classes produced by the Registrar's Office.

Conclusion

Texas A&M University-Commerce ensures that the student who registers in a distance or correspondence education course is the same student who participates in and completes the course and receives the credit. This assurance comes from an identity assurance program that begins at the moment of application and which uses a combination of administrative and technical controls including

utilization of a secure login and password along with two-factor authentication. The University has clearly established processes and controls in place to protect the security of student information. Additionally, A&M-Commerce and the Texas A&M System have in place policies and procedures that protect student privacy. These published policies and procedures apply to all A&M-Commerce students, including those enrolled in distance and online education courses and programs. Students in distance education courses or programs requiring additional verification of student identity through the utilization of proctoring services are notified in writing at the time of enrollment if any projected charges may apply. As such, the University finds itself in compliance with Standard 10.6.

- 10.7** The institution publishes and implements policies for determining the amount and level of credit awarded for its courses, regardless of format or mode of delivery. These policies require oversight by persons academically qualified to make the necessary judgments. In educational programs not based on credit hours (e.g., direct assessment programs), the institution has a sound means for determining credit equivalencies. (*Policies for awarding credit*)

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Introduction

Texas A&M University-Commerce and the Texas A&M University System have policies and procedures that comply with Federal and State guidelines concerning credit hours, and A&M-Commerce employs sound and acceptable practices for determining the amount and level of credit awarded for courses, regardless of format or mode of delivery.

Rules and Definitions

A&M-Commerce rules and procedures for determining credit hours awarded for both courses and programs are guided by the rules established by the US Department of Education (34 §600.2[1]), the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges *Credit Hours Policy Statement* [2] and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's (THECB) *Glossary of Terms*[3]. These rules are demonstrated through descriptions found in the University's *Undergraduate* and *Graduate* catalogs. Catalog information is reviewed annually by the Registrar's Office, the Graduate School and University stakeholders.

The A&M-Commerce *Undergraduate Catalog*[4] describes the semester hour as, "one clock hour per week in lecture or two to three hours per week in laboratory for one semester is the normal amount of classwork required for one semester hour of credit." The A&M-Commerce *Graduate Catalog*[5] echoes this statement, defining the semester hour as, "one hour of lecture per week, or its equivalent in laboratory work, for one semester or its equivalent."

The faculty, with support of the administration, is responsible for the development, implementation and monitoring of academic courses. In developing academic courses and making changes to the curriculum, the University follows standards of good practice and the guidelines established by A&M-Commerce Procedure 03.02.99.R0.04 [6] *Academic Approval Procedures for Courses*, the A&M System, THECB and SACSCOC. Changes to existing or proposals of new courses are initiated by departmental faculty who make initial determinations regarding the amount and level of credit awarded for courses. Determinations of credit awarded must adhere to the University's definition of the semester hour. In the case of courses which include academic activities other than direct faculty classroom instruction, such as laboratory classes, studios, internships, professional practicums or independent studies as well as courses in online or hybrid delivery modes, qualified faculty make determinations about the equivalent amount of work leading to the award of academic credit. Approval processes for courses follow either an expedited or non-expedited process. Changes to course credit hours fall under the non-expedited process and require approval by the department head and department curriculum committee, the college dean, Graduate Council (when applicable), Academic Department Heads Council (when applicable) Dean's Council, Institutional Effectiveness and the University's Faculty

Senate. Examples of courses which have proceeded through the approval process and received review of credit hour determinations include Commercial Photography (PHO 341[7]) and Advanced Health Assessment (NURS 5305[8]).

Courses are numbered according to the following scheme: Freshman courses are 100-1999 inclusive; sophomore courses, 200-2999 inclusive; junior courses, 300-3999 inclusive; senior courses, 400-4999 inclusive; master's courses, 500-5999 and 600-699; and doctoral courses 600-799. Courses completed at four-year institutions and numbered at the 300 level or above are considered to be advanced. All courses with a semester credit hour other than three are designated with the semester credit hour value[9].

The institutional course numbering system is further driven by the University's participation in the Texas Common Course Numbering System (TCCNS), a cooperative effort among Texas two-year colleges and universities to facilitate transfer of freshman- and sophomore-level general academic courses. Institutions teach courses that are similar in nature and have been designated by a common number. The common course number, a four-digit abbreviation for the discipline and a four-digit course number, is to facilitate the transferability of these courses between the participating institutions. The first digit reflects the academic credit; the second digit indicates the semester hour credit; and the third and fourth digits establish course sequence. The common course number[10] is shown in parenthesis to the right of the Texas A&M University-Commerce course number in departmental course descriptions. A listing of all common courses numbers adopted by A&M-Commerce as well as institutions participating in the TCCNS are available in the *Undergraduate Catalog*[11].

All courses included in the University's dual enrollment offerings are part of the University's Core Curriculum, approved by the THECB to fill three credit hour blocks.

Shortened Courses

In accordance with the Texas Administrative Code (TAC Title 19 Part 1 Chapter 4 Subchapter A Rule §4.6[12]), A&M System policy 11.03 *Shortened Courses*[13] and A&M-Commerce Procedure 11.03.99.R0.01 *Course Credit and Length Requirements*[14] both address courses that are less than a regular semester in length. System Policy 11.03, Section 1.1.1[15] clearly states that, "all shortened face-to-face courses must consist of the same number of class contact hours as similar three-hour courses offered in a regular session or summer session: that is, normally 45 to 48 contact hours". A&M-Commerce Procedure 11.03.99.R0.01[16] provides further clarification, requiring that, "the minimum number of class contact hours shall be fifteen hours for each semester hour of credit" and outlines that approval to offer courses in a shortened format follows regular approval procedures for courses. All University rules and procedures are published on the A&M-Commerce Rules and Procedures web page[17] and are developed and revised according to University procedure 01.01.01.R0.02[18] *Development and Maintenance of University Rules and Procedures*.

Distance Education Courses

Courses offered through distance education are governed by A&M-Commerce Procedure 11.03.99.R0.01[19] which requires that "All off-campus courses will follow the current rules and regulations for the approval of distance learning instruction for public colleges and universities as set forth by the coordinating board". The THECB follows the Texas Administrative Code under the following provisions: 1) courses shall be within the role and mission of the institution responsible for offering the instruction and 2) courses shall meet the quality standards applicable to on-campus courses (TAC Title 19 Part 1 Chapter 4 Subchapter P Rule §4.262[20]). The Texas Administrative Code further provides guidance that courses offered in a non-traditional way which does not meet traditional contact hour requirements may be offered if the courses have been "reviewed and approved through a formal, institutional faculty review process that evaluates the course and its learning outcomes[12]."

For courses in an online delivery mode, the department, under the direction of the department head, is responsible for determining which courses can be offered in an online delivery mode and for ensuring

that online courses are equivalent to face-to-face offerings, including in terms of the amount and level of credit awarded. Procedure states that “courses offered in an online delivery mode will demonstrate equivalency to traditionally delivered courses in terms of rigor and learning objectives[19]” and requires the Department Curriculum Committee to review student learning outcomes for new courses or significantly changed courses[21]. A comparison of syllabi between similar courses taught online and face-to-face confirms course comparability. For example, syllabi for both the online course offering (03W[22]) of Accounting I (ACCT 2301) and the face-to-face offering (02E[23]) reflect similar student learning outcomes and assessments. Another example can be found in online (01W[24]) and face-to-face (01B[25]) sections of Machine Language/Computer Organization (COCS 2325). Examples of course equivalency at the graduate level include the online (01W[26]) and face-to-face (01E[27]) course offerings of Computer Architecture (CSCI 540) and the online (01W[28]) and face-to-face (01E [29]) course offerings of Marketing Environment (MKT 501).

For online courses, student contact with online course material can be monitored via the University’s learning management system, D2L Brightspace, which provides instructors the ability to view the amount of time a student spent in the class. As an additional quality measure[30] for courses offered in an online delivery mode to ensure comparability to the quality of on-campus courses, the University provides the Quality Matters rubric to guide faculty in developing online courses[31]. The Quality Matters Rubric of Standards[32] is a set of eight general standards and 42 specific standards used to evaluate the design of online and blended courses. Examples of courses participating in a self-evaluation of online teaching based on a modified QM Rubric include ACCT 575[33] Financial Statement Analysis, MGT 394[34] Human Resource Management and MKT 467.01W[35] Global Consumer Behavior.

Competency-Based Education Programs

A&M-Commerce currently offers two competency-based education programs, the BAAS in Organizational Leadership and the BS in Criminal Justice. Both programs are delivered in a fully online delivery mode and are based on a traditional semester credit hour. Courses offered through both programs are approved through the university’s *Academic Approval Procedures for Courses*, including determination of the amount and level of credit awarded for each course as described in *Rules and Definitions* above.

Rather than measuring seat time and the amount of student work accomplished during a set calendar period, the BAAS in Organizational Leadership and BS in Criminal Justice programs focus on documenting student mastery of the corresponding material. The current federal definition of a semester credit hour provides institutions with some flexibility in determining the appropriate amount of credit hours for student credit. This flexibility includes the following guidelines, as outlined by the SACSCOC Credit Hours Policy Statement[2]:

- The institution determines the amount of credit for student work.
- A credit hour is expected to be a reasonable approximation of a minimum amount of student work in a Carnegie unit in accordance with commonly accepted practice in higher education.
- The credit hour definition is a minimum standard that does not restrict an institution from setting a higher standard that requires more student work per credit hour.
- The definition does not dictate particular amounts of classroom time versus out-of-class student work.
- In determining the amount of work the institution's learning outcomes will entail, the institution may take into consideration alternative delivery methods, measurements of student work, academic calendars, disciplines, and degree levels.
- To the extent an institution believes that complying with the federal definition of a credit hour would not be appropriate for academic and other institutional needs, it may adopt a separate measure for those purposes.
- Credits may be awarded on the basis of documentation of the amount of work a typical student is expected to complete within a specified amount of academically engaged time, or the basis of documented student learning calibrated to that amount of academically engaged time for a typical student.

A&M-Commerce faculty have ensured that the curriculum of its competency-based programs complies with Standard 10.7, the SACSCOC Credit Hours Policy Statement and the federal definition of a semester credit hour. In the case of the Core Curriculum, all competencies are mapped to the learning outcomes of existing coursework. Students do not receive a final grade for that course until they have demonstrated mastery at a minimum 80 percent level for all competencies associated with the course. Faculty approved assessment instruments are used to determine student mastery. All assessment instruments are directly mapped to student learning outcomes and use methods of assessment appropriate to their discipline.

Competencies are mapped to courses[36] and course grades assigned in the same manner as with all courses; therefore, the integrity of student records and transferability of credits is not an issue. A comparison of syllabi between similar courses taught in a competency-based[37] format and face-to-face[38] confirms course comparability. Competencies are tied to units of instruction in each online course, which is similar to best practices for all online courses. When all competencies, or units of instruction, have been mastered and recorded in grade books, course grades are assigned. To receive credit for the corresponding courses, students must demonstrate mastery of each module by earning no less than an 80% on the faculty-approved post-assessment(s). The corresponding course credit is transcribed after students have shown appropriate evidence of mastery for all modules that comprises the traditional credit-bearing course. Students may attempt mastery of each competency assessment up to three times; students who are unable to earn a passing grade are provided with academic advising for course completion.

Conclusion

A&M-Commerce adheres to Federal, State, A&M System and University regulations, policies and procedures regarding the definition of credit hours. Determinations regarding the amount and level of credit awarded for courses are made in adherence to these policies and definitions and under the direction of qualified faculty. Courses offered in a shortened format, through distance education or as part of a competency based education program follow sound procedures for making determinations regarding the amount and level of credit assigned for courses.

- 10.9** The institution ensures the quality and integrity of the work recorded when an institution transcribes courses or credits as its own when offered through a cooperative academic arrangement. The institution maintains formal agreements between the parties involved, and the institution regularly evaluates such agreements. (*Cooperative academic arrangements*)

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Texas A&M University-Commerce has no cooperative academic arrangements.

Section 12 Academic and Student Support Services

- 12.1** The institution provides appropriate academic and student support programs, services, and activities consistent with its mission. (*Student support services*) [CR]

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Introduction

Texas A&M University-Commerce offers academic and student support programs, services and activities designed to fulfill the University's mission[1] to Educate, Discover and Achieve. The University's vision further states that A&M-Commerce strives to transform lives, advance knowledge,

serve an inclusive community and foster collaboration. Academic and student support programs, services and activities at A&M-Commerce are consistent with this mission and vision. The units described below work to transform student lives by providing an educational experience that prepares them for a rapidly changing world while fostering a culture of service, collaboration and inclusion. A&M-Commerce provides support services for all students regardless of enrollment in courses on the main campus, at off-campus instructional sites or via online learning. While the array of support services may vary depending upon the classification and needs of the student populations, all students have access to services to support their academic and personal success.

Student Profile

A&M-Commerce is proud of its diverse student population, many of whom are first-generation college students. The University is committed to providing an environment of support, encouragement and attention to student success for both undergraduate and graduate students.

Undergraduate Student Profile

In Fall 2018, Texas A&M University-Commerce had a total undergraduate enrollment of 8,270, composed of 60% female and 40% male students. The University serves an ethnically diverse undergraduate student population – 44% White, 22% Black or African American, 22% Hispanic/Latino and 12% Other (Source: IPEDS Fall Enrollment 2018-19).

The student profile at A&M-Commerce is also academically diverse. In regard to their academic preparation, of the 71% of fall 2018 incoming freshmen who submitted SAT scores for admission consideration, more than 70% scored a 500 or better on the Evidence-Based Reading and Writing section, and more than 65% scored a 500 or better on the Math portion of the exam. Of the 53% of incoming freshmen who submitted ACT scores for review, more than 61% of incoming students scored an 18 or better on the ACT composite exam, with more than 59% scoring an 18 or above on the English portion and 62% on the Math portion. In terms of their class rank, 44% of the first-time, first-year students who enrolled during this same time period graduated from high school in the top quarter of their graduating class (Source: TAMUC Common Data Set 2018-19).

Texas A&M University-Commerce also continues to attract first-generation college students. Self-reported first-generation students amount to 26% of fall 2018 enrollment, although this information, collected through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), may underreport the true percentage of first-generation students at A&M-Commerce. It is typical for this student population to require a greater level of academic support services in order to navigate through college. In fall 2018, 21% of students attending college for the first time who enrolled did not meet the state's standards in at least one area and were required to take developmental courses (Source: Institutional Research). A&M-Commerce also attracts highly prepared students into its Honors Program for undergraduates.

The university predominantly serves an undergraduate population that is attending full-time (74% of students) (Source: IPEDS Fall Enrollment 2018-19) and is composed of a nearly equal mix of transfer (51%) and first-time (49%) students. Twenty-one percent of undergraduate students are enrolled in online courses only, and ten percent attend only courses at one of A&M-Commerce's off-campus instructional sites (Source: Institutional Research). Survey data suggests that approximately 56% of undergraduate students may be working while enrolled, and 49% meet the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's definition for economically disadvantaged (Source: THECB Accountability System).

Student services for undergraduate students at the University are offered to meet the needs of a population that comes from diverse ethnic, academic and socioeconomic backgrounds. This provides both challenge and opportunity for the University.

Graduate Student Profile

A&M-Commerce also serves a large population of graduate students, with graduate enrollment for fall

2018 totaling 4,141 students, of which 65% were female and 35% were male. The graduate population is 48% White, 17% Black, 15% Hispanic, 20% Other. International students represent nine percent of the graduate population (Source: IPEDS Fall Enrollment 2018-19).

The graduate population at A&M-Commerce predominantly attends part-time (73%). Fifty-nine percent of graduate students are enrolled in online courses only, and six percent attend only courses at one of A&M-Commerce's off-campus instructional sites (Source: Institutional Research).

The average age of a master's student at A&M-Commerce is 33. For a doctoral student, the average age is higher, at 43. Survey data suggests that approximately 73% of graduate students are working while enrolled, and many live outside the immediate radius (50 miles) of the University (67%) (Source: Institutional Research).

Student services for graduate students at the University are offered to meet the needs of these students who often attend part-time, in many cases online, and while managing the other professional and family responsibilities associated with older students. The University continues to evaluate and respond to the academic and student support needs of these students.

Academic and Student Support Services

Students are informed of the support services available by distribution of the *Student Guidebook*^[2] at all new student orientations, via web pages for each program or service and by email reminders^[3] at the beginning of each semester. Postings on social media (Facebook and Twitter) as well as in postings around campus (electronic and non-electronic signage) further serve to inform students. Information about academic and student support services is also published in the *Undergraduate*^[4] and *Graduate*^[5] catalogs.

Academic and student support services at A&M-Commerce are primarily organized within three divisions: the Division of Campus Life and Student Development, the Division of Enrollment Management and the Division of Academic Affairs.

The Division of Campus Life and Student Development

The mission^[6] of the Division of Campus Life and Student Development (CLSD) is to promote a culture of intellectual exploration and inclusion by facilitating student-centered programming, developing student leaders and global citizens, and providing services and facilities designed to encourage continued learning outside of the classroom. CLSD, under the direction of the Dean of Students, includes the following units, which are described in detail below:

Student Disability Resources and Services^[7]. Students with disabilities at A&M-Commerce are encouraged to participate in all aspects of campus life. Therefore, in relation to the University's Mission, Student Disability Resources & Services (SDRS) is committed to promoting an academic, recreational and social experience for students with disabilities that is personalized, inclusive and accessible. Students on the main campus, online and at off-site locations have 24-hour access to SDRS services through an online student portal and email. Additionally, all A&M-Commerce's off-site locations are staffed with a representative to assist students in receiving disability related accommodations and support. For the 2018-2019 fall and spring semesters, 1,826 student requests for reasonable accommodations were received, processed and distributed to faculty/instructors and students. The SDRS Student and Faculty annual survey^[8] consistently indicates a service satisfaction rate in excess of 80%.

Residential Living and Learning^[9] (RLL). RLL is committed to providing an environment conducive to the active pursuit of academic, personal and professional success through providing on-campus residential housing in traditional and apartment-style living communities. RLL strives to maintain safe, secure and reasonably priced living/learning environments for all classifications of students, including special populations such as family housing and academic- and affinity-based Living and Learning

Communities. Social and academic activities are planned in each residential community, as are one-to-one engagements between RLL staff and each student. Students have 24-hour access to RLL facilities and staff in receiving assistance for academic and personal support. For the 2018-2019 academic year, 2,579 students lived in university-owned and operated facilities. The RLL Student Satisfaction annual survey[10] indicates statistically significant gains upon the previous year; overall satisfaction was 68.7%.

Campus Recreation[11] (CR). Campus Recreation (CR) enriches student life and promotes wellness to the A&M-Commerce community by providing diverse recreational opportunities, facilities and programs. CR facilities include the Morris Recreation Center (which includes the Great OutRoars and outdoor MAC Court), Cain Sports Complex and Outdoor Adventure Area (which includes the challenge course, disc golf course, and bike trail). CR provides programming that includes intramural sports, club sports, aquatics, fitness, outdoor programs and special events. All students who pay the dedicated recreation fee (this includes undergraduates, graduates and online students) have access to these programs and facilities. Faculty and staff can also receive access by paying the recreation fee. In the 2018-19 CR satisfaction survey[12], 86% of respondents said that they strongly agree or somewhat agree that participation in Campus Recreation facilities, programs, and services was a satisfying experience. Usage data for fall 2018 and spring 2019 reflects the following:

| Program | # of unique users | % of users who are students |
|-------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Intramural | 1,014 | 98% |
| Fitness | 987 | 86% |
| Club Sports | 121 | 100% |
| Outdoors | 1,583 | 95% |
| Facilities | 4,704 | 93% |

Source: Campus Recreation (Fusion and IMLeagues)

Rayburn Student Center[13] (RSC). The Rayburn Student Center hosts many campus activities and events aimed to enhance and nurture educational, cultural and social student experiences. These activities and programs take into account the varied populations of both undergraduate and graduate students, ranging from nontraditional to traditional, students with families and students who live off campus, in addition to faculty and staff. Students, faculty and staff experience the state-of-the-art facility by dining in the Lions Mane Cafeteria, enjoying music or playing a game in The Club, visiting the University bookstore, attending a meeting in one of the conference rooms, or enjoying the outdoor patio. The Rayburn Student Center supports and hosts Student Organizations, Student Involvement, Greek Life and the Pride Shop. Also residing in the RSC, the Student Government Association (SGA) empowers, enables, serves and represents the A&M-Commerce student population with the goal of enhancing the student experience by seeking out student concerns and issues to address the academic, accessibility and personal experiences of students. Information about the RSC facilities and the student involvement opportunities hosted there can be found online on the Rayburn Student Center[13] web page, and on the University's student engagement platform, ManeSync[14]. When asked how often they visit the Rayburn Student Center in a 2019 survey of students, staff and community members, 110 out of 155 respondents answered "daily" and 144 respondents answered affirmatively that the RSC met their expectations.

Counseling Center[15]. The Counseling Center aims to complement the University's academic mission and goals by initiating mental health interventions to promote a healthy campus environment and meet the psychological and educational needs of the University community. The Counseling Center fulfills its mission by providing individual, couples and group counseling as well as consultation, educational outreach, crisis intervention, after-hours crisis assistance, psychiatric evaluation and medication management services. Students in online programs or at off-campus locations also have access to the Counseling Center services, may be provided with referrals and can utilize after-hours

crisis assistance or the Therapist Assistance Online (TAO), an interactive online program to provide support for common psychological concerns students may experience. For the 2018-2019 fall and spring semesters, a total of 3,212 counseling appointments were provided to 621 students. Educational outreach events and activities reached an additional 4,195 students and the University community.

Children's Learning Center [16]. The Children's Learning Center (CLC) offers campus childcare in a rich learning environment to parents who are University undergraduate and graduate students or faculty/staff. The Center provides care for children ages six weeks to five years and an after-school and full day summer/holiday program for children up to age 12. The CLC strives to meet the mission of the university by offering affordable quality childcare to both students and faculty/staff so that they can know their children are safe and can focus on completing their classes and/or providing high-quality instruction. The CLC also serves as a training, research, instructional and educational site for the University where students have the opportunity to observe and carry out activities to complete educational assignments, as well as be hired as student workers and gain hands-on experience in the field. Approximately 75% of families served by the CLC each fall/spring semester are students and faculty/staff, with about half from each category.

Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities [17]. The Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities works to educate the campus community regarding standards for student conduct and to foster a community of civility, integrity, dignity, respect for others and appreciation for diversity. The goal is to address behavioral misconduct in a manner that educates and guides students toward civility and upholding ethical standards. The Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities serves as a resource for all students concerning their rights and responsibilities to their community, as well as provides assistance to faculty, staff and students regarding student disciplinary matters. The office addresses issues of both undergraduate and graduate student populations. The office is also responsible for the University Behavior Intervention Team (BIT [18]). The Behavioral Intervention Team serves the Texas A&M University-Commerce community by assessing, responding to, and evaluating disruptive, concerning or threatening behaviors brought to the attention of the Team. As a part of this work, the Team also seeks to help identify members of the University community who are in need of support, guidance, or other intervention and to refer them to appropriate campus and community resources. The BIT is empowered by the Dean of Students to make decisions and take appropriate action in fulfillment of its mission. The Dean of Students provides administrative oversight for the Team.

Student Case Specialist. The University has developed services for students around a case management model. Student Case Management supports students throughout their college careers in order to best achieve their academic and co-curricular goals. Case management does not solve students' problems for them, but rather helps the student to identify issues and appropriate resources and works collaboratively with the student to develop an action plan. Once resources are identified and referrals are made, the Student Case Specialist may provide further follow up with the student as needed. These needs may center on issues such as victim advocacy or food insecurity. Student Case Management is not counseling or therapy; rather, the Student Case Specialist has the opportunity to develop close helping relationships with students while coaching them toward appropriate self-care and self-advocacy. Students are referred to case management services by faculty, staff or other students when they have a concern regarding a student's wellbeing. Students can also be self-referred to gain assistance. The goal is to avert more serious difficulties, focus on the safety of both the student and the A&M-Commerce community, and help the student attain academic and personal success. During the 2018-2019 academic year, there were 329 referrals to Student Case Management.

Intercultural Engagement and Leadership [19]. The Intercultural Engagement and Leadership office offers an inclusive space and serves as the hub of intentional leadership development through programs offered to students including the Experience Leadership Conference, Leadership Without Limits Global program, Hats off to Women, Operation Blue and Gold and the Tunnel of Oppression. Through its services and initiatives, the office seeks to create innovative, experiential opportunities to promote students' commitment to lifelong learning and holistic development.

Student Health Services [20]. The mission of Student Health Services is to enhance the academic success of A&M-Commerce students by providing accessible high-quality medical care and to promote

healthier lifestyles to achieve and maintain lifelong health and wellness. Primary health care services offered include: acute care and injuries, allergy injections, birth control, EKGs, immunizations, flu shots, TB testing, [labs](#), minor surgical procedures, physical exams, splints, STD/STI testing and treatment, stitches, wart treatment, women's health and minor wound care. Student Health Services see students who are currently enrolled in a given semester, including graduate and undergraduate students and students in online or off-campus courses. Appointments can be made by calling the clinic or by booking an appointment online. In the fiscal year 2019, the clinic recorded 6,093 encounters.

Success Teams and Academic Advising. The University has recently adopted a centralized advising model. Centralization of advising was recommended during the 2019 Ruffalo Noel-Levitz strategic enrollment management consultancy. Centralization in this context refers to all advising offices being under one supervisor, and following a single set of prescribed work and service expectations. Administrative responsibility for advising lies with the Vice President for Student Success and Dean of Studies. This model includes three distinct position types (professional advisors, financial aid advisors and concierges) organized into success teams attached to the University's six academic colleges. Professional advisors perform the duties normally expected of persons in that position, though centralized direction of those individuals' workflow and methods is something new to the University. Financial aid advisors in this model will coordinate with the University's already-existing financial aid office, but provide more immediate and geographically accessible assistance to students. Concierge positions exist to help troubleshoot complex problems for students across the University bureaucracy. At this writing the new model is being put into place in order to be ready to receive students starting in Fall 2020. Information about how to access advising services is shared with students during orientation (on-campus and online) and can be located via the web-based degree planning tool DegreeWorks^[21] through the University's student portal myLeo. Advising at off-campus sites is provided by both professional advisors and faculty members, and students completing online degree programs are advised through success team advisors.

The Division of Enrollment Management and Retention

The mission of the Division of Enrollment Management and Retention^[22] is to effectively recruit, enroll and retain a diverse student body. The Division of Enrollment Management, under the direction of the Vice President of Enrollment Management, includes the following units, which are described in detail below:

Office of Undergraduate Admissions^[23]. The Office of Undergraduate Admissions works to promote the University and admissions requirements to prospective students and assists incoming students in the admissions process. The University's recruitment efforts help provide a personal relationship with prospective students, counselors and parents by providing access to an excellent, relevant and personalized educational experience for a diverse community of learners, in direct support of the A&M-Commerce mission. This includes, among other activities, recruiting freshmen and transfer students and aiding in the University admissions process for in-state, out-of-state and international students. Admissions also supports incoming transfer students by providing transcript evaluation and transfer course information, developing admissions publications and deadlines and providing answers to multi-faceted questions. Each step along the way, admissions supports prospective students and their parents by communicating information of where they are in the application process. Students at off-site locations are assisted in the admissions process by on-site directors/coordinators and staff at each location, in coordination with the Undergraduate Admissions office. The office communicates with prospective students until they are admitted and enrolled, through multiple means—face-to-face, email, texts, web pages and through admissions social media channels such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Registrar^[24]. The Office of the Registrar maintains the academic records for all students as well as assists with registration, transcript requests, enrollment verifications, veteran certification, athlete certification, grade records and graduation. In accordance with the University's mission, the Registrar's Office is committed to providing top quality enrollment processes and ensuring confidentiality with the best service possible. Services such as registration, enrollment verification, applying for graduation and

requesting a transcript can all be accessed by students online through the myLeo Portal. For all other services (ex: withdraw, drop/add, GPA updates), information and forms can be found on the Registrar's web page. These online services are available to all students at all locations for both undergraduate and graduate classifications. The myLeo portal is used daily by faculty, staff and students for a variety of services such as registration, grading and completing coursework and is available 24 hours a day/7 days a week.

Veterans & Military Services[25]. Located in the Registrar's Office, Veterans & Military Services serves as a liaison between the Department of Veteran's Affairs, Texas Veterans Commission, Department of Defense, veterans and their family members. The office serves to advance higher education success for veterans, service members and military families and to protect the integrity and promise of the GI Bill and other federal and state education programs. Information regarding veteran benefits is located on the Veterans & Military Services web page. Students pursuing academics through the main campus, online and at off-site locations can utilize the web page to access resources available through the Texas Veteran's Commission[26] and to locate a link to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs[27] website through which they are able to apply for federal GI Bill benefits. For the 2018-2019 Fall and Spring semesters, 1,203 veteran students attended A&M-Commerce.

Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships. By assisting students in securing financial aid and scholarships, the A&M-Commerce Financial Aid and Scholarships office provides support for the University's mission to educate students. In addition to providing financial aid processes and awarding aid for graduate and undergraduate students, the office offers guidance and answers to questions for student FASFA applications. They also coordinate the College Work Study program, Student Scholarship Awards and agreements for financial aid specified in articulation agreements with community colleges. Students matriculating in off-site locations or in online programs have access to financial aid and scholarship information and assistance through on-site directors/coordinators, scheduled visits by a financial aid counselor to the off-site location, the website, email, and telephone and Skype appointments. This office serves both undergraduate and graduate students.

The Office of Student Diversity and Inclusion[28]. Texas A&M University-Commerce serves an increasingly diverse student body and recognizes that the Latino population is a predominant culture in the region and throughout the state. The Office of Student Diversity and Inclusion was created to provide bilingual services to diverse student populations with a unique focus on an affordable educational experience for a diverse community of learners. Services are accessed by students and families on the Hispanic Outreach web page where visitors learn about cultural, academic and scholarship opportunities. Services, while geared towards undergraduate students, are not limited to only undergraduate students. A&M Commerce graduate students can benefit from mentorship opportunities and work as graduate assistants within the office. Focused recruiting, advocacy activities and bilingual resources have resulted in a tremendous growth in Latino student enrollment, from less than 9% in 2008, to more than 20% in 2018. The office continues to be among the only bilingual services east of Dallas and west of Texarkana, with specific focuses on mentorship, internship and scholarship opportunities.

Testing Center[29]. The Testing Center administers various national, state and local testing instruments, including, but not limited to, tests for admission, placement, certification, credit-by-exam and dual credit. The office promotes college readiness through cooperation with public schools in the dual credit and Pride Prep programs, academic departments, and other campus offices, and embodies the University's mission by providing access to an array of high quality testing services in computer-based and paper/pencil formats for students on the main campus, at off-site locations and in the community. Testers with disabilities are now served in a new private testing room with state-of-the-art accommodations added in 2018. During the academic year 2017-2018, the Testing Center served more than 4,300 students in the main campus lab and more than 1,000 testers for ACT, SAT and LSAT. The Testing Center consistently indicates a service satisfaction[30] rate in excess of 85%.

The Division of Academic Affairs

The mission of the Office of the Provost and Vice President[31] is to provide leadership and guidance to the academic colleges and divisions in the areas of research, instruction, scholarly activity and globalization. Support units that serve a primarily academic function are organized under the Division of Academic Affairs and are described in detail below:

First-Year TRAC[32]. All first-time, full-time freshmen are enrolled in the First-Year Transforming Relationships and Academic Connections (TRAC) initiative designed to maximize learning and foster a sense of community. Key elements of the TRAC initiative include signature course, peer mentoring and a common read. Assessments of TRAC have shown positive results on students' self-reported levels of integration[33] with the university.

Developmental Mathematics. The Developmental Math program supports the University's mission by assisting students as they seek academic success and educational achievement. All undergraduate students entering a public Institution of Higher Education in the state of Texas are subject to the Texas Success Initiative, which requires students who are not considered college-ready in mathematics to enroll in a developmental math course. Developmental math courses are chosen according to each student's major, with students learning the basic skills necessary to be successful in a college-level math course. An additional role of the developmental math program is to provide quality instruction and opportunities for students to engage in support activities outside of the classroom, such as workshops, supplemental instruction and tutoring services. The Developmental Math program served approximately 500 students during the academic year 2018-2019.

Math Skills Center[34]. Through its services to undergraduate students in the First Year Math program, including courses through Calculus 1, the Math Skills Center supports the University's mission by assisting students as they seek academic success and educational achievement. The center offers tutoring services and the use of computers for online homework and other software needs. This process involves close cooperation with the Department of Mathematics and its faculty. One of the main emphases of this cooperation has been ensuring greater access to college-level math for entering students. The result has been an increased percentage of First Year Math students successfully completing college-level math. The other area of cooperation has been in experimentation with delivery and pedagogy in developmental math courses, including MATH 131 and the newly-created Math 120 course. Both efforts contributed to an increase in retention and an overall decrease in time to graduation. Students can access the services of the Math Skills Center by walking into its main campus location at Binnion 328; no appointments are required. Students visited the Center for over 6,000 contact hours during the academic year 2018-2019.

Writing Center[35]. As an integral part of across-the-curriculum support for writing on the A&M-Commerce campus, the Writing Center provides tutoring service in writing, reading and critical thinking for both graduate and undergraduate students. The learning that occurs in a tutoring session inherently supports the University's mission to educate students. Students and faculty access these services through the on-site Center in David Talbot Hall and through the Online Writing Lab. Students enrolled in online courses or at off-campus or dual-credit locations may also access services through the Online Writing Lab email. The Writing Center also works with faculty to provide services appropriate to the needs of writing for academic disciplines. For the 2018-2019 fall and spring semesters, 1,452 students were served through both the on-site location and the Online Writing Lab. The Writing Center Client Survey[36] for spring 2019 indicates a satisfaction rate in excess of 80%.

Academic Success Center[37] (ASC). Texas A&M University-Commerce is dedicated to providing students with high-quality support in their education. The Academic Success Center (ASC) is an undergraduate tutoring program that provides support for core level courses and operates in several locations on the University's main campus including the James G. Gee Library and the McFarland Science Building. The Center's Supplemental Instruction[38] program (SI) employs undergraduate students to attend lectures and then host group study sessions outside of the lecture. SI Leaders work closely with faculty members, meeting weekly to report attendance and student learning progress with course materials. Faculty may also request tutors from the Center to be embedded in their classrooms. In addition, the University has contracted with Tutor.com[39] to provide online tutoring for

undergraduate students in online courses or at off-campus locations. In the academic year 2018-19, the ASC reported over 5,800 contact hours with students, and 89% (N = 111) of students surveyed indicated they would use ASC tutoring services again.

Career Development[40]. *The purpose of the Career Development Department is to increase students' career opportunities and enhance student knowledge of the job market. Career Development develops relationships with employers resulting in career opportunities for students/alumni, while also providing quality career preparation tools to develop the essential skills students need to compete in the job market. Career Development staff also work closely with University faculty and staff to provide services that promote student success. Services offered to students and alumni include networking opportunities through Career Fairs, Speaker Panels and Field Trips. Students and Alumni can access services, including the scheduling of career coaching appointments and registration for workshops and events, through the University's HireALion web page powered by Handshake*[41]. *To serve online students and working professionals, online appointments and evening hours are also offered. In the academic year 2018-2019, Career Development coordinated 6 field trips serving 120 students, 13 networking events serving 4,287 students and 153 career development workshops serving 3,494 students. Students who have visited the Career Development Office have reported they felt their career coach was knowledgeable about the topic(s) discussed and would highly recommend them to others.*

TRiO/Student Support Services[42]. The Trio Programs are hosted by Texas A&M University-Commerce and funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Trio Programs have a rich history of advocating for students and families while supporting their passion for learning. Trio provides educational opportunities and college access for low-income, first-generation and disabled students to begin successfully and to remain in college until graduation. Participants receive tutoring, counseling and remedial instruction in order to reach their goals of college completion. In keeping with A&M-Commerce's vision, Trio Programs play a major role in student enrollment, retention and college graduation for a diverse community of learners. The Office of Trio Programs gathers and analyzes data to determine the impact that the services have on retention and graduation for the first generation, socio-economically disadvantaged student, and students with disabilities. Federal Trio Programs hosted at Texas A&M University-Commerce include Trio Student Support Services, Trio Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate program and Trio Upward Bound program. These programs serve undergraduate students, currently including 425 Trio Student Support Services participants, 25 Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalureate Program participants and 154 Trio Upward Bound participants. Services are offered on the main campus only. Program participants are offered support services daily including face-to-face, by email and through video chatting services. The Trio Programs 2018-2019 surveys[43] indicate that 89% of participants are satisfied with the services offered.

Honors College[44]. The Honors College is a learning community that uses high impact educational practices to enhance undergraduate students' love of scholarship. Honors students embody the University's mission of education, discovery and achievement by carrying out and defending an Honors thesis, travelling internationally and/or by completing targeted internships. Honors courses are offered each fall and spring semester where students can engage with faculty and peers in the learning process[45]. The Honors Scholar Program is embedded within the Honors College and provides students on the main campus, online and at off-site locations with the ability to partake in the Honors experience. Approximately 300 students took advantage of Honors services during the 2018-19 fall and spring semesters, including 47 students who defended an Honors thesis and 31 who travelled internationally.

Graduate Student Services[46]. Support services for graduate students are primarily coordinated by the Graduate School. Through interaction with applicants and graduate students, the Graduate School provides the tools and resources needed to help students with their academic goals. The Graduate School provides assistance in person, by phone, and by email for all graduate students, and graduate information is available online through the main Graduate School[46] web page and through the Resources for Students[47] web page. Services to graduate students include program admissions, digital degree plans and graduation processes. Information regarding program coordinators and faculty advisers is available for graduate students online and can be located via the web-based degree planning tool DegreeWorks through the University's student portal myLeo. Students are contacted

through email regarding services and information provided by the Graduate School. In addition, forms, guides and the Doctoral Student Handbook[48] have been prepared to assist students in the pursuit of their graduate studies. For the academic year 2018-2019, graduate students rated their satisfaction with their admission experience[49] as 94.7% and satisfaction with their graduation experience[50] as 94.5%.

Thesis and Dissertation Services (TDS) provides assistance to graduate students completing a dissertation or thesis. The Graduate School employs a Dissertation Thesis Specialist who works with students in person, by phone and by email to meet the needs of students at all campus locations. The TDS provides resources, tools, checklists, templates and FAQs to assist students in meeting the thesis or dissertation requirements.

The Graduate School also facilitates graduate assistantships available for interested and qualified students. For graduate students with the appropriate credentials, teaching assistantships provide students with financial support and supervised teaching experiences. Research teaching assistantships give students exposure to research and offer various levels of financial support depending upon students' majors and specific qualifications.

Office of International Student & Scholar Services[51]. International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) is a unit within the Office of International Programs (OIP), which serves international students, scholars and their dependents while enhancing internationalization of the Texas A&M University-Commerce campus. ISSS provides services such as immigration advising, cultural adjustment, cultural and educational programs, trips to the Dallas/Fort Worth area and other destinations, and multi-cultural programs in keeping with University's mission. Students on the main campus, online and at off-campus locations have access to ISSS services through the website and email. During the 2018-2019 fall and spring semesters, the OIP recorded over 2,798 student visits to the office to request ISSS services. The OIP international student annual survey[52] indicated service satisfaction rates from average to outstanding in excess of 80%.

Office of Academic Technology[53]. The Office of Academic Technology's (OAT) primary focus is to assist faculty in teaching with technology. The unit works with faculty to assist with use of the university's myLeo Online (D2L Brightspace) learning management system (LMS) for online courses; training on classroom technology; the accessibility of course materials and multimedia studio production for courses. Online courses are accessed by all students and faculty via the myLeo portal. D2L provides 24-hour technical assistance for students and faculty using the LMS, and the Office of Academic Technology provides a second layer of faculty support Monday through Friday from 8:00a.m. to 5:00p.m. In the fall 2018 and spring 2019 semesters OAT logged a total of 1,561 faculty support interactions, 855 and 706 respectively. Additionally, 25 LMS training sessions[54] were offered and attended by 148 faculty.

James G. Gee Library[55]. Located in the center of the campus, the James G. Gee Library (main campus) occupies five floors and 92,478 square feet of the library building. The library has 622 seats and users have access to 30 study rooms and 138 networked desktop computers. The library classroom is equipped with a projector, 28 computers, and has a seating capacity of 29. The library provides 90 laptops available for student checkout, 2 KIC scanners, and 2 black/white and color copy machines. During fiscal year 2018-19, there were 424,701 visitors to the library. Group and individual study rooms were checked out for a total of 13,325 times. In addition to housing the physical collections, the library also provides space to the Academic Success and Tutoring Services, Student Disabilities Resources and Services, Assistive Technology Lab, the Office of Sponsored Programs, Training and Development, a coffee shop and a food services area for the academic community. The library's collection includes over 400,000 print monographs, over 55,000 online journals, 335,000 eBooks and 215 research databases. All students, faculty and staff have access to library resources of an appropriate breadth and quality for the distance education program(s) offered. These resources can be accessed by faculty and students via the Libraries' website using their myLeo account login credentials. The print materials are available to all faculty and students and are delivered via interlibrary loans to students and faculty off-campus. A full review of library and learning/information resources is conducted as part of the institution's response to Standard 11.1 as part of the decennial review.

Additional Services

Additional support services overseen by Business Administration and the Office of the President include the following:

Computer Resources. A&M-Commerce provides a variety of computers, computer labs and computer enabled classrooms that support the academic functions of the University. General use computer labs[56] are open for all students, faculty and staff during regular hours of operation. Traditional teaching classrooms have been enhanced with teacher computers and data projection at all locations. Full technology-enhanced classrooms[57] are available at the main campus and at all off-campus sites. Instructor podiums are equipped with a computer, a laptop connection, document camera, audio and video controls and data projection. In some rooms, portable systems are available to allow the use of technology in a more flexible manner. Academic departments may also have technology hardware and software that are specific to a particular discipline and support unique learning experiences. The University's Center for IT Excellence (CITE) offers a Help Desk and Call Center providing technical assistance to faculty, staff and students. The Help Desk can be reached by phone or email, and information about CITE's services can be accessed on the CITE[58] web page. A further description of technological infrastructure is included under Standard 13.7. Additional learning/information resources are managed separately by the Office of Academic Technology and the A&M-Commerce Libraries (see above).

Athletic Department. Through intercollegiate athletics, Texas A&M University-Commerce provides opportunities for learning and development. The University is a member of the NCAA Division II Lone Star Conference with fourteen varsity teams comprised of six men's and eight women's teams. Men's sports include Basketball, Cross Country, Football, Golf, Indoor Track & Field and Outdoor Track & Field. Women's sports include Basketball, Cross Country, Golf, Soccer, Softball, Indoor Track & Field, Outdoor Track & Field and Volleyball. Within the department of Intercollegiate Athletics, the James Thrower Center for Student-Athlete Success[59] provides innovative resources and is committed to the academic and personal development of all student-athletes by empowering them with holistic programming and growth opportunities. The Deputy Athletics Director for Student-Athlete Success is responsible for the overall administration of the Thrower Center by monitoring academic progress, eligibility and student development. The center provides services including academic advising, tutoring services and leadership programs. The primary goal is to help each student-athlete take full advantage of the opportunities available and to maintain athletics eligibility. In the academic year 2018-2019, 810 tutoring appointments were attended by student athletes, and 104 student athletes participated in the Center's Leadership Academy.

University Police[60]. The mission of the University Police Department (UPD) is to provide a safe and secure environment and a learning atmosphere that promotes unfettered thought, ceaseless industry and fearless investigation. The department is structured with several different divisions, including, patrol, criminal investigations, dispatch, administration and security and is manned 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. UPD is capable of dispatching police, fire and medical services. UPD provides additional services to the campus such as crime prevention, assistance with locked vehicles, active shooter training and management of the Pride Alert Warning System (PAWS). The PAWS provides notifications to University students, faculty and staff in the case of immediate danger or emergency situations. PAWS alerts are available at both the main campus and off-campus instructional sites. The University Police Department maintains a close working relationship with all local law enforcement agencies in order to be aware of any potential threats to A&M-Commerce or its students, faculty and staff. Information about the University Police Department can be accessed on the UPD web page. Please see Standard 13.8 for additional information regarding UPD's role in providing a safe and secure environment for the campus community.

Services for Online and Off-Campus Students

Texas A&M University-Commerce offers courses and programs via an online delivery mode and face-to-face at off-site instructional locations. As noted in the student profile above, 21% of

undergraduate and 59% of graduate students are enrolled in online courses only while 10% of undergraduate and 6% of graduate students are enrolled only in courses at one of the University's off-campus sites. To meet the needs of these students, the University prioritizes the following services (described above and included again below).

Technical Access and Support

Online courses are accessed by all students and faculty via the myLeo Online (D2L Brightspace) learning management system (LMS) portal. D2L provides 24-hour technical assistance for students and faculty using the LMS, and the Office of Academic Technology provides a second layer of faculty support Monday through Friday from 8:00a.m. to 5:00p.m. In further support, the University's Center for IT Excellence (CITE) offers a Help Desk and Call Center providing technical assistance to faculty, staff and students. The Help Desk can be reached by phone or email. Additionally, the University help desk is staffed Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. and an after-hours and weekend emergency phone number is provided to students.

Admissions, Orientation and Advising

All applicants to A&M-Commerce apply to the University via the ApplyTexas application, a standardized online application for admission to any public 2-year or 4-year institution in the state of Texas. Graduate and Undergraduate Admissions staff communicate with student applicants via email, telephone and myLeo communications. Students at off-site locations are assisted in the admissions process by on-site directors/coordinators and staff at each location, in coordination with the Undergraduate Admissions office.

Online orientation is provided to both graduate and undergraduate students. Students at off-site locations have access to complete an online orientation as well or may meet face-to-face with their advisors at those locations prior to registration.

Information about how to access advising services is shared with students during orientation (on-campus and online) and can be located via the web-based degree planning tool DegreeWorks through the University's student portal myLeo. Advising at off-campus sites is provided both by professional advisors and faculty members, and students completing online degree programs are advised through success team advisors.

Financial Aid

The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships communicates with students through their campus email and by providing information through the myLEO portal. Students matriculating in off-site locations or in online programs also have access to financial aid and scholarship information and assistance through on-site directors/coordinators, scheduled visits by a financial aid counselor to the off-site location, the Financial Aid web page, telephone and virtual appointments through Skype.

Tutoring Services and Library Resources

The University has contracted with Tutor.com^[39] to provide online tutoring for undergraduate students in online courses or at off-campus locations. Students may also access the services of the Writing Center through use of the Online Writing Lab.

All students, faculty, and staff have access to library resources of an appropriate breadth and quality for the distance education program(s) offered. The Texas A&M University-Commerce Libraries collection includes over 900,000 items including over 400,000 print books, 24,000 serials volumes, 250 databases, 55,000 e-journals, 101,000 physical media, 19,000 digital media and over 335,000 e-books. These resources can be accessed by faculty and students via the Libraries' website using their myLeo account login credentials. Print materials are available to all faculty and students and are delivered via interlibrary loans to our students and faculty off-campus. Texas A&M University-Commerce libraries

also provide access to electronic books, which are available to all students, both on campus and from distant locations. Texas A&M University-Commerce Libraries is a member of the TexShare program, which allows faculty, staff and students to borrow materials at any participating TexShare library. A TexShare card can be obtained from the Texas A&M University-Commerce Libraries.

Library users have many avenues available for help with research needs, including contacting a librarian via text, email, chat, video chat or telephone. Information regarding access to these services is found on the “Contact the Librarians” web page. An extensive network of research guides and video tutorials is available on the Library website for faculty and students to access independently. Library instruction can be scheduled onsite at the library, at remote locations or via webinar.

Student Disability and Counseling Services

Students on the main campus, online and at off-site locations have 24-hour access to Student Disability Resources and Services (SDRS) through an online student portal and email. Additionally, all A&M-Commerce’s off-site locations are staffed with an SDRS representative to assist students in receiving disability related accommodations and support.

Students in online programs or at off-campus locations also have access to the Counseling Center services, may be provided with referrals and can utilize after-hours crisis assistance or the Therapist Assistance Online (TAO), an interactive online program to provide support for common psychological concerns students may experience.

Career Services

Students and Alumni can access services, including the scheduling of career coaching appointments and registration for workshops and events, through the University’s Hirealio web page powered by Handshake[41]. To serve online students and working professionals, online appointments and evening hours are also offered.

Services for Dual-Enrollment Students

For the terms fall 2018 and spring 2019, 582 and 430 students, respectively, were enrolled in dual credit courses with A&M-Commerce (Source: Institutional Research). Students enrolled in dual credit courses with A&M-Commerce have access to the full range of University academic and student support services.

Dual enrollment students receive information about services available through distribution of the *Dual Credit Handbook*[61], through visits by the University’s designated representative[62] and by email communications sent to all A&M-Commerce students.

Services specifically highlighted for access by this student population include the Testing Center, Student Disability Resources and Services and tutoring and library services. Advising information for students is included in the *Dual Credit Handbook* and provided during campus visits by the University’s designated representative. During the 18-19 academic year, a University representative visited each dual credit campus at least three times[63].

Review and Determination of Appropriateness

Academic support programs and services are regularly reviewed as part of the University’s strategic planning and institutional effectiveness processes. The University engages annually in a systematic process of collection, review, and use of outcomes data for continuous improvement. University procedure 03.01.99.R0.03[64] *Institutional Effectiveness* provides guidance on this annual process. Every year, each support unit, including academic and support services, documents an assessment (IE) plan and (IE) results which presents an opportunity to review unit effectiveness and alignment with mission. Samples are provided. (Samples 1[65], 2[66], 3[67], 4[68]) A full review of outcomes for

academic and student services is reported under Standard 8.2.c as part of the University's decennial accreditation review. Furthermore, the University's comprehensive strategic planning process presents an additional opportunity to review services provided and further align their work with the mission and strategic goals of the University.

Institutional surveys also provide an indirect measure of the adequacy and appropriateness of services to meet the needs of students. The Graduation Exit Survey was created for the purpose of regularly monitoring student characteristics and satisfaction and is administered each semester, summer, fall and spring, to students who have applied for graduation, both graduate and undergraduate. Results are published on the University website. Students are asked to rate their level of satisfaction with various A&M-Commerce services and are also able to offer specific feedback on satisfaction with advising services (Undergraduates[69]) (Graduates[70]), among other question items. The University participates in periodic administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). This survey is administered to freshmen and senior undergraduate students on a two-year cycle and results are published on the University website. Questions regarding campus environment give the University feedback on student perceptions of the quality of their interactions and the supportiveness of the University environment[71], although a limited number of student responses on this survey have made results less generalizable to the campus. During the 2018-19 academic year, A&M-Commerce contracted with Ruffalo-Noel Levitz (RNL) to engage in a strategic enrollment review and planning process. As a component of this review, the Student Satisfaction Inventory[72] was administered to students and revealed areas of importance and satisfaction for the undergraduate student population, including strengths in support services such as security services, tutoring services, and library resources and services. This survey response demonstrated the largest single sample of undergraduate students in recent history, allowing results to provide a detailed picture of student satisfaction. Survey results identified challenge areas which were primarily academic in nature (with the exception of financial aid), indicating that, in general, undergraduate students are satisfied with support services available to them.

Students, faculty and staff at A&M-Commerce have channels through which concerns regarding support services can be raised. The Student Government Association holds regular forums which are open to students, faculty and staff. (Fall[73]) (Spring[74]) These forums are used to hear concerns from students or share information. Faculty Senate offers an avenue through which faculty can raise concerns regarding sufficiency of services to meet the needs of students and faculty or be presented with information about services available. Staff Council provides a similar opportunity for University staff.

These standing processes, instruments and forums provide regular opportunities for review of and feedback on appropriateness of existing services to meet the needs of students and faculty. Existing services are modified or new services created when determined necessary. For example, services are expanded to meet the needs of the University's current student body, such as implementing 24-hour library hours or adding online access options for services such as Career Development and the Writing Center. The addition of a Student Case Specialist offering case management services to students and the creation of the University's integrated first-year experience program, First Year TRAC (described above) offer examples of implementation of new services and programming to meet the needs of students, consistent with institutional mission to provide a personalized education to diverse learners.

A&M-Commerce continues to provide appropriate academic and student support programs, services and activities consistent with its mission. Specific areas identified for development moving forward include

- further expansion of services to students at off-site locations, including Student Health Services which encompass counseling, health care and student disability services and resources.
- increased availability and utilization of funds available through collection of a student service fee to expand the footprint of services on campus, including the hiring of a nutritionist and a health and wellness educator.
- planning for a new residence hall designed as a living and learning facility
- reorganization of advising services under management of the Vice President for Student Success and Dean of Students to allow for centralized implementation of effective advising

- practices
- renovations to the A&M-Commerce Libraries to provide the best mix of spaces available to meet the diverse needs of campus users

Conclusion

A&M-Commerce is providing a comprehensive and appropriate range of support programs, services and activities that are consistent within its mission to provide students a transformative education that allows them to discover and achieve. These services are available to both undergraduate and graduate students, and appropriate services are provided to meet the needs of online students and students attending classes at off-site locations. The institution uses regular planning and assessment processes, student surveys and governing bodies to review and receive feedback on the appropriateness of services provided and their alignment with institutional mission. As such, the University is in compliance with Core Requirement 12.1.

- 12.4** The institution (a) publishes appropriate and clear procedures for addressing written student complaints, (b) demonstrates that it follows the procedures when resolving them, and (c) maintains a record of student complaints that can be accessed upon request by SACSCOC. (*Student complaints*)

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Introduction

Texas A&M University-Commerce publishes adequate procedures for addressing written student complaints, is responsible for demonstrating that it follows those procedures and maintains a record of student complaints. These policies apply to all students, regardless of classification (residential, commuter, online), status (graduate, undergraduate) or location (main campus or off-campus instructional site).

Student Concerns

The *Student Guidebook* (pages 57-63)[1] outlines the University's philosophy of helping students resolve concerns, problems or conflicts with regards to University policies, procedures and decisions before they rise to the level of a written complaint. This philosophy reflects an understanding that issues are best resolved at the level closest to the circumstances that lead to the issue, emphasizes the importance of communication as a first step in the resolution of issues and indicates that dialogue among parties is the first step in resolving disputes before initiating formal complaint procedures. The office of the Dean of Students provides for a confidential and neutral place for students to express their concerns. Students work directly with staff members to identify steps that may be taken to achieve a timely and fair resolution to a problem. The office may collaborate with others in the University community regarding student concerns.

The *Student Guidebook* also provides an overview of rights and responsibilities inclusive of complaints or grievances associated with discrimination; disability accommodations; harassment; grade disputes such as academic probation, suspension and/or academic dismissal; academic dishonesty; absences; and disciplinary actions. The University has developed the Student Complaint Matrix[2] to assist students in understanding the procedures and process for addressing these common issues. The matrix provides students with a clear understanding of the office or person responsible for addressing issues based on the nature of the issue. This matrix can be found on pages 58-63 of the *Student Guidebook*. This matrix allows for a timely response and resolution within the appropriate division/department of the University.

Students are able to submit concerns through the studentconcern@tamuc.edu email address. The office of the Dean of Students then works to triage concerns and refer them to the appropriate office for resolution, following the guidelines of the Student Concern Matrix.

For example, the student concern sent to this address on November 15th was received by the office of the Dean of Students and referred to the academic department head for resolution[3]. The academic department head communicated with the faculty member concerned, who was then able to meet with the student and resolve the concern (November 22nd[4]).

Student forums for students are also conducted for the purpose of providing students with opportunities to express concerns and to open the dialogue for continuous improvement at Texas A&M University-Commerce. (Example 1[5]) (Example 2[6]) Directors and deans attend these forums and respond directly to students. The format for each student forum is to review progress on addressing previous concerns expressed at the previous forums. Students taking online courses and who attend classes at off-campus sites are also encouraged to provide input through the Student Government Association.

Written Student Complaints

Students unable to resolve their complaints through the complaint and appeal procedures outlined in the Student Complaint, Appeal and Concern Matrix are able to file a written student complaint as a further appeal. The institution defines a written student complaint as a complaint that is submitted using the Student Complaint, Appeal, and Concern Resolution Form[7]. This form, along with procedures governing written student complaints, can be accessed through the primary point of information for student concerns, the Student Concerns web page[8] located in the Campus Life and Student Development section of the University website.

The institution is committed to addressing written student complaints in a fair and professional manner and in making all relevant information well publicized and clear and consistent. Information about student complaints, appeals and concerns is documented in the *Student Guidebook*, which is disseminated to students[9] and available on the Dean of Students web page[10].

All written student complaints are filed with the Office of the Dean of Students, where a record of formal written student complaints is maintained. Written student complaints are stored as both electronic and hard copy format in the Dean of Students Office based on the format in which they were received. The Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities is responsible for maintaining the record of complaints.

Elements of the record maintained include:

- Full Name (printed and signed)
- Contact Information
- Name of the individual that prompted the complaint report
- Notice of attempt to resolve informally
- Detailed description of the complaint
- Notice of desired outcome from complainant
- Any additional information gathered during the course of investigation and adjudication

Complaints are reviewed and adjudicated by the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities as they are received, with appeal to the Dean of Students. The review and adjudication procedure mirrors the student conduct process and includes gathering relevant information from those parties deemed to be appropriate to the complaint in order to ensure due process has been carried out, consideration of any mitigating circumstances and a review of the appropriateness of the determined action. After appropriate inquiry or investigation, the complainant is notified of the outcome of the written complaint.

A&M-Commerce developed its original written student complaint process in response to recommendations regarding the University's previous Fifth-Year Interim Report in 2009. Subsequently, the University's decennial review and 2014 reaffirmation confirmed the sufficiency and effectiveness of this process. From fall 2016 to fall 2018, the University experienced a period of significant administrative change. Ownership of the complaint process passed from Enrollment Management to Academic Affairs, and then, to Student Affairs. After responsibility for student complaints passed to Student Affairs, three different administrators served as dean. New stability in that position has allowed

for review and revision of the written complaint process. That revision included the distinction between student concerns and formal written complaints described earlier.

The self-study process for the University's 2020 Fifth-Year Interim Report prompted improvements to student-facing communications regarding handling of student complaints. The student concerns web page is being updated to better express the intended distinction between concerns and complaints. Students are empowered to address concerns themselves by following proper channels outlined in the Student Concern Matrix. However, not every situation fits neatly within the matrix, and not all students can negotiate challenges without support. Therefore, students are invited to submit concerns via a student concern email account or, alternatively, to come in person to the dean of students office. The goal is to emphasize real-time solutions when students most need them. Students are guided toward the written complaint form and process if they are unable to resolve their concerns through other means.

Under the direction of the Dean of Students, a revised intra office process for addressing written student complaints has also been proposed which includes improvements to the retention schedule and location for the record of student complaints; the creation of a student complaint committee to regularly review the record of student complaints to ensure appropriate, equitable and consistent adjudication; and a further delineation of the investigation process for complaints received.

Conclusion

Texas A&M University-Commerce has adequate procedures for addressing written student complaints and demonstrates that it follows those procedures; furthermore, information is publicized, clear and consistent. A record of complaints received by the University is maintained in the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. The University has also initiated a process in order to improve on student complaint procedures as outlined above. After a thorough review, the institution finds itself in compliance with Standard 12.4.

Section 13 Financial and Physical Resources

- 13.6** The institution (a) is in compliance with its program responsibilities under Title IV of the most recent Higher Education Act as amended and (b) audits financial aid programs as required by federal and state regulations. In reviewing the institution's compliance with these program responsibilities under Title IV, SACSCOC relies on documentation forwarded to it by the U. S. Department of Education. *(Federal and state responsibilities)*

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Introduction

Texas A&M University-Commerce is in compliance with its Title IV program responsibilities and undergoes regular audits of its financial aid programs as required by federal and state regulations. Three separate and independent audits were conducted this past year. As a member of The Texas A&M University System, audits are authorized by the Texas A&M System Board of Regents through System Policies and Regulations[1]. The Texas A&M University System Internal Audit Department[2], a direct report to The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents[3], conducts audits for system schools to include A&M-Commerce. An independent audit team from Weaver and Tidwell, L.L.P. led by Mr. Daniel Graves, CPA Partner Risk Advisory Services, also conducted a compliance audit of the University's Title IV Programs. Weaver and Tidwell L.L.P., or Mr. Graves, have no association with Texas A&M University-Commerce beyond the scope of this independent audit.

Program Responsibilities

Financial Aid Programs at A&M-Commerce

A&M-Commerce offers various types of both federal and state financial aid[4]. These include the following Title IV programs: Pell Grant, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG), Work-study, Teacher Education Assistance for College Grant (TEACH Grant), Direct Subsidized Stafford Loan, Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan, Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS) and Graduate PLUS Loan.

Eligibility to Participate in Title IV Financial Aid

A&M-Commerce is eligible to participate in all Title IV Student Financial Assistance Programs[5]. A&M-Commerce is eligible because it maintains its accreditation status[6] as required by 34 CFR Part 600: Institutional Eligibility under the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended[7]. A&M-Commerce has no issues with Title IV financial aid programs, and no pending litigation exists concerning financial aid at the university.

Student Loan Default Rate

The U.S. Department of Education calculates a three-year student loan default rate each academic year. A comparison of the University's three-year default rate[8] with state[9] and national[10] averages appears in Table 1 below. The 2016 cohort default rate for A&M-Commerce was 9.6%. For comparison the national rate is 10.1% and the State of Texas rate is 10.4%, thus showing TAMUC has kept ahead of both the national rate and the State of Texas rate. However, the University's current default rate is above that of Texas 4-year public institutions, which becomes a target to aim for as the University works to implement strategies that will reduce its own rate.

Table 1. 3-Year Student Loan Default Rate

| 3-Year Cohort Default Rate | 2016 Cohort (Released 2019) | 2015 Cohort (Released 2018) | 2014 Cohort (Released 2017) |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| A&M-Commerce | 9.6 | 9.5 | 7.3 |
| Texas 4-Year Public Institutions* | 7.30 | 7.62 | 7.14 |
| State of Texas | 10.4 | 10.9 | 10.4 |
| National Rate | 10.1 | 10.8 | 11.5 |

*does not include medical schools

Source: National Student Loan Data System

Financial Aid Audits

The policies, procedures and guidelines administered by the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships are subject to annual audits to ensure they satisfy the audit and review standards established by the U.S. Department of Education and the State of Texas. Audits are performed by the Texas A&M University System Internal Audit Department following the guidelines set forth by the Texas State Auditor and the U.S. Department of Education by the United States of America (USA) Office of Management and Budget (OMB), OMB Circular A-133[11]; Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations. All university internal audits are performed according to the standards set forth by the Institute of Internal Auditors. Audits by the Texas State Auditor's Office are performed under the provisions of Texas Government Code Chapter 321.

A&M System Internal Audit

An A&M System internal audit[12] was conducted for the period of August 2018 to March 2019 and completed in September 2019 with an overall conclusion stating internal controls over student financial aid processes were generally operating as intended and in compliance with laws and policies.

Opportunities for improved controls were noted in the areas of award limits, Return to Title IV processing, Fiscal Operations Report and Application to Participate, cost of attendance documentation, and loan disclosure statements. This audit report was considered a Code 2 Report, denoting notable observations and minor violations of controls, laws, policies, and regulations. A copy of "Rating System for Audit Reports[13]" is provided in evidence documentation.

Notable Observations Included:

1. Financial aid was not consistently adjusted when student enrollment status changed. System Internal Audit identified an error rate of 2.6%. Of the five records identified, the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships returned the funds to the Department of Education. The Policy and Procedure Manual correctly listed the proper procedures to identify overawards using the Ellucian Banner Potential Overawards Report.
2. Return of Title IV funds to the Department of Education was not timely. Title IV funds for two of 26 (8%) students tested were returned 90 days after the determination of withdrawal. All Financial Aid and Registrar's Office personnel involved in student withdrawals are now utilizing an automated process in Banner to provide a more accurate and timely method of identifying students who are no longer enrolled.
3. The university's annual Fiscal Operations Report and Application to Participate (FISAP) contained errors. The university's corrected FISAP Report for 2017/18 and Application to Participate for 2020/21 contained 4 errors based on a comparison of supporting documentation. Two amounts did not agree to supporting documentation and two additional amounts lacked supporting documentation. Procedures have been updated and a checklist established to limit future errors.
4. Cost of attendance tables have limited documentation available to support the reasonableness of these costs. All documentation will now be scanned and held according to record retention policies.
5. Three of 30 (10%) disclosure statements reviewed did not include unsubsidized loan information as required by Department of Education guidelines. In order to improve the accuracy and efficiency of the federal loan disclosure requirements, the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships will collaborate with the Bursar's Office and IT Department to automate the process to provide the required information for student disclosures in a manner prescribed by federal regulations.

The A&M System Internal Audit will provide an audit tracking report quarterly to monitor the status of implementing the audit recommendations. All recommendations will be fully implemented by the end of May 2020.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) Desk Review

A Compliance Desk Review of the TEXAS Grant program at Texas A&M University-Commerce, Report No. THECB-CM-FA-19-0079[14] was also conducted in fiscal year 2019. The report showed no findings resulting from the engagement. A&M Commerce complied with relevant THECB rules and regulation for the Towards Excellence, Access and Success (TEXAS) Grants.

The desk review included tests of relevant data reported and certified by A&M Commerce for 2017/18.

Work area included the following procedures with no findings or recommendations:

- Students met all eligibility criteria, including SAP requirements;
- Student demonstrated financial need;
- Students fulfilled residency requirements;
- Applicable students registered with the selective service system, and;
- Reported award amounts reconciled with Texas A&M University-Commerce's student data system and payment records.

No further comment was made identifying issues or concerns.

-
Weaver and Tidwell L.L.P. Audit

An audit conducted by Weaver and Tidwell L.L.P.[15] for the coverage period of August 15, 2018 to August 14, 2019 was completed in February 2020 with an overall conclusion stating the Title IV program has procedures and controls in place to conduct effective management of the significant processes within TAMUC. However, they identified two opportunities to improve the effectiveness of the controls within the Title IV program.

| OVERALL ASSESSMENT | | STRONG |
|---|---|----------------|
| SCOPE AREA | RESULT | RATING |
| <p>Objective A Determine whether internal controls over Title IV processes are in place to ensure that consistent processes are implemented and designed effectively to address the risks within the Title IV sub-processes and to ensure compliance with the federal law.</p> | <p>Identified 23 controls to be in place in the processes. However, there were opportunities to strengthen the processes and control environment including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconcile loan disbursement notifications to loan disbursements • Review returns of Title IV funds for accuracy and timeliness of reporting to the Department of Education | STRONG* |
| <p>Objective B Verify that awards, disbursements, and returns of Title IV funds are complete, accurate, and in compliance with federal requirements.</p> | <p>Controls appear to be in place; however, all are not consistently executed. We identified the following opportunities for improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure loan disbursement notifications are sent to all federal loan recipients • Ensure that returns of Title IV funds are reported timely to the Department of Education | STRONG* |
| | | |

Report Rating- STRONG: The area under review meets the expected level.

No high risk rated findings and only a few moderate or low findings were identified.

To address the opportunities for improvement, A&M-Commerce is automating the student disclosure process and assuring reconciliations of all disbursement notifications is completed. The University has also updated the Review of Title IV Return procedures to assure accuracy and timeliness of reporting.

Conclusion

A&M-Commerce is in compliance with its program responsibilities under Title IV of the most recent Higher Education Act as amended and regularly audits its financial aid programs as required by federal and state regulations. There are no impending litigation issues with respect to financial aid activities, adverse communications received from the U.S. Department of Education, unpaid federal dollars due back to the U.S. Department of Education or infractions to regulations that would jeopardize Title IV funding at A&M-Commerce.

13.7 The institution ensures adequate physical facilities and resources, both on and off campus, that appropriately serve the needs of the institution's educational programs, support services, and other mission-related activities. *(Physical resources)*

Compliance Status: Compliant**Narrative****Introduction**

Texas A&M University-Commerce (A&M-Commerce), a member of the Texas A&M University System, is committed to providing physical facilities and resources that serve the needs of the institution's educational programs, support services and other mission-related activities, thus enhancing the educational environment of the University's students, faculty and staff. A&M-Commerce provides operational control and maintains physical facilities, both on and off campus, to provide students with a transformative education which allows them to discover and achieve[1].

The vice president for business and administration (VPBA[2]) is charged with the management of operational issues, including security and safety, oversight of design and construction, campus computing, voice/data networking and the acquisition or lease of real property[3]. The VPBA also supervises the Director of Campus Operations and Safety[4] who works in collaboration with Service Solutions Corporation (SSC) to ensure all operations to maintain and improve physical facilities and resources are performed at the level needed to maintain an attractive, safe environment that promotes a positive learning experience. A&M-Commerce exercises appropriate control over all of its physical and financial resources. This narrative provides evidence of the University's compliance through daily operations and maintenance of the institution's physical facilities and resources.

Physical Facilities and Resources at Main Campus

The main campus[5] consists of 154 acres located in Commerce, Texas and 1,729 additional acres comprised of recreational, instructional, farm and ranch land. The University has 109 buildings on the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) facilities buildings inventory[6], and 1,620,273 net assignable square feet (NASF) on the main campus[7] which serve the needs of more than 130 degree programs and 12,411 students (IPEDS 2018, Fall Enrollment). An interactive campus map[8] is available on the University website and provides images, videos and short narration about each building on campus and associated services, such as food locations, police and health services.

Educational and Support Services Facilities

Overall, the University has 626,925 Education and General (E&G) space, which includes all places used for teaching, research or the preservation of knowledge.

Educational buildings on the main campus range from Ferguson Social Sciences[9] (1925), the oldest building on campus, to the Keith D. McFarland Science Building[10] (2006), the Music Building[11] (2011) and the construction of the newest building: Nursing and Health Sciences[12] (2019). A few additional buildings for student activities and services include the Performing Arts Center[13] (1977), which rests adjacent to Gee Lake[14] (1950), Halladay Student Services[15] (1970), the One Stop Shop[16] (1978) and the Sam Rayburn Student Center[17] (2009).

Residential Space

In addition to the educational and general space, A&M-Commerce has 1,918,346 gross square feet of student residential space consisting of 25 on-campus residence halls[18]. Residential facilities include traditional residence halls and apartments. Over 2,000 beds are available for students, including Phase III[19] residence hall, a 496-bed facility completed in summer 2017. The on-campus residence halls also include learning communities for students that offer peer and faculty mentoring and study-groups as well as educational and professional development activities. In fall 2019, A&M-Commerce residential space served 2,559 students.

Athletic and Recreational Facilities

Athletic facilities consist of the Memorial Stadium/Ernest Hawkins Field[20] (1950), the Field House[21] (1951) where the Thrower Center[22] for Student-Athlete Success is located, Whitley Gym Weight Room[23], the Field Events complex at Cain Sports Complex[24], the renovated Lion Soccer Field[25] and the Cain Softball Field Complex[26].

Recreation[27] facilities include the Morris Recreation Center[28] and new outdoor Multi-activity court [29], the Outdoor Adventure Program[30], the Adventure Base Experience, the Cain Sports Complex [24], Intramural Sports Fields[31], Aquatics and the Disc Golf Course.

Libraries[32]

Located in the center of the campus, the James G. Gee Library (main campus) occupies five floors and 92,478 square feet of the library building. The library has 622 seats and users have access to 30 study rooms and 138 networked desktop computers. The library classroom is equipped with a projector, 28 computers and has a seating capacity of 29. The library provides 90 laptops available for student checkout, two KIC scanners and two black/white and color copy machines. During FY 18-19, there were 424,701 visitors to the library. The group and individual study rooms were checked out for a total of 13,325.

In addition to housing the physical collections, the library also provides space to the Academic Success and Tutoring Services, Student Disabilities Resources and Services, Assistive Technology Lab, Office of Sponsored Programs, Training and Development, a coffee shop and food services area for the academic community. The total square footage of the space partners is 14,040 sq. ft.

A second library is located at the Mesquite Metroplex Center in Mesquite, Texas. The Mesquite Library occupies 1800 square feet of the building, with a seating capacity of thirteen. Users have access to eight computers and a black/white and color copy machine. At each location, all mobile devices can connect to the University's wireless environment throughout the building.

Physical Facilities and Resources at Off-Campus Instructional Sites

Off-campus instructional sites where the University is approved to offer 50% or more of a degree program include Collin Higher Education Center in McKinney; Mesquite Metroplex Center; Universities Center at Dallas – El Centro; Navarro Partnership-Corsicana; L-3Harris; the Frisco-Preston Ridge location of Collin College; and RELLIS. The A&M-Commerce at Rockwall location closed[33] in December 2017 due to low student enrollment at that site. The Multi-Institutional Teaching Center, Midlothian Higher Education Center[34], was phased out in December 2018.

Articulation agreements and lease agreements[35] document information on facilities and physical resources provided at each location. A representative from the Office of the Provost holds routine meetings with Off-Campus Directors and institutional representatives to ensure resources and financial support are adequate to deliver high-quality programs. Off-Campus Directors participate in recruiting and enrollment discussions, curriculum/program changes and advising to ensure the appropriateness of classroom space utilized throughout the academic year. In addition, Off-Campus Directors work closely with partners at each host location, ensuring the articulation and lease agreements are upheld.

Collin Higher Education Center[36] in McKinney

The Collin Higher Education Center (CHEC), located at 3452 Spur 399, McKinney, Texas 75069, is a partnership among A&M-Commerce, Texas Woman's University, the University of Texas at Dallas, the University of North Texas and Collin College. The Collin Higher Education Center provides classrooms, lab facilities and dedicated office space for A&M-Commerce. The computer lab includes a learning area with a wireless network connection to connect to A&M-Commerce's online library services with access to fee-based printing. Collin College provides adequate maintenance of the facility. Students also have on-site advising available.

At the CHEC, A&M-Commerce is approved to offer the following programs: baccalaureate programs in Interdisciplinary Studies (BAIS/BSIS), Psychology (BS), Sports and Recreation Management (BS); master's programs in Curriculum and Instruction (MED/MS), Counseling (MED/MS) and Social Work (MSW); a doctoral program in Counseling (PhD).

L-3Harris

A&M-Commerce is approved to offer a master's degree in Management (MS) at the L-3Harris campus in Greenville. Texas A&M University-Commerce offers a 12-course cohort program at the location for employees of L-3 and teaches two graduate courses for the program each fall, spring and summer semester.

L-3 is located at 10001 Jack Finney Boulevard, Greenville, TX 75403-6056. A large classroom space with a computer, audio-visual equipment and internet access is provided for use by the University.

Mesquite Metroplex Center[\[37\]](#)

The Mesquite Metroplex Center is a two-story building that is shared with the Mesquite Independent School District, located at 3819 Towne Crossing Boulevard, Mesquite, Texas 75150. The Metroplex Center provides a bookstore, classrooms, office spaces, computer lab and a library that participates in interlibrary loans. Mesquite Independent School District provides adequate maintenance of the facility. Premises are ADA compliant as required by federal and state laws and regulations. Students have access to the A&M-Commerce library's online resources as well as access to the Metroplex Center Library and its online resources. Free Wi-Fi and a computer lab with 20 computers and printing capabilities are also available.

At the Mesquite Metroplex Center, A&M-Commerce is approved to offer the following programs: baccalaureate programs in Interdisciplinary Studies (BAIS/BSIS), Social Work (BSW), Spanish (BA); master's programs in Applied Linguistics (MA/MS), The Art of Teaching (MED), Business Administration (MBA), Counseling (MED), Curriculum and Instruction (MED/MS), Early Childhood Education (MED/MS), Higher Education (MS), Mathematics (MS), Reading (MA/MED/MS), School Psychology (SSP), Secondary Education (MED/MS), Social Work (MSW), Special Education (MED/MS); a doctoral program in Supervision Curriculum and Instruction (Ed.D.)

Navarro Partnership-Corsicana[\[38\]](#)

Through the Navarro Partnership, the University shares the facilities of Navarro College in Corsicana located at 3200 West 7th Avenue, Corsicana, Texas 75110. The space allocated to the University includes classrooms, office space and a computer lab, which are all ADA compliant as required by federal and state laws and regulations. Parking is made available to faculty, staff and students. Navarro College maintains, repairs and replaces property used by students. Services available to students include on-site advising, free online tutoring offered 24/7, A&M-Commerce library's online resources, Navarro College Library, photocopiers, laser printers, study areas and free Wi-Fi access.

At the Navarro Partnership-Corsicana, A&M-Commerce is approved to offer the following programs: baccalaureate programs in Environmental Science (BS), Computer Science (BS), Computer Information Systems (BSCIS), Criminal Justice (BACJ/BSCJ), Interdisciplinary Studies (BAIS/BSIS); master's programs in Mathematics (MS) and Special Education (MED/MS).

Universities Center at Dallas[\[39\]](#) (UCD) – EI Centro

In fall 2017, A&M-Commerce ended its MITC relationship with the University of North Texas, and relocated to EI Centro Community College[\[40\]](#) in downtown Dallas located at 801 Main Street, Dallas, Texas 75202 effective June 2018. EI Centro provided comparable classroom and office space and was still conveniently located in the downtown area, so the move did not inconvenience existing students. The location name, Universities Center at Dallas (UCD), was retained as well. Students have access to use the computer lab in the C building. In addition to A&M-Commerce's library's online resources,

students have access to the college's libraries as well as common areas. All classrooms, offices, labs and other facilities are ADA compliant as required by federal and state laws and regulations. El Centro College maintains, repairs and replaces property used by the students.

At UCD-El Centro, A&M-Commerce is approved to offer the following programs: baccalaureate programs in Finance (BBA), Visual Communications (BFA); master's programs in Art (MA/MFA), The Art of Teaching (MED), Accounting (MSA), Business Administration (MBA), Finance (MSF), Higher Education (MS) and Management (MS).

Texas A&M University-Commerce at Frisco[41] (Collin College Preston Ridge)

The Preston Ridge campus of Collin College is located at 9700 Wade Blvd. Frisco, Texas, 75035. The University began offering courses at this location in spring 2017 and recently sought and received approval from SACSCOC[42] to offer 50% or more of a degree program at this location beginning fall 2019. Texas A&M University-Commerce at Frisco is located in University Hall[43] on the Preston Ridge campus. The administrative support office, located in University Hall 105, is 883 square feet and consists of an administrative receiving desk, a conference room and an academic office. In addition, 187 square feet is dedicated space for a faculty office, located in University Hall 125, which supports faculty office hours for academic advising. Additionally, two classrooms (University Hall 138 and 139) are solely dedicated to Texas A&M University-Commerce at Frisco program offerings, with additional classrooms available in University Hall, Lawler Hall and other buildings on the Preston Ridge campus as needed. University Hall 138 and 139 are both 812 square feet accommodating 32 student stations and 1 faculty station. The classrooms are equipped with dry-erase whiteboards, a projection unit and a Dell computer desktop with Microsoft Office and internet connection to support any faculty teaching method.

Beginning in fall 2019, A&M-Commerce offered the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) General Business, the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) Business Analytics, the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW), and the Bachelor of Science (BS) in Agribusiness at the Frisco location.

RELLIS[44] (Texas A&M University System)

The Texas A&M University System established the RELLIS campus on 2,000 acres in College Station, Texas to be a unique innovative partnership that brings education, workforce development, industry and research together on a single campus. The Academic Alliance at RELLIS includes a community college district along with A&M System universities. Each A&M System university offers 1-2 unique degrees, providing a full range of options for students. A&M-Commerce was asked to offer a BS Computer Science degree in a face-to-face format. A&M-Commerce recently sought and received approval[45] to offer 50% or more of a degree program at the RELLIS location beginning Fall 2019. The education portion of the campus includes academic buildings for Blinn College and the A&M System program, laboratories, a joint library and full student services. Facilities for the BS Computer Science program are located in Academic Complex Building I[46] and include a collaborative computer teaching laboratory which seats 25 and two individual faculty offices. The building also houses shared space for an Internet of Things Cybersecurity Laboratory and common areas including food and coffee kiosk, study areas and space for student advising and support services. RELLIS is located at 3100 Texas 47, Bryan, Texas 77807.

Dual Enrollment

For the academic year 2019-20, Texas A&M University-Commerce offered dual enrollment courses at five sites which included Boles High School, Caddo Mills High School, Commerce High School, Rains High School (less than 25%) and Royse City High School. Physical resources and facilities are made available by and remain under the control of the high schools. Each location provides classroom space based on student enrollment needs, typically 3-9 classrooms with a seating capacity between 25-60 students. Students have access to Chromebooks and/or computer labs provided by the high school. A representative from the Office of the Provost holds routine meetings with school officials to ensure resources and support are adequate to deliver high-quality courses.

Technology Resources

Classroom and Distance Education Technology

The University's standard for teaching classrooms include a computer, a projector and a document camera[47]. As classrooms are updated they are further equipped with interactive tools such as an interactive projector or touchscreen display[48]. The Classroom Services team provides technical support to faculty in their instructional mission to students. Faculty have access to a dedicated classroom support hotline for immediate technical support by calling 903-468-6004. For after-hours support faculty and staff can contact the IT help desk at 903-468-6000.

There are 54 computer labs[49] on the main campus with varying levels of student use. The largest is the library[50] with 131 computers. All computer labs include internet access, the Microsoft Office suite and approved specialty software when requested by the instructor. The University also offers a learning disability lab[51] with visual and hearing-impaired software aids located in the library. This lab includes specialized software, wheelchair accessible desks and adjustable monitors with pictures.

Distance education courses are provided through specialized Distance Education classrooms[49] on each campus offering live, interactive video conferencing between classes. These direct video connections allow individual professors to offer classes for students in multiple physical locations every semester. These classrooms have two cameras and five displays in each room allowing instructors and students to directly and immediately interact during their class session through the live video feed as well as make presentations and share content. This is made possible by Polycom RealPresence[52] video conferencing hardware installed in every Distance Education room.

A&M-Commerce utilizes Desire to Learn (D2L) as its learning management system. To gain access to University technologies such as email, the learning management system (D2L) and the myLeo student portal, the student must log in via Single Sign On (SSO) as outlined by the University's Acceptable Use Policy[53].

Technological Infrastructure

University information services, both internally and externally hosted, are built on the principles of redundancy, fault tolerance and security. The University's primary data center hosts an 11-node virtual server cluster with 600Ghz CPU capacity, 4.10TB of memory and 175TB of SAN storage. Each of these resources is operating at 60% of total capacity. The primary data center's power systems are backed up by both a seven-day generator and 50KVA uninterruptible power system. Cooling for this important environment also has a redundancy. Both the environment and the physical security of the facility are monitored 24/7 by the University Police Department using remote sensors and surveillance cameras. Through a cooperative agreement with another Texas A&M University System school, the University operates a smaller capacity version of the same infrastructure described above. This secondary site facilitates the stand-by services for identity, email & the University student information system to name a few. Through the use of redundant pathing, next generation firewalls, load balancers, virtual server infrastructure and effective management of these technologies, the University can assure the availability of services for students, faculty and staff that rely on a technology component.

Campus Housing is equipped with dedicated Internet Service which ensures sufficient bandwidth for academic, social and recreational pursuits. The Center for IT Excellence provides Campus Housing access to usage data enabling them to meet increasing bandwidth demands using a scalable infrastructure based on a pay for what you use model. Individual residence halls have network access in every room and all but one have wireless coverage as well.

A&M Commerce's master plan work group recently identified the lack of a secondary path for the University's internet as a potential risk for both day-to-day operations and stability of online classes. Plans to increase bandwidth and establish a secondary path have been added to the 2019 Master Plan Addendum[54] (described below).

Oversight and Review of Physical Facilities and Resources

Planning and Evaluation

Master Plan. In accordance with Texas A&M University System Policy 51.01[55] *Capital Planning*, Texas A&M University-Commerce documents both an annual capital plan[56] and a master plan[57] identifying capital needs and projects. The University's annual Capital Plan summarizes current funded capital projects and unfunded capital needs.

In fall 2012, A&M-Commerce launched a campus master planning process intended to lead the University through the year 2032. The Master Plan Committee[58], chaired by the VPBA, was comprised of faculty, staff and students who understood that the process is as important as the product; therefore, considerable time was spent creating an inclusive, open process and a reasonable timeline with the intention that both the process and the product would be worthwhile and useful. Input from across the campus and the community were sought and became an integral part of the final document. Questionnaires were distributed across campus to help the architectural team understand campus needs and gather valuable insight. This was followed up with two days of on-site interviews with deans, department heads, faculty, staff and other groups in October of 2012. A link to the latest master plan[59] presentation and data were made available via the president's web page[58] and presentations were made to students, faculty, staff and the Commerce City Council in March 2013. In response to several factors including leadership changes, academic priorities and state financial resources, a team consisting of key personnel from operations, finance and the physical plant operations team was created in early 2019 to guide a revision process for updating the master plan which would draw from the expertise of the team as well as input from faculty and staff. Recommendations of the team include an annual review and update of the master plan to reflect the most current needs of the University's educational programs and mission. A 2019 Campus Master Plan Amendment[60] was produced and speaks to both projects completed and those planned for the remaining time period of the Master Plan. This amendment addresses planning within the context of the institution's revised mission statement (effective for academic year 2019-20).

Space Utilization. The facility reporting coordinator (FCR) is responsible for tracking of all changes to spaces on campus. This is accomplished through participation in weekly project meetings, audits on physical spaces and questionnaires. Updates are made to the data system at the THECB as needed. A final update to both buildings and rooms is certified and reported to the THECB annually.

Classroom and laboratory spaces are managed by a collaboration of the FRC, the registrar's office and the faculty. Facility information about specific classrooms and lab spaces, including pictures, equipment, type of setup, etc. is provided on the Event Management System[61] (EMS) portal. This portal is available to anyone requesting access.

Capacity evaluations have been completed using the guidance of the Safety department and physical review of the space. Each year as part of the annual certification of spaces, the classrooms (type 110) and laboratory spaces (type 210) are reviewed for utilization[62]. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) benchmarks the University's use of classrooms and laboratories against other Texas public universities[63] and in comparison to a statewide average[64]. Recent studies of space utilization show that A&M-Commerce has an excess of teaching spaces when using THECB parameters as compared to other universities. Meetings in the past four years with faculty, the registrar's office and the FCR have resulted in improvement from a weighted score of 99 to a score of 133 in 2018 (out of a possible 200). In further response, the University has begun to evaluate and identify spaces and learning environments that cater to functions such as research, collaboration and seminars to improve identification while better prioritizing efficient use of classroom spaces during high-impact times.

Surveys. Regular collection of survey data assists the university in gauging the adequacy of physical facilities and resources.

A Graduation Exit Survey is administered to all graduating undergraduate and graduate semesters who submit an application for graduation each term. Students are asked to indicate their satisfaction with a range of A&M-Commerce services on a five point scale where 1 = Very Dissatisfied and 5 = Very Satisfied. Results for the Graduation Exit Survey of Undergraduate Students^[65] for spring 2019 were positive concerning the various facilities and resources across campus. A total of 664 undergraduate students out of 934 applicants for graduation completed the survey, with an overall response rate of 71%.

Results for the Graduation Exit Survey of Graduate Students^[66] for spring 2019 were also positive. A total of 494 graduate students out of 640 applicants for graduation responded, with an overall response rate of 77%.

| Q15. Please tell us about your level of satisfaction with the following A&M-Commerce Services: | Spring 2019 Graduate (N = 494) | Spring 2019 Undergraduate (N = 664) | Spring 2018 Graduate (N = 517) | Spring 2018 Undergraduate (N = 736) |
|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | % Satisfied or Very Satisfied | % Satisfied or Very Satisfied | % Satisfied or Very Satisfied | % Satisfied or Very Satisfied |
| Access to Electronic Library Resources | 97.11% | 96.77% | 95.58% | 96.85% |
| Library Facilities | 98.67% | 96.56% | 97.29% | 98.26% |
| Resident Hall Facilities | 94.23% | 79.87% | 88.34% | 81.48% |
| Resident Hall Services | 95.05% | 81.47% | 90.00% | 82.85% |
| Campus Bookstore | 91.53% | 91.02% | 89.83% | 88.54% |
| Campus Recreational Services | 99.25% | 98.05% | 96.81% | 97.41% |
| Parking Services | 88.21% | 65.14% | 81.77% | 60.50% |
| Parking Facilities | 89.25% | 61.47% | 81.04% | 59.26% |
| Parking Availability | 82.99% | 51.05% | 76.72% | 50.73% |
| Campus Security | 95.24% | 89.43% | 94.06% | 91.37% |
| Sam Rayburn Student Center Services | 98.17% | 97.17% | 98.46% | 99.00% |
| Academic Advising | 93.52% | 89.13% | 89.36% | 90.90% |
| Work/lab space on campus | 93.94% | 94.19% | 94.41% | 94.55% |
| Athletic Events | 95.61% | 98.02% | 96.53% | 97.51% |
| Student Accounts | 95.50% | 95.36% | 93.13% | 91.48% |
| Academic Success Center | 95.35% | 97.78% | 94.93% | 96.17% |
| Center for Information Technology Excellence | 96.82% | 93.16% | 94.70% | 93.19% |

Source: Institutional Research

Off-site instructional locations also survey students and faculty to determine how their facilities and programs are meeting their educational needs. While each location tailors their survey to the needs of their student body, a common theme asks if facilities are meeting their needs. Below are the results from surveys conducted in 2017-2018 and 2018-2019.

How would you rate the classroom facilities offered at _____?

| OFF-SITE LOCATION | 2017-2018 Survey | | 2018-2019 Survey | |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| | Highly Positive Response* | Number of Responses | Highly Positive Response* | Number of Responses |
| Collin Higher Education Center (17-18[67]) (18-19[68]) | 85.33% | 64 | 94.28% | 33 |
| Mesquite Metroplex Center (17-18[69]) | 82% | 132 | -- | -- |
| Navarro Partnership Corsicana (17-18[70]) | 66.18% | 68 | -- | -- |
| Universities Center at Dallas (17-18[71]) (18-19[72]) | 93% | 57 | 76% | 25 |

*Responses of Above Average/Excellent; Very Good/Good; Commendable/Outstanding

The University also surveys staff and faculty utilizing quarterly surveys of housekeeping quality conducted by the Contract office[73] which are used to monitor contracted services (described below). Staff and faculty are encouraged to participate each quarter. Results are reviewed by the Contract Office, and when necessary, concerns are shared with the Department of Campus Operations and Safety.

To promote excellence in service, the library conducts the LibQUAL © survey[74] annually to assess whether the library is meeting the expectations of the users. An analysis of student and faculty comments and adequacy scores led to additional facility enhancements. Since 2014, the library added a silent lab and silent study room, additional individual and group collaboration study areas, 2nd floor computer lab, charging stations, portable outlet chargers, new comfortable seating, media equipment, upgraded computer software, installed sound proof ceiling tiles for noise reduction and added 30 additional laptops for circulation and 18 new research databases.

User comments from the FY 2018 LibQUAL © survey directly influenced the creation of a new FY 2019 Institutional Effectiveness plan[75] that is designed to specifically focus on additional concerns with the facility. The library and University have made it a priority to address student and faculty needs. A new roof and HVAC system will be installed to address environmental concerns. Further, the library is creating a cross departmental task force to develop a comprehensive and integrated vision that transforms the current facility into a modern, academic learning commons that fosters creativity, innovation, collaboration, learning, student success and retention.

Management and Operations

Physical Plant Operations. In April 2013, A&M-Commerce signed an agreement with Service Solutions Corporation (SSC) to operate and maintain the physical facilities that serve the educational, support services and other needs within the University. SSC is charged with ensuring the adequate functioning of the University's physical resources by providing students, faculty, staff and visitors of A&M-Commerce with a safe and attractive environment that is conducive to a positive learning experience[76].

The Director of Campus Operations and Safety is responsible for ensuring that SSC is fulfilling their contract to provide routine and preventive maintenance. SSC fully operates the physical plant and resources of A&M-Commerce. The University does not facilitate maintenance or repair services at its off-site instructional locations but instead utilizes leasing agreements specific to each location that identify the scope of work and services to be provided.

- SSC schedules preventive maintenance [77] on a recurring basis to maintain and prolong [78] the life of the University's physical assets.
- SSC is responsible for providing electricity, chilled water and potable water distribution across campus as well as facility cleaning and landscaping.
- Day-to-day maintenance and repair of university facilities and grounds is the responsibility of SSC. SSC uses Maintenance Connection [79], a computerized maintenance management system, to process and track work order requests.

Facilities also offers professional and technical support on programming, design, bid and construction management and handles all related contracts and daily on-site inspection of the work.

Physical Inventory. The office of Financial Services is responsible for managing the physical inventory. The Texas A&M System sets forth policies and regulations governing property management for all system members, as documented in the Texas A&M University System Asset Management Manual [80]. Specific procedures for each member are maintained by the respective A&M System Member. The Property Management Manual contains property management rules which are intended to supplement the TAMUS Equipment Management Manual and are specific to A&M-Commerce [81]. At A&M-Commerce, all assets that meet the requirement are tracked through the FAMIS/Canopy system and are tagged with barcode tags that have been assigned based on the purchasing department guidelines. Annually, each department is required to do a physical inventory [82] with a bar scanner and report their findings to the office. In addition, unannounced spots checks are conducted throughout the year. Procedures for transferring, selling, loaning or surplus or disposal of equipment have also been created, as documented in the manual. A Post Payment Audit was conducted in 2017-2018 by the Texas State Comptroller's Office. The scope of the audit included controls over fixed assets. No findings were reported in the audit report [83] dated January 2018.

Deferred Maintenance. Deferred maintenance is defined as the "maintenance and repairs that were not performed when they should have been or were scheduled to be and which are put off or delayed for a future period" (Federal accounting standards advisory board [84]). A team including safety personnel, facility reporting, operations and budgeting personnel leads the deferred maintenance planning at A&M-Commerce. The University team meets twice a year with SSC partners to discuss and prioritize a five-year cycle [85] of expenditures for addressing deferred maintenance. Items discussed include mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP) systems, building envelope systems, interior and exterior finishes, and infrastructure systems. Several tools are used to evaluate whether an item makes the final five-year cycle report including work orders, age of equipment or building, comments or observations made from student, faculty or staff, and failure analysis. Deferred maintenance for the current year is added to the project report provided by SSC and reviewed weekly for progress. An annual Campus Condition Index [86] report is provided to the A&M System which details expected costs for each five-year period and the actual cost of the previous year's deferred maintenance. The THECB also maintains a summary of all Texas public institutions' deferred maintenance plans [87] and expenditures on their website.

As of the writing of this self-study, the University is in discussion with Sightlines, a facilities intelligence solutions contractor, to further develop a process for long range planning of deferred maintenance.

Risk Management and Insurance. Each year, the Department of Campus Operation and Safety reviews the physical property inventory and reaches out to departments seeking any changes or additions regarding contents or space. Any new property or buildings that were not included in the previous year's inventory are reviewed at that time. Factors included in the decision to insure a building or property include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Age
- Replacement cost
- Content value
- Building activity or use
- Location
- Environmental risk

Currently, A&M-Commerce follows the FM Global Risk Evaluation[88] and Inspection program offered through the A&M System. Each year there is a scheduled on-site meeting with FM Global. During the visit, inspections of select areas and reviews of plans and programs are conducted. It is followed up with suggestions for recommended risk mitigation practices which are reviewed by the University and implemented where feasible.

The University insures 65 buildings, equating to \$535,535,615.00 in coverage of approximately 1,537,873 square feet.

Conclusion

A&M-Commerce operates and maintains facilities, both on and off campus, that appropriately serve the needs of the institution's mission-related activities. Students, faculty and staff have access to quality facilities that are appropriate to the task and maintained regularly. Buildings, structures and classrooms are evaluated by facilities personnel on a regular basis and, when necessary, appropriate maintenance and repairs are made. Faculty and staff also have the ability to request needed maintenance and repairs through the Maintenance Connect maintenance management system. Based on the evidence provided, A&M-Commerce is able to clearly demonstrate compliance with the requirements of Standard 13.7.

- 13.8** The institution takes reasonable steps to provide a healthy, safe, and secure environment for all members of the campus community. (*Institutional environment*)

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Introduction

With multiple on-site services and functions, Texas A&M University-Commerce has taken the reasonable steps necessary to provide a healthy, safe and secure environment for all members of the campus community. These services and functions are outlined below.

A Healthy and Safe Environment

The Director of the Department of Campus Operations and Safety has campus administrative responsibility for environmental health and safety. The Director reports to the Vice President of Business Administration (VPBA), who reports to the University President. The Department of Campus Operations and Safety offers several services to the A&M-Commerce campus community to assist in the protection of faculty, staff, students, visitors, community and physical properties[1]. Such services include:

- Emergency Management[2]
- Standard Operating Procedures[3]
- Information Dissemination
- Routine Inspections[4]
- Safety Training Programs[5]
- Fire Alarm Testing and Inspections[6]
- Online Safety Manual[7]

Following the Texas A&M University System policy, 24.01[8] *Risk Management*, the University has established several procedures and practices to maintain a safe, healthy and compliant environment for faculty, staff, students and community.
Environmental Health and Safety

The Department of Campus Operations and Safety utilizes several standard operating procedures to

provide professional oversight and best management practices for ensuring University compliance with federal, state and local regulations. Standard operating procedures and programs have been developed for the following areas:

- Chemical management[9]
- Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS[10]) management
- Safety inspections[11]
- Outdoor burning/grilling[12]
- Laboratory safety
- Fire and life safety[13]
- Emergency response

Off-campus locations follow the guidelines and regulatory enforcement mechanisms of the building owner. A representative from the Department of Campus Operations and Safety visits and is available to address specific complaints, as needed.

Environmental Health and Safety Communications. The Department of Campus Operations and Safety communicates relevant, non-emergency information to the campus community through avenues such as email listservs for faculty, staff and students; web site postings, social media, flyers and postings; and radio broadcast through the University's radio station, KETR. (Sample 1[14]) (Sample 2 [15])

Environmental Health and Safety Training. The Department of Campus Operations and Safety ensures that federal, state and local regulations pertaining to Environmental Health and Safety are followed. Such regulations include:

- Procedure 24.01.01.R0.01[16] *Bloodborne Pathogen & Hazard Communication*
- OSHA
- Respirator Use
- Construction Safety
- Laboratory Safety
- National Incident Management System
- First Aid – CPR and AED

Training for staff about these regulations is offered by the Department of Campus Operations and Safety in conjunction with the Department of Training and Development. A record of training assignments and completions is maintained. (Pathogens[17]) (Communication[18]).

Environmental Health and Safety Inspections. Following standard operating procedure[3], the Department of Campus Operations and Safety at A&M-Commerce periodically conducts safety inspections of all University facilities, grounds, offices, classrooms, laboratories and work sites. Inspections include electrical safety, fire and life safety, signage, chemical labeling, building conditions, chemical hygiene practices, hazardous and non-hazardous waste, personal protective equipment, waste disposal and general safety and compliance practices. Inspection summaries are reviewed as necessary with supervisory and management staff and findings are addressed appropriately. An example[19] is provided.

Fire Alarm Testing and Inspections. The University provides fire alarm systems in all main campus buildings. These systems are monitored by the University Police Department (UPD) and Department of Campus Operations and Safety. Preventative maintenance, annual testing[6] and service calls are facilitated by the Department of Campus Operations and Safety. Additionally, the department publishes an annual Fire Safety Report which provides information on fire safety, equipment, procedures and statistics. Fire Safety Reports[20] are available on the department's web page[21].
Emergency Operations and Planning

Emergency Operation Plan[22]. The Emergency Operation Plan (EOP) is intended to establish policies, procedures and organizational structure for response to emergencies that are of a magnitude

that could cause significant disruption of the functionality of all or portions of the University. This plan describes the roles and responsibilities of departments, agencies and personnel during emergency situations. The basic emergency procedures are designed to protect lives and property through effective use of University and community resources. Since emergencies may be sudden and without warning, these procedures are designed to be flexible in order to accommodate contingencies of various types and magnitudes. The Emergency Operation Plan (EOP) was last tested on December 16, 2019. Its next scheduled test is March 6, 2020.

Emergency Operation Center. The Emergency Operation Center (EOC) provides a central location from which government at any level can provide interagency coordination and executive decision making in support of the incident response. Emergency Operation Centers can be activated for a number of situations:

- Emergency exercise preparation, execution and review
- Emergency response activities or monitoring related to disasters such as tornadoes, floods, severe weather, ice storms and building collapses
- Coordination of large events such as parades, conventions, state and local fairs or events and large attendance sporting events.

Texas A&M University-Commerce has adopted the National Incident Management System (NIMS) for incident management, as described below. Although NIMS does not require the use of an EOC, Texas A&M University-Commerce has structured its EOC to function according to NIMS.

National Incident Management System. When it is considered necessary to activate the Emergency Operation Plan (EOP), the University will follow the operational aspect of the National Incident Management System. NIMS is a modular emergency management system designed for all hazards and levels of emergency response. This system creates a combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures and communication operating within a standardized organizational structure. The system is used by the Department of Homeland Security and throughout the United States as the basis for emergency response management. Use of NIMS as a basis for its organization and response to emergency management at the University facilitates the University's ability to communicate and coordinate response actions with other jurisdictions and external emergency response providers.

NIMS is organized around five major management activities:

- Command units have overall responsibility at the incident or event, determine objectives and establish priorities based on the nature of the incident, available resources and agency policy. In all incidents there is an identified Incident Commander or a unified command team. These designees have responsibility for overall management of the incident and must be fully qualified to manage the incident.
- Operation teams develop tactical organization and direct all resources to carry out the incident objectives.
- Planning groups develop incident action plans to accomplish the objectives, collect and evaluate information and maintain status of assigned resources.
- Logistic personnel provide resources and all other services needed to support the organization.
- Finance and administration monitor costs related to the incident, provide accounting, procurement, time recording, cost analyses and overall fiscal guidance.

Emergency Communications. The Emergency Operation Center utilizes several resources for emergency communications and information gathering that include numerous redundancies. The EOC is equipped with the following:

- Internet service from both University-provided servers and an outside provider. The service is through wired and wireless avenues. Equipment used includes desktop computers, laptop computers and tablets.
- Weather monitoring software from three different providers that allow the EOC staff to track, predict and monitor severe weather situations locally and nationwide.
- Radio communication through frequencies that include all local emergency responder agencies, Texas Department of Public Safety, surrounding jurisdictions and the National Weather Service.
- Amateur radio communications

- Satellite phone use, which includes four portable satellite phones and six fixed-station units
- Broadcast media from Time Warner Cable, Dish Network, and Campus Televideo
- Eight separate phone lines provided by campus services and one provided by an outside service
- Seven workstations for responding agencies and campus staff members which include phone, internet and radio capabilities
- Ability to coordinate with University Police Department to activate the Pride Alert Warning System, controlled by UPD (described below)

The Emergency Operation Plan outlines the responsibilities of the Public Information Office (PIO), a member of the Emergency Management Response Team, to include interfacing with the public and media or with other agencies with incident related information requirements. The PIO follows the written crisis communications plan when an incident requires communications to the public, media, other agencies or web-based communication. The PIO for A&M-Commerce is the Executive Director of Marketing and Communications[23]. Channels of communication for crisis communications to members of the campus community include the Pride Alert Warning System and Lion Safe App (described in full below), the University website, faculty/staff emails, student emails, parent emails and social media. All media inquiries are directed to the PIO.

Off-campus locations are part of the A&M-Commerce network for emergency management and receive emergency communications along with all students, faculty and staff. Procedures for weather-related closures at off-campus locations are followed according to University Procedure 34.99.99.R0.01[24] *Weather-Related Closing of the University*.

Emergency Exercises. A&M-Commerce prepares for emergency scenarios through activities such as preplanning activities, exercise execution and after-action reviews. (Sample 1[25]) (Sample 2[26]) Three primary exercise activities are utilized:

Tabletops are exercises that involve senior staff members, elected or key personnel, and other key members in an informal group setting discussing a hypothetical situation. Benefits include:

- Identification of strengths or shortfalls
- Enhances understanding of new concepts
- Seeks to change existing attitudes and perspectives
- Requires an experienced or trained facilitator
- In-depth discussion
- Slow paced problem solving

Functional Exercises are single or multi-agency activities designed to evaluate capabilities and multiple functions. Inclusive activities and factors are listed below:

- Participants evaluate management of Emergency Operation Centers, command posts and headquarters
- Assess the adequacy of response plans and organizations
- Simulated deployments
- Rapid problem solving
- Highly stressful environments
- Immediate feedback of response capabilities and organizations

Full Scale Incidents are high-stress, multi-agency and jurisdictional events involving actual deployment of resources in a coordinated response. Benefits include:

- Assess plans and procedures under a crisis situation
- Evaluate response
- Mobilization of all involved organizations
- Scripted scenario

Campus Safety

Directional/Way Finding Signage. A uniform campus-wide directional/way finding signage package identifies University property and provides directional information across the campus and at the University farm. This package includes: two lighted gateway monument signs that flank the main

campus entrance; five 10' monolith monument signs designating the campus perimeter; eight directional signs which designate building locations across the campus, along with 23 free-standing building signs; four secondary campus maps; and two canopy-covered campus directory signs. Additionally, an electronic campus map[27] with a listing of all buildings can be accessed via the A&M-Commerce website and the LionSafe app (described below).

Building Access[28]. Buildings are controlled by the door access module of Blackboard Transaction System[29], which is managed by Auxiliary Services and Lion Card Team. Building access is a privilege that is assigned with approval in place. Access is requested via the Door Access Authorization Form[30]. This is enforced with safety patrols, security cameras and door schedules that allow and disallow entry accordingly. Request to access a room or building outside of normal business hours (Monday through Friday) or over holidays must be communicated using an online form[31] which notifies Auxiliary Services, the Lion Card Staff, University Facilities and the University Police.

Event Risk Assessment. A risk assessment is conducted for events held on campus as well as for events involving travel off campus in order to address the safety of visitors to the campus as well as that of students, faculty or staff traveling off campus. An Event Risk Assessment Form is completed and routed to the applicable offices for review and approval, including the University Police Department and Risk Management. (Examples 1[32], 2[33], 3[34]). For approved events, determinations are made for provision of campus security, insurance, waivers and compliance with any applicable regulations, policies and procedures. On-campus events are also reviewed by Event Services. Off-campus events are included in Clery Act reporting (described below). For all foreign travel, such as study abroad, a risk assessment and security brief is prepared by Risk Management.

Campus Living. All residence halls have electronic swipe-control access for main entrances, and access controls for all student rooms doors are by either physical key or electronic swipe. All traditional-style residence halls have multiple controlled access points designed to limit access to individual student rooms, and only residents assigned to the individual residence hall have access to that hall. Residence hall front desks are staffed according to a schedule managed by the Residential Living and Learning Department, and all residence halls have Resident Assistants (2) on-call every evening from 5:00pm-8:00am. These staff perform building walks throughout the hall to address concerns as needed.

All new students, including freshman and transfer students, are required to attend New Student Orientation. Orientation is offered multiple times during the summer months before the start of the fall semester and also late in the fall prior to the start of the spring semester. As part of New Student Orientation the Department of Campus Operations and Safety provides information on crosswalk safety, also available on their web pages[35], as well as an introduction to other safety resources.

All students living on campus are provided a copy of the *Residential Living and Learning Community Handbook*[36] that provides a section on safety and security[37]. The handbook also provides individual procedures for many health and safety topics, including, but not limited to, bomb threats, candles/open flames, cleanliness, door propping, emergency/safety equipment and fire and life safety.

Residential Living and Learning Department personnel conduct periodic health and safety inspections and fire drills[6] in each residence hall each semester. The Department of Campus Operations and Safety periodically provides environmental health and safety communications for all students, such as the "Have an Exit Strategy" program, which focuses on making students aware of exit routes during a variety of emergency situations.

Following a shooting that occurred in one of the University's residence halls on February 3, 2020, SACSCOC requested additional information from A&M-Commerce about current safety precautions for entry into the dormitories and what changes are being made to ensure the future safety of individuals in the dormitories[38]. The University responded in a letter dated March 4, 2020[39], outlining current safety precautions and including a copy of its Campus Safety Action Plan[40], which describes specific initiatives being implemented to further ensure campus safety and security. Items #1, #3, #4, #5 and #6 detail action items specifically related to the residence halls.

A Secure Environment

University Police Department[41]

A&M-Commerce supports a University police force comprising 23 sworn police officers, three security officers and a police communication division. The University Police Department is responsible for providing security on the main campus. The Chief of Police reports to the Vice-President of Business Administration (VPBA), who reports to the University President. The University Police Department maintains a close working relationship with all local law enforcement agencies in order to be aware of all potential threats to A&M-Commerce or its students and employees. The department has memorandums of understanding with numerous local public safety agencies for mutual aid and support if needed and also monitors radio frequencies of local law enforcement for events that might affect the safety of students, faculty and staff on campus.

Texas Education Code 51.218[42] requires that all institutions of higher education establish an emergency alert system for their students and employees. A&M-Commerce utilizes the Pride Alert Warning System (PAWS[43]), a mass notification system[44] used to inform students, faculty and staff of school closings and emergency situations. Should a situation arise presenting an immediate danger to students, faculty and staff of the University, immediate notification is provided through direct phone calls using the PAWS system. Each employee and student is encouraged to sign up for this free service. Students and employees can sign up through the myLeo portal. In the event of confirmation by police officials that a significant emergency on campus is occurring, University Police Department staff will initiate a PAWS alert using pre-determined scripts. This alert will go to all A&M-Commerce students and employees who have signed up for PAWS alerts. After the initial PAWS alert has been sent, all further communications to the public will come through the university's public information officer. All available resources will be used including webpage postings, KETR broadcasts and e-mail notifications. PAWS is tested monthly on the first Wednesday of the month at 11:00a.m. A sample series of PAWS alerts is provided as evidence[45].

Evacuation routes[46] are posted throughout each campus building. Additionally, a wealth of safety[47] and emergency procedures[48] are found online and in the LionSafe[49] application available to all students, faculty and staff. The app has many features, among them a mobile bluelight, which allows users to simultaneously call UPD and send location information to the dispatcher. The application is also capable of sending "push" alerts to app users, thus functioning as supplemental messaging to PAWS. Other functions include basic safety instructions, evacuation procedures and the ability to live chat with a UPD dispatcher. The University Police Department works with the University's Marketing and Communications department to raise awareness of the Pride Alert Warning System and the LionSafe app and to increase sign ups by students, faculty and staff. Recent awareness campaigns have included promotions on social media, the website and University signs[50].

All off-site locations, with one exception, are located at partnership campuses that have their own police departments. The one exception is the Mesquite Metroplex Center, which contracts with Texas Industrial Security[51] to provide armed security at night and other peak times as needed at this site. The UPD has also joined the emergency alert system at each off-site location. In the event of an emergency, UPD relays information to students that it receives from the local authorities at each off-site location. Directors at off-campus locations[52] post and disseminate emergency contact information and information about utilizing the Lion Safe App to students at these locations.

In compliance with the Clery Act. 34 C.F.R. § 668.41(e), the University Police Department is responsible for compiling the annual Clery Act report and publishing it by October 1 each year. The UPD web page[53] publishes both the annual report[54] and the Crime Statistics Reporting Form[55].

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence

Over the time period since the University's last SACSCOC comprehensive decennial review, Texas A&M University-Commerce has not been and is not currently the subject of an investigation by the U.S.

Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights for possible violations alleging sexual violence. No investigations were active at the time of the University's last comprehensive review.

In compliance with A&M System regulation 08.01.01[56] *Civil Rights Compliance* and Texas Labor Code 21.010[57], all employees must receive training on equal opportunity and nondiscrimination within 30 days of hire and every two years hereafter. Pursuant with A&M System Regulation 33.05.02 [58] *Required Employee Training*, required training for all A&M-Commerce employees includes prevention of sexual harassment [59] within the scope of its nondiscrimination training for new employees.

Conclusion

After a thorough review, A&M-Commerce finds its education programs, communication, planning and preparedness adequate and reasonable in provision for a healthy, safe and secure environment for all members of the University. Its recent Campus Safety Action Plan outlines current initiatives which demonstrate the University's commitment to continually assess and improve the institutional environment.

Section 14 Transparency and Institutional Representation

- 14.1** The institution (a) accurately represents its accreditation status and publishes the name, address, and telephone number of SACSCOC in accordance with SACSCOC's requirements and federal policy and (b) ensures all its branch campuses include the name of that institution and make it clear that their accreditation is dependent on the continued accreditation of the parent campus. (*Publication of accreditation status*)

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Texas A&M University-Commerce accurately publishes its accreditation status, as well as the name, address and telephone number of the Commission in accordance with commission requirements and federal policy in the following manner:

"Texas A&M University-Commerce is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral degrees. Contact the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Texas A&M University-Commerce."

The information regarding the University's accreditation status appears in both the printed and online versions of the *Undergraduate*[1] and *Graduate*[2] catalogs. Furthermore, it appears on the Accreditation web page[3] on the Texas A&M University-Commerce website which can be navigated to from the About menu option of the University's home site[4].

The University does not permit publications or promotions that present the University's SACSCOC accreditation as being accreditation of specific degrees or programs. The University's publications and promotion approval chain provides sufficient checks and balances to prevent inaccurate representation of that accreditation status[5]. All published material is properly vetted by the Department of Institutional Effectiveness and Research for appropriate content regarding accreditation.

Texas A&M University-Commerce does not have any branch campuses.

- 14.3** The institution applies all appropriate standards and policies to its distance learning programs, branch campuses, and off-campus instructional sites. (*Comprehensive institutional reviews*)

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Introduction

Programs offered via distance education and at off-campus instructional sites are reviewed for compliance with all appropriate standards and policies along with all educational programs at Texas A&M University-Commerce. A review of compliance for the applicable standards within the Fifth-Year Compliance Certification is included below.

Standards and Policies

Standard 5.4 demonstrates the appropriate qualifications and regular evaluation of administrative and academic officers who oversee distance learning programs and off-campus instructional sites, including academic deans, associate provosts, the University provost and administrative officers overseeing operational and support functions. The provost manages staff responsible for the Office of Academic Technologies which serves online programs. The Associate Provost manages staff responsible for operational administration of Extended University, which serves off-site programs. Academic functions are managed by the respective academic deans for the programs offered.

Standard 6.1 demonstrates through a review of full-time faculty headcounts, semester credit hour production and student/faculty ratio data that the University employs an adequate number of full-time faculty members to support the mission and goals of the institution. This mission includes the offering of courses and programs at off-site locations and through distance education, in order to offer a personalized, transformative education to diverse learners.

Standard 6.2.b addresses distance education by including a disaggregated description of full-time faculty semester credit hour production in online programs and programs offered 50% or more at off-campus locations. Responsibility for curriculum and program quality, integrity and review resides with the full-time faculty. Part-time faculty teaching dual enrollment courses or in online or off-campus programs work under the oversight of full-time faculty or academic administrators.

Standard 6.2.c demonstrates that the University assigns appropriate responsibility for program coordination to qualified department heads and program coordinators. Programs offered at off-site locations and via distance education are overseen by academic departments. Department heads, housed on the main campus, assign appropriate program coordination responsibilities.

Standard 8.1 addresses student achievement for students in programs offered via distance education and at off-campus instructional sites. These students are counted in the assessment of the University's outcomes measures – graduation and retention rates; completions by economically disadvantaged students; post-graduate outcomes; and 30 SCH tuition and fees – and these results are evaluated relative to established goals and published on the University website.

Standard 8.2.a includes a sample of student outcomes assessment reports for educational programs to document compliance—identifying expected outcomes, assessing the extent to which those outcomes are achieved and providing evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results. Programs from this sampling offered online or off-site are indicated. Students in academic programs offered at off-campus instructional sites and via an online-delivery mode are assessed as part of the annual Institutional Effectiveness reporting cycle, the same as face-to-face programs offered at the main Commerce campus. Learning outcomes for students enrolled in dual enrollment courses are assessed along with the University's Core Curriculum (general education), as part of the annual assessment (IE) cycle.

Standard 9.1 demonstrates that review and approval processes ensure quality for all programs, including those offered at off-campus locations or via an online delivery mode. Proposals for new programs or changes to existing programs (including the offering of an online or off-site program) are approved by University faculty and administrative bodies following University procedures, and approval

or notification processes are conducted, as applicable, for the Texas A&M University System and Board of Regents' policy, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and SACSCOC. Institutional approval and review processes ensure that all programs are aligned with the mission and goals of the University.

Standard 9.2 demonstrates that all A&M-Commerce degree programs, including those offered off-site or through distance education are based on the semester credit hour and have degree requirements that align with the expectations of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) policies and regulations concerning baccalaureate, master's and doctoral program length. All A&M-Commerce baccalaureate programs require 120 semester credit hours (SCH) or more. All A&M-Commerce master's programs require a minimum of 30 SCH. Doctoral programs must consist of at least 90 SCH beyond the bachelor's degree or 60 SCH beyond the master's.

Standard 10.2 demonstrates that the University makes the institution's academic calendars, grading policies, cost of attendance and refund policies available to students and to the public. These are described in specific sections of the undergraduate and graduate catalogs and maintained and regularly updated on the University's website, which is accessible to all students, including students in online courses and at off-campus locations.

Standard 10.3 demonstrates that Texas A&M University-Commerce ensures the availability of both undergraduate and graduate catalogs, which publish course offerings and degree requirements for all programs, including those offered off-site or via distance education. The Registrar's Office and the Graduate School are responsible for producing and archiving the University catalogs in conjunction with the curriculum and catalog management system, CourseLeaf.

Standard 10.5 addresses University admissions policies applicable for all students, both the main Commerce campus, the University's off-site locations and for programs in all delivery modes. These policies are published on the A&M-Commerce website and in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs. Additional information on application processes for dual credit students is provided in the Dual Credit Handbook for each dual credit site. Recruitment materials and presentations are designed and appropriately reviewed to represent the practices, policies and accreditation status of A&M-Commerce accurately, for all programs and locations. Work with contractors from Blackboard, Inc. is managed by University staff through processes which ensure that any recruitment materials or admissions information about online or off-site programs are reviewed through appropriate University channels and governed by institutional principles and policies.

Standard 10.6. The University's procedure *13.99.99.R0.02 Confidentiality of Student Academic Records and Test Scores* protects the privacy of all students, including those enrolled in correspondence and/or distance education courses or programs. A&M-Commerce's written procedure is based on guidelines outlined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which applies to all students, including distance students. University procedure *29.01.03.R0.02 Electronic Information Security* provides further guidance for the management and oversight for information security processes, including guidelines for protecting the privacy of usernames and passwords. Secure logins and passwords utilizing two-factor authentication are used to verify student identify. The University describes steps taken to ensure students are notified in writing at the time of registration or enrollment of any projected additional student charges associated with verification of student identity, including notifications on course syllabi, on program documents and in the schedule of classes viewable at registration.

Standard 10.7 demonstrates that A&M-Commerce follows rules and procedures for determining credit hours awarded for both courses and programs guided by the rules established by the US Department of Education, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges Credit Hours Policy Statement and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's (THECB) Glossary of Terms. The narrative also addresses the University's process for determining credit hours awarded for courses

offered in a shortened format or a competency-based format. Courses offered in an online delivery mode maintain equivalency to traditionally delivered courses in terms of rigor and learning objectives, as observed by a review of syllabi.

Standard 10.9 documents that Texas A&M University-Commerce has no cooperative academic arrangements.

Standard 12.1 addresses University academic and student support services and demonstrates these are appropriate to meet the needs of all students. Provided within the narrative is a discussion of services particularly applicable to online, off-campus and dual enrollment students. The University has been able to recently expand services to offer online resources, including for services such as tutoring, orientation, student disability, counseling and career services. The narrative also reviews plans to expand additional services (available on the main campus) to have a physical presence at off-site locations. Annual assessment (IE) processes and institutional surveys collect information on the appropriateness and effectiveness of support services.

Standard 12.4 describes the University's policies and procedures for addressing written student complaints, applicable to all students including students in online or off-campus programs. All students have access to information about these procedures published on the University's Campus Life and Student Development web page and in the *Student Guidebook*. The University's representative to dual enrollment sites ensures that these students are informed of their rights and responsibilities, and the Dual Credit Handbook is being updated to provide additional notification of complaint procedures.

Standard 13.6 demonstrates the University is in compliance with its responsibilities under Title IV and audits financial aid programs as required by federal and state regulations. The University awards appropriate financial aid to eligible students, whether at the main campus, off-campus locations or online.

Standard 13.7 provides a review of physical resources available at the University's approved off-campus instructional sites and at its dual credit locations. These resources are identified and reviewed in articulation agreements and lease agreements, as applicable. The University demonstrates adequate technological resources infrastructure to support the needs of its distance education programs.

Standard 13.8 addresses how police departments and/or contracted security services maintain a secure environment at the University's off-campus locations. The A&M-Commerce University Police Department has joined the emergency alert system at each off-site location, and in the event of an emergency, relays information to students that it receives from the local authorities at each off-site location. The Lion Safe App provides information to off-site and distance education students regarding school closings, emergency situations and other safety resources. Directors at off-campus locations post and disseminate emergency contact information and information about utilizing the Lion Safe App to students at these locations. Procedures for weather-related closures at off-campus locations are followed according to University procedure *34.99.99.R0.01 Weather-Related Closing of the University*. Off-campus locations follow the guidelines and regulatory enforcement mechanisms of the building owner.

Standard 14.1 demonstrates that the University accurately represents its accreditation status and publishes the name, address and telephone number of SACSCOC in accordance with SACSCOC's requirements and federal policy. A&M-Commerce has no branch campuses.

Standard 14.4 addresses how the institution represents itself to all U.S. Department of Education-recognized agencies with which it holds accreditation, including accreditations applicable to online or off-site programs. These agencies are informed of any changes in accreditation status.

Conclusion

Programs offered via online delivery and at off-campus instructional sites are reviewed for compliance with all appropriate standards and policies along with all educational programs at Texas A&M University-Commerce. Distance education and off-campus instructional sites have been addressed in the appropriate standards throughout the University's compliance certification for the Fifth-Year Interim Report.

- 14.4** The institution (a) represents itself accurately to all U.S. Department of Education recognized accrediting agencies with which it holds accreditation and (b) informs those agencies of any change of accreditation status, including the imposition of public sanctions. (See SACSCOC's policy "Accrediting Decisions of Other Agencies.") (*Representation to other agencies*)

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Introduction

In addition to being regionally accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, Texas A&M University-Commerce holds accreditations from three U.S. Department of Education-recognized accrediting bodies, the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD), the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) and the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)[1]. Since the University's most recent reaffirmation of accreditation, A&M-Commerce has neither had its accreditation terminated nor voluntarily withdrawn its accreditation by or from any federally recognized accrediting body. A&M-Commerce accurately represents itself to all U.S. Department of Education recognized accrediting agencies with which it holds accreditation and provides notification if any changes in accreditation status occur. The Office of the Provost works in conjunction with the Department of Institutional Effectiveness and Research to collect this information and provide notification as needed[2].

National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD)

The A&M-Commerce Department of Art was reviewed for NASAD accreditation in 2010 and granted accreditation as an associate member in 2011[3]. In 2013, the department updated its programs, and these were subsequently reviewed and approved[4]. The University remains in good standing and was last reviewed in 2019. The University is listed as a "Degree-Granting, SACSCOC [accredited], Not-for-profit, Public. A department of art in a college of humanities, social sciences and arts in a state-supported university." A copy of the most recent self-study is provided[5].

National Association of Schools of Music (NASM)

The A&M-Commerce Department of Music has been accredited by NASM since 1969, with its last review in 2015[6]. The University remains in good standing and is next scheduled for review during the 2024-25 academic year. The University is listed as a, "Degree-Granting, SACSCOC [accredited], Not-for-profit, Public. A department of music in a college of humanities, social sciences and arts in a state-supported university." A copy of the most recent self-study is provided[7].

Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)

The baccalaureate degree in nursing (BSN) and the master's degree in nursing (MSN) at A&M-Commerce are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. Initial accreditation for the BSN was granted in 2014. The MSN received accreditation in 2019. The University remains in good standing and is next scheduled for review of the BSN in 2029 and review of the MSN in 2024[8]. A copy of the most recent self-study is provided[9].

Conclusion

A&M-Commerce finds itself to be in compliance with this standard because it describes itself in the

same manner to all accrediting bodies. Had there been a change in status, the University would have apprised each of the same.

Part IV Fifth-Year Follow Up Report

IV-1 Fifth-Year Follow Up Report

Narrative

Not applicable to Texas A&M University-Commerce.

Part V The Impact Report of the Quality Enhancement Plan

V-1 The Impact Report of the Quality Enhancement Plan

Compliance Status: Compliant

Narrative

Introduction: The following Executive Summary was submitted as part of the SACSCOC reaffirmation process of A&M-Commerce in 2014 to meet (former) Core Principle 2.12 and Comprehensive Standard 3.3.2. The summary remains in its original form and captures the schematic overview of the QEP and overarching goal to increase student learning and preparation, specifically in relation to global competence.

Executive Summary (extracted from original 2014 QEP Proposal)

In accordance with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges' Core Principle 2.12 and Comprehensive Standard 3.3.2, Texas A&M University-Commerce has selected and developed a topic for the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The QEP evolved from a five-year process that involved narrowing the topic options, intensive and broad-based campus involvement and discovery, and selection and development of a final topic. Overall, the process revealed that faculty, staff, students, and the community agree, along with supporting data, that global competence is essential but is not yet fully mastered at A&M-Commerce. The A&M-Commerce QEP will focus on "Preparing Students for an Interconnected World." The QEP proposes intentional structures and processes to enhance and improve students' global competence through two programs: Global Scholar and Global Fellow. These programs are fully aligned with the university strategy, mission, and guiding principles. The objectives of the programs have been matched with the student learning outcomes (SLOs) that have been drawn from best practices and the overarching goals of the QEP.

Enrollment data indicate that of the nearly 12,000 A&M-Commerce students, more than 60% are undergraduate students. The targeted student population for the initial implementation of the QEP will include all first-year, full-time freshman (about 500 each fall). Following the current trend for four to six-year graduation rates of 38%, the QEP anticipates half of those who graduate will earn status as a Global Scholar, with about 20% earning a foreign travel scholarship opportunity. The Global Fellow Program is peripheral to the Global Scholar Program, with a clear focus on creating and maintaining an academic environment where achievement of the SLOs is possible. Additionally, the program will create and maintain a diversified and multi-disciplinary team with specialized global experiences and resources. Coupled, the programs clearly provide opportunities for students, faculty, and staff that align with the strategic plan, mission, vision, and guiding principles of A&M-Commerce. Through promotion and focus on student learning outcomes, and the environment that enables and supports those outcomes, A&M-Commerce will intentionally make broad improvements to the quality of students' educational experiences.

Although A&M-Commerce has a longstanding commitment to global initiatives, education, and development of competence, the QEP presents a well-conceived plan with strategic attention to bringing together many disjointed efforts to form a collaborative and interdisciplinary approach to global learning. The QEP is based on sound theoretical underpinnings and will encompass the cultivation of global knowledge, the ability to apply that knowledge, and engagement. A&M-Commerce has involved a wide variety of constituents from across the university, and has the institutional capability to implement the QEP. The total A&M-Commerce QEP budget of almost \$2 million over a five-year period represents a serious institutional commitment to developing students' global competence. Funding for human and physical resources, marketing and communication, technology components, training and development, ongoing assessments, and recognition and distinction efforts are included in the budget. Pending a successful outcome of the on-site visit in Spring 2014, A&M-Commerce will proceed to execute the QEP. A standing committee, department mentors, and the QEP Director will collaborate with existing campus entities, services, and resources to fully execute, promote, support, organize, and assess the QEP.

1. Initial Goals and Intended Outcomes of the QEP

The objective of the Texas A&M University-Commerce QEP is "preparing students for an interconnected world"

through a focus on improving global competence. The QEP creates intentional structures and processes to enhance and improve students' global competence through two programs: Global Scholars, student recognition for engagement in the globally-focused campus environment, and Global Fellows, faculty and staff recognition for creating and influencing the globally-focused environment. These two programs work together to increase students' knowledge of global dynamics and to help them apply that knowledge and understand their roles as engaged citizens within an interconnected and diverse world. These two programs comprise the bulk of the QEP and enable the institution to strengthen its focus on and support of global initiatives while seeking to increase students' global competencies.

Global Scholars Program Overview: The primary goal of the Global Scholar Program is to create distinction and recognition for students who began as first-time, full-time freshman, for engagement in and reflection on specialized instruction (global courses and research) and experiences (global events and travel). Students are introduced to the program through the Freshman Experience (orientation and seminars) and are eligible based on set criteria, including the completion of the QEP's primary assessment, the Global Competence Aptitude Assessment. Objectives of the Global Scholar Program include: (1) Develop an opportunity for students to become better prepared for engaging in a highly interconnected world; (2) Distinction and recognition of students for engagement in specialized instruction (global courses) and experiences (global events and travel); (3) Encourage and increase student engagement in global activities (courses, events, and travel); (4) Encourage and increase students' global competence (knowledge, skills, and engagement).

Global Fellows Program Overview: The overarching goal of the Global Fellow Program is to create and maintain an environment where achievement of the QEP's student learning outcomes is possible. The program encourages faculty and staff engagement in global activities, provides distinction and funding opportunities, and creates a multidisciplinary team with specialized global experiences and resources. The Global Fellow Program is peripheral to the Global Scholar Program. Faculty and staff are made aware of the program through new hire orientation, training and development, community updates, as well as departmental and college meetings. The Global Fellow award is based on engagement in activities classified into categories complimentary to the Global Scholar: global course development and teaching, global events, global travel, global research, and personal and professional development. Objectives of the Global Fellow Program include: (1) Develop a university environment that encourages and enhances students' global learning and engagement; (2) Distinction and recognition of faculty/staff for engagement in global activities (courses, events, travel, research, personal/professional development); (3) Encourage and increase faculty/staff engagement in global activities (courses, events, travel, research, personal/professional development); (4) Create and maintain a diversified and multi-disciplinary team with specialized global experiences and resources in an effort to improve students' global competence.

The 2015-2020 and 2019-2024 university strategic plans and mission continue to guide the objectives of the Global Scholar and Global Fellow Programs. Additionally, the program objectives match the three student learning outcomes drawn from the overarching goals of the QEP. Originally developed under the 2010-2015 University Strategic Plan, the following goals influenced the creation of a sixth guiding principle, Globalization, as part of the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan.

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QEP Goals:

1. Develop students' global competence, which will contribute to increased job placement rates.
2. Increase students' global learning and participation in travel/study abroad by cultivating an environment that supports, encourages, and enhances the QEP programs.
3. Insure the quality and sustainability of the new and innovative initiatives by effective and responsible leveraging of human, physical and financial resources allocated and reallocated to the QEP.

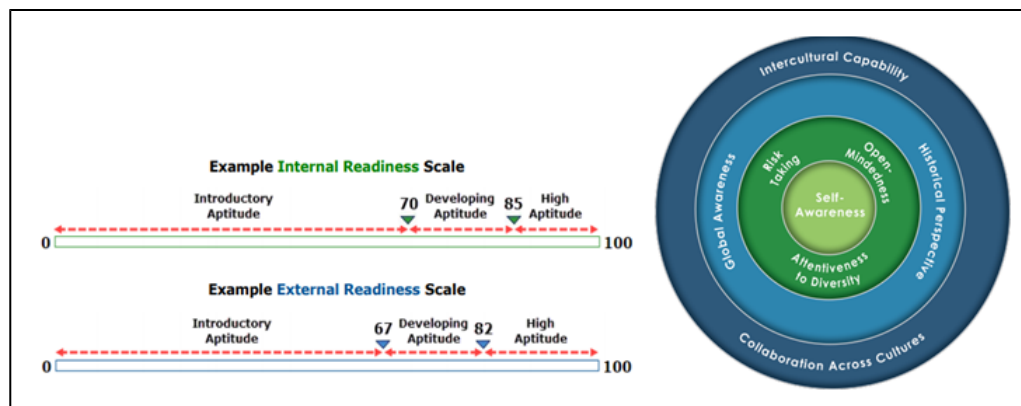
QEP Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):

1. Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the interconnectedness of global dynamics (issues, processes, trends, and systems).
2. Students will be able to apply knowledge of the interconnectedness of global dynamics.
3. Students will be able to view themselves as engaged citizens within an interconnected and diverse world.

The measurement of these learning outcomes resides primarily in the results of the Global Competence Aptitude Assessment (GCAA) completed by incoming freshman, graduating seniors and students participating in study abroad. Annual collection of individual results and cohort averages measures progress towards achieving these SLOs. Additional formative assessment measures determine the level to which the university environment is

influencing students' global competence and perception of preparedness for an interconnected world. This includes the creation, designation and assessment of Global Courses; the implementation and utilization of an ePortfolio tool; the ability to capture student perceptions of learning through end of course evaluations and a graduation exit survey. Through various assessments, the plan incorporates direct measures of these SLOs and indirect measures to capture campus environment and student perceptions of learning.

Based on past research, continued international norming and current utilization, the GCAA is used as the primary instrument capable for measuring constructs related to global competence. The instrument stems from the research of William Hunter (2018) who defines global competence as “having flexible, respectful attitudes, including self-perspective, and applying knowledge of the historical, geographic, and societal factors that influence cultures in order to effectively interact and build relationships with people around the world.” This updated definition stems from Hunter’s previous work (2004) cited in the original narrative as “having an open mind while actively seeking to understand cultural norms and expectations of others, and leveraging this gained knowledge to interact, communicate, and work effectively in diverse environments.” The GCAA has demonstrated the ability to capture an individual’s capacities of global knowledge, skills, attitudes and experiences. Consistently used by A&M-Commerce from the baseline assessment (2013) until present, this web-based tool has measured global competency for each incoming first time, full-time (FTFT) freshman cohort, international travel group and identified graduates. Constructs measured and related to global competence include both internal and external readiness scores, which merge eight sub-components into two primary categories. Internal readiness characteristics (shaded green below) encompass the personal and attitudinal drivers of global competence. External readiness characteristics (shaded blue below) are one’s acquired knowledge through education or life experiences. To be considered “globally competent,” individuals must earn high aptitude ratings for both internal (above 85%) and external readiness (above 82%).



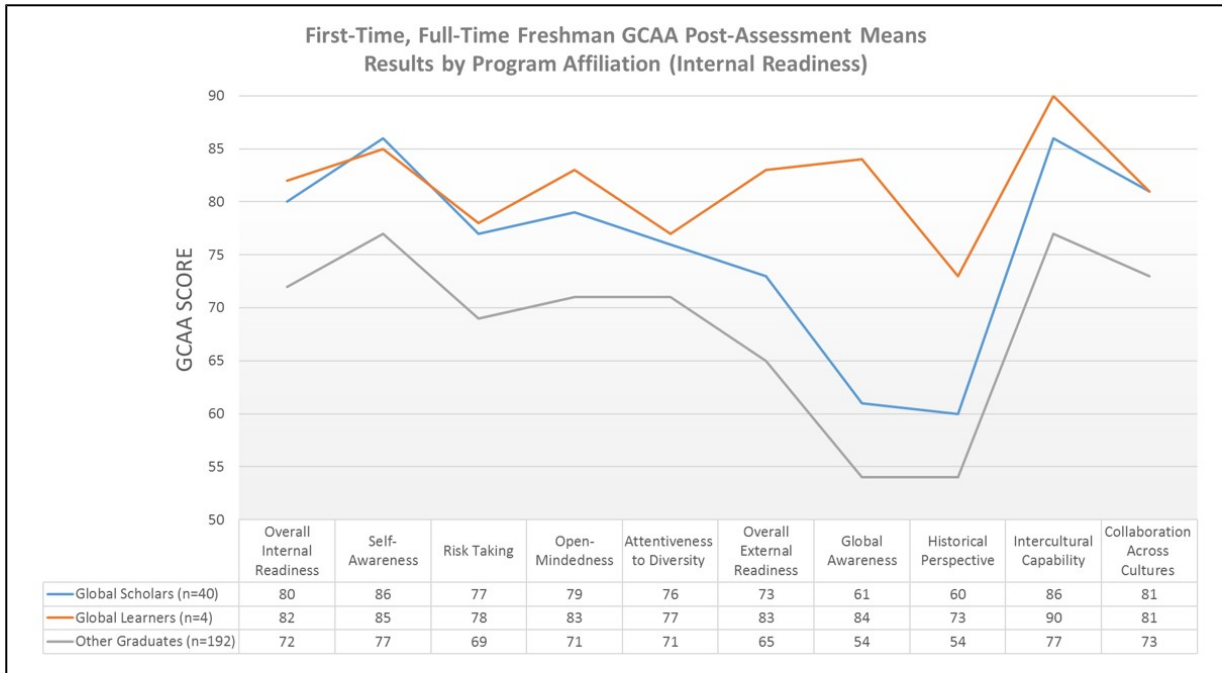
The QEP seeks to improve both internal and external readiness scores to ranges indicative of “developing aptitude” and “high aptitude” global competence by the time of graduation, an ambitious feat considering “high aptitude” for global competence is, ultimately, a lifetime goal. Results of the assessment help A&M-Commerce measure the effectiveness of the QEP’s programs from a longitudinal perspective for all three SLOs and the overall QEP objective of “Preparing Students for an Interconnected World.” Historically completed by 88-90% of each incoming freshman cohort, the assessment has provided insight into key development areas for our incoming student population as well as valuable feedback for graduating students or those returning from travel in relation to marketable skills and areas for development. Students who complete the assessment receive a detailed feedback report with both scores, their meaning and suggestions for improving global competence.

2. Key Findings and Assessments

The evaluation of the QEP’s impact centers on the measurement of the original goals and intended outcomes outlined in the 2014 narrative as well as constant review of processes, their modifications and improvements made over the past five years through annual reports. As discussed, direct assessment of the QEP’s three student learning outcomes lies in the results of the Global Competence Aptitude Assessment and is further refined through a comparison of these results by program affiliation — those who actively pursued recognition as a Global Scholar versus those who did not. Key findings are discussed below with reference to the student learning outcomes achieved.

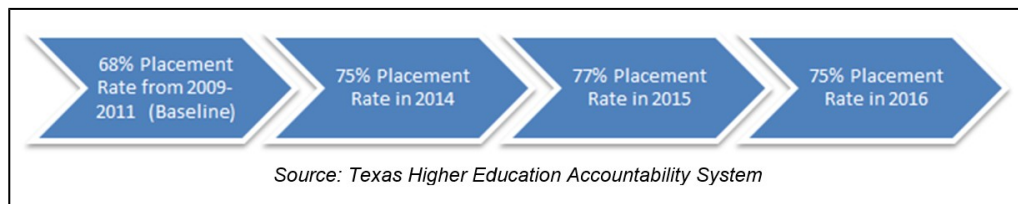
The following chart shows that, overall, the average graduate (post) GCAA score falls in the “developing” range

of global competence for internal readiness and the “developing” or “high aptitude” range for external readiness for students in our cohort programs (Global Scholar/Learner) compared to their non-cohort peers. This assessment, indicates that students who seek the Global Scholar/Learner recognitions achieve the SLOs, albeit on a small scale, by reaching these score thresholds. Continuing research has our team now looking into the student experiences of those in each of the mentioned groups, attempting to capture participation in key activities which may affect the exit-level scores for students in each group. Specifically, the following is being collected: number of global courses completed, grades for global course artifacts, international study program participation and length and attendance at globally-focused campus. For those in the Global Scholar and Global Learner groups, this information is easier to obtain through review of the ePortfolio tool, but lacking or more difficult to collect for the general campus population.



Overall, findings show that students who participate in cohort-based recognition programs have higher levels of global competence at graduation than do general graduates. While exit-level (post) GCAA results for Global Learners and Global Scholars show a developing/high aptitude is achieved, results also identify a greater need in our general student population to provide intentional opportunities for students to cultivate global awareness and historical perspective. Overall scores in these ranges document achievement of all three of the QEP’s SLOs and meet the QEP’s overarching goal of graduating globally competent students.

Additionally, these specific measures, along with information from the Texas Higher Education Accountability System contribute to the indirect assessment of the QEP and Goal 1 of “developing students’ global competence, which will contribute to increased job placement rates.” After five years, information collected lines up with the QEP’s expectation that students’ improved global competence will contribute to increased placement rates, thereby contributing to the accomplishment of our imperative.



Assessment of Learning (QEP SLOs)

As mentioned, the QEP’s three student learning outcomes are assessed directly through use of the Global Competence Aptitude Assessment (distributed to three different groups) and indirectly through use of the Graduation Exit Survey.

Direct Assessment: The Global Competence Aptitude Assessment (GCAA)

GCAA Distributed to Incoming Freshman Students: To establish a baseline for global competence (2013) before the development and implementation of the QEP, the GCAA was issued to three groups of students (N = 497) during the summer and fall of 2013. Students fell into one of the following groups: (1) students traveling/studying abroad, (2) students registered in a summer speech class serving as a control group, and (3) a group of incoming freshman students. All students traveling abroad and students enrolled in speech classes completed the pre- and post-GCAA during the same 12-week period. The incoming freshman students completed the GCAA in respective Freshman Success Classes.

The baseline GCAA results indicate that overall internal readiness scores (self-awareness, risk taking, open-mindedness, and attentiveness to diversity) were 69.8%, where the external readiness scores (global awareness, historical perspective, intercultural capability, and collaboration across cultures) were 48.1%. These scores both fell below the 82-85% “high aptitude” score range and were indicative of under-developed or introductory levels readiness.

Since the QEP’s implementation, from Fall 2014-Fall 2019, the GCAA has been completed by 4,377 first year students. This consistent assessment provides insight into the entering-level of global competence possessed by students and a comparison tool for results collected at time of graduation. Despite multiple years of reporting, entering (pre-test) scores remain primarily in the “introductory” aptitude ranges. While not surprising, these scores validate the need to create and maintain intentional structures, which allow students to explore the interconnectedness of global dynamics (issues, processes, trends, and systems) and, ultimately, to increase global competence.

The chart below chronologically details the semester-by semester breakdown of entry-level (pre-assessment) GCAA scores for each incoming first year cohort. Students complete assessments within the first six weeks of each fall and spring semester as part of their freshman seminar experience.

| First-Time, Full-Time Freshman | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|
| GCAA Pre-Assessment Readiness Score Averages by Cohort | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Fall 2013 (Baseline) | Fall 2014 | Spring 2015 | Fall 2015 | Spring 2016 | Fall 2016 | Spring 2017 | Fall 2017 | Spring 2018 | Fall 2018 |
| Assessments Completed | 397 | 930 | 35 | 934 | 35 | 915 | 26 | 848 | 7 | 904 |
| Internal Readiness Mean | 68.2 | 73.1 | 67.7 | 70.4 | 66.6 | 69 | 67 | 69 | 71 | 70 |
| External Readiness Mean | 45.7 | 59.9 | 48.4 | 56.5 | 51.2 | 54 | 48 | 53 | 63 | 64 |

GCAA Distributed to Graduating Students who Completed the GCAA as Freshman: After applying for graduation, students graduating in 3-5+ years who completed the entry-level GCAA as freshman are issued the post-assessment. Post assessments are conducted each semester and began summer 2017. After each assessment, students receive scores in each domain of global competence. This feedback report is issued directly to students and provides reference to marketable skills and preparing for next steps after graduation.

The chart below shows average post-GCAA scores for students who 1) began as first time, full-time freshmen in fall/spring, 2) completed the GCAA as freshmen and 3) applied for graduation, as compared to the baseline group. Out of 720 eligible students from Spring 2017 (earliest 2014 FTFT cohort graduation cycle) to Fall 2019, 236 completed post-assessments (32.7% response rate). Participation is voluntary and not a graduation requirement.

| First-Time, Full-Time Freshman | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|------|-----------|------|
| GCAA Pre/Post-Assesmen Readiness Score Comparison | | | | |
| Assessment Period | Spring 2017-Fall 2019 | | | |
| | Pre-Test | | Post-Test | |
| Internal Readiness | n | Mean | n | Mean |
| Overall Internal Readiness | 236 | 70 | 236 | 74 |
| Self-Awareness | 236 | 74 | 236 | 79 |
| Risk Taking | 236 | 70 | 236 | 71 |
| Open-Mindedness | 236 | 70 | 236 | 73 |
| Attentiveness to Diversity | 236 | 69 | 72 | 70 |
| External Readiness | Pre-Test | | Post-Test | |
| | n | Mean | n | Mean |

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------|-----|----|-----|----|
| Overall External Readiness | Overall | 236 | 57 | 236 | 67 |
| Global Awareness | | 236 | 39 | 236 | 56 |
| Historical Perspective | | 236 | 48 | 236 | 55 |
| Intercultural Capability | | 236 | 69 | 236 | 79 |
| Collaboration Across Cultures | | 236 | 69 | 236 | 75 |

Although both pre- and post-test scores fall in the “developing aptitude” range, this group demonstrates overall growth in global competence by time of graduation. However, post-assessment scores fail to meet the goal of “high aptitude” global competency in either internal or external readiness. High aptitude for global competence is a life-long goal and not one easily accomplished. As defined in the GCAA feedback report, a developing aptitude for global competence is making “significant progress towards global competence.” Considering that the majority of students starting as first-time, full-time freshmen are well-placed within an introductory level of global competence then this is indeed a milestone for our graduates.

Now, with data collected at the fifth year, our team is now going back to see what specific experiences we can connect to students’ exit-level global competence and which may influence exit-level scores. Specific items to note from graduating (post) GCAA data are the significant gains made in the external readiness category as it relates to “global awareness” and “intercultural capabilities.” Missing as a comparison tool is baseline exit (post) GCAA data from the original baseline group. A control group was established in the 2013 baseline set, but the data only included 15 completed responses, not a statistically relevant number when compared to the data now available. Furthermore, this previous baseline data was collected from summer sections of a course, not graduating students; thus, the ability to assess the extent of the QEP’s direct impact on global competence for graduating students is limited by the lack of an exit-level global competence baseline prior to QEP implementation.

GCAA Distributed to Study Abroad Participants Pre/Post Travel: Researchers articulate the importance of international experiences in fostering global competence development. The GCAA is used to measure global competence for students traveling abroad through all A&M-Commerce sponsored programs. In total, 516 students have completed both the pre- and post-travel GCAA. Results accumulated annually reveal if the QEP has achieved overall student learning outcomes. Supporting previous literature, analysis of students’ GCAA pre- and post-travel results (as of Summer 2019) indicates some increase in internal readiness (mean of 77) and external readiness (mean of 64) scores after travelling internationally. (see chart below) Results show students remain in “developing” categories for both domains even after travel, which indicates some growth but also highlights a need for further development.

| Assessment Total | | Pre-Test | | Assessment Total | | Post-Test | |
|-------------------------------|---------|----------|------|-------------------------------|---------|-----------|------|
| Internal Readiness | | Pre-Test | | Internal Readiness | | Post-Test | |
| | | n | Mean | | | n | Mean |
| Overall Internal Readiness | Overall | 516 | 75 | Overall Internal Readiness | Overall | 516 | 77 |
| Self-Awareness | | 516 | 78 | Self-Awareness | | 516 | 79 |
| Risk Taking | | 516 | 72 | Risk Taking | | 516 | 74 |
| Open-Mindedness | | 516 | 77 | Open-Mindedness | | 516 | 79 |
| Attentiveness to Diversity | | 516 | 73 | Attentiveness to Diversity | | 516 | 76 |
| External Readiness | | Pre-Test | | External Readiness | | Post-Test | |
| | | n | Mean | | | n | Mean |
| Overall External Readiness | Overall | 516 | 62 | Overall External Readiness | Overall | 516 | 64 |
| Global Awareness | | 516 | 52 | Global Awareness | | 516 | 54 |
| Historical Perspective | | 516 | 43 | Historical Perspective | | 516 | 50 |
| Intercultural Capability | | 516 | 75 | Intercultural Capability | | 516 | 77 |
| Collaboration Across Cultures | | 516 | 74 | Collaboration Across Cultures | | 516 | 77 |

Indirect Assessment: Graduation Exit Survey

A non-mandatory graduation exit survey is conducted at A&M-Commerce every semester to all students applying for graduation each academic term and include people who may or may not knowingly participate in globally focused events, activities or courses. With the launch of the QEP, two question sets were added to the

graduation survey to self-report assessment of learning as related to preparation for an interconnected world, the objective of the QEP. Feedback serves as an indirect assessment of QEP SLO 3 as it relates to students' perceptions of learning and ability to see themselves as engaged citizens in an interconnected world.

As an example, information below represents data collected from surveys in Fall 2016 through Summer 2018. Of the undergraduate and graduate students surveyed (n=2335), an average 95.8% agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements.

| <i>Please rate your agreement with the following statements regarding our interconnected world:</i> | Average Percentage |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Upon completion of my degree: I am prepared for an interconnected world | 96% agree or strongly agree |
| I have the ability/skill to apply the knowledge of the interconnectedness of global dynamics (issues, processes, trends and systems) | 96% agree or strongly agree |
| I view myself as an engaged citizen within an interconnected and diverse world | 96% agree or strongly agree |
| I have the knowledge of the interconnectedness of global dynamics (issues, processes, trends and systems). | 95% agree or strongly agree |

Overall, data collected through the GCAA and the Graduation Exit survey provide evidence that the QEP at A&M-Commerce is achieving QEP Goal 1 of developing students' global competence, which we feel will continue to contribute to increased job placement rates and help students connect relevant marketable skills to their future aspirations.

Assessment of Environment (QEP Goals)

QEP Goals 2 and 3 center primarily on cultivating and sustaining a campus environment full of intentional structures such as globally-focused travel, coursework and activities. Part of this campus environment is the intentional connection of students to international travel opportunities. QEP Goal 2 is to "Increase...participation in travel/study abroad by cultivating an environment that supports, encourages, and enhances the QEP programs," and involvement in the assessment process for international travel allows for the QEP to be aware of students studying abroad. In the baseline year (2013), the university supported 84 students in study abroad. Since the QEP implementation, a total of 606 students have traveled abroad with an average of 121 students per year. The highest travel year (2015-2016) supported 227 travelers while the start-up year (2014-2015) saw only 68 student travelers. Though travel numbers have moderately risen, the goal to increase participation remains. Over the past five years, the QEP has maintained a budget allocated for direct support to study abroad through funding to students (through the Global Scholars program) and faculty (through the Global Fellows Program). The following sections detail the programs and their assistance to supporting QEP Goal 2, along with awarded funding. Awarded funding supports both the travel/study abroad imperative while also meeting QEP Goal 3 of leveraging resources (financial, human, etc.) to support initiatives for sustainability.

Global Scholar Program: The primary goal of the Global Scholar Program is to create distinction and recognition among students who began as first-time, full-time freshman (who completed the GCAA) for engagement in specialized instruction (global courses and research) and experiences (global events and travel). In the original QEP narrative the institution set a goal to have 38% of the 4-year first year cohort selected as Global Scholars. Based on the 2014 FTFT cohort of 500, a stretch goal was set for 190 students to earn Global Scholar status each year. From Fall 2016, the first year of eligibility for the 2014 cohort, to Fall 2019 a total of 154 Global Scholar applications were received with 128 distinctions earned. In total 1147 students from the 2014-2018 freshman cohorts were eligible based on the criteria below. This means collectively only 13% of eligible students applied and, on average, 11.2% earned distinction. The QEP committee continues to work on new techniques and develop best practices in garnering and sustaining student interest in this program from freshman to junior year.

Applications require a brief essay explaining "how have you become prepared to engage within an

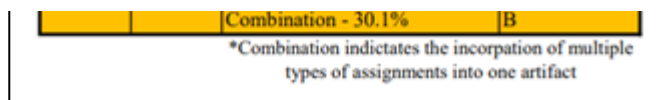
interconnected and diverse world?” along with an ePortfolio attached, documenting involvement in the global environment, including course/event artifacts and reflections along with the initial GCAA feedback. Global Fellows and the QEP committee evaluate each application based on an established rubric. Content analysis of the ePortfolio analysis allows the QEP committee to look at formative assessment related to global competence and student learning. As part of the application, students indicate interest in consideration for a travel award from the university (valued up to \$5,000) to participate in university-related domestic or international travel. To date, the QEP has maintained a yearly award budget of \$50,000 in student funding which now translates to over \$170,000 dollars in travel support during the Summer/Fall 2017-2020. Continued collaboration with the university Global Programs Office, academic departments, Registrar’s Office and the QEP office encourage the institutionalization of the Global Scholars Program, making it a permanent and prominent fixture of the university, accomplishing Goal 2.

Global Fellow Program: The overarching goal of the Global Fellow Program is to create and maintain an environment where achievement of the student learning outcomes is possible. The program encourages faculty and staff engagement in global activities, provides distinction and recognition and creates a multidisciplinary team with specialized global experiences and resources. All Global Fellows are required to maintain an ePortfolio. The ePortfolio follows the same method as the Global Scholars Program so Global Fellows can model and promote the tool. Faculty and staff members are rewarded through internal funding for planning, sponsoring, organizing and attending global colloquiums, conferences and/or events. Applications for status as a Global Fellow are available every spring semester and accepted upon completion of at least one year of documented activity. After scoring on an established rubric by current Global Fellows, new faculty and staff are recognized as a Global Fellow after earning a set threshold of points.

The QEP Committee has recognized 91 Global Fellows on campus. Twenty-one are also recognized as Distinguished Global Fellows, additional recognition for those who continue to develop courses, travel and conduct research related to the student learning outcomes of the QEP after receiving Global Fellow status. For those recognized as Global Fellows, the QEP has funded 35 different proposals relating to a specific QEP SLO(s). These requests have assisted faculty/staff in supporting students with travel to professional conferences, support to study abroad, campus event creation and development of new global courses. Since 2016, the QEP has awarded more than \$41,000 in direct support to Global Fellows continuing to enhance the globally-focused environment.

Global Course Artifacts: Global Courses, a significant portion of the globally-focused campus environment, are departmentally-identified academic courses which meet one or more the QEP’s SLOs. Academic departments identify and approve relevant courses then submit to the respective college dean and QEP director. Once “global” distinction is earned (earning a GLB prefix), courses are listed in the course catalog and schedule of classes. Each fall/spring semester departments offer approximately 175-215 sections of Global Courses in every academic college. At the end of each term through an internal form and information request, faculty members report the QEP SLO(s) measured in their course, the artifact they used to measure that SLO and the average grade of the artifact. Over time, artifacts are also collected from reporting sections of global courses through Global Scholar/Learner applications. The table below represents a snapshot of artifacts collected that meet specific course/QEP SLOs and the average grade. This information is used as formative assessment of learning in relation to the QEP at a program level. Global courses are open to all graduate and undergraduate level students, regardless of involvement in the QEP.

| Global Course Outcomes Spring 2018 | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Students n = 1517 | | | |
| | | Artifact Type | Average Grade |
| SLO 1 | 1065 70.2% | Paper -65.4% | B |
| | | Powerpoint - 8.1% | B |
| | | Event Attendance - 0 | |
| | | Combination - 26.5% | B |
| SLO 2 | 1169 77.1% | Paper - 69.9% | B |
| | | Powerpoint - 3.0% | B |
| | | Event Attendance - 0 | |
| | | Combination - 27.1% | B |
| SLO 3 | 847 55.8% | Paper - 59.7% | B |
| | | Powerpoint - 7.6% | B |
| | | Event Attendance - 2.6% | A |



Overall, participation in this reporting is a required condition of labeling a course as “global,” but enforcing reporting is difficult due to instructor rotation and course changes, among other things. End-of-semester reporting has steadily diminished over time. Currently, only 38% of global course instructors report answers to the questions issued in the end-of-course survey. Questions include: (1) How many students were in your global course? (2) What is the artifact students uploaded to their ePortfolio? (A short description) (3) What was the average grade (percentage out of 100, if possible) of the artifact students uploaded to their ePortfolio? (4) Which of the QEP Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) were addressed by this artifact?

ePortfolio: An electronic portfolio (ePortfolio) is the overarching tool connecting the Global Scholar and Global Fellow programs and utilized for those taking Global Courses. In addition to being one of the newly recognized high-impact practices (AAC&U, 2016) this tool also allows for the collection and review of student learning outcome achievement, as well as a means for broad, multidimensional and integrated program evaluation. The user populates the ePortfolio with materials and artifacts that demonstrate global competence (e.g., reflections, written documents, class projects).

Creation of the student ePortfolio begins during first semester of the freshman year as part of the Freshman Seminar course and is updated through involvement in global courses. Ongoing reminders to update and edit information go to faculty who teach Global Courses or as applications open. Students and faculty/staff are prompted to write reflections for each global experience (e.g., global course, global event and global travel). Required reflections address how participation improved a participant’s global knowledge, ability to apply global knowledge and/ or how engagement has increased. For Global Fellows, Scholars and Learners, the QEP Committee reviewers assess each ePortfolio included with an application against a rubric to determine quality of the reflections. Global Course instructors determine the quality of student work submitted in relation to Global Courses and the achievement of course student-learning outcomes. Since this is a small sampling, it does not provide the summative assessment of learning as written in the original narrative.

Of the university’s 7,330 ePortfolio active account users, 2,961 are directly connected to the university’s QEP and receive regular communication regarding global events, activities, courses and Global Scholar/Learner/Fellow applications. The regular use of an ePortfolio by a significant portion of the student population is a way the institution works to implement a high-impact practice (HIP) to scale.

3. Changes Made to the QEP and Rationale

Over the past five years, the QEP remains a highly structured and administered program ingrained in university culture. This format, which keeps operational decisions at the departmental level, allows for ownership and sustainability of the QEP’s SLOs. While the QEP reports and assesses various efforts towards measuring global competence, decisions about what constitutes a global event, course, activity, etc. are determined at the departmental level. Overall, the goal remains to increase students’ levels of global competence through involvement in both on-campus and global learning opportunities. New goals are now set for taking these initiatives to all students, not just the freshmen targeted in the original proposal.

Addition of the Global Learner Program (2017): After the first application cycle of the Global Scholar Program, a significant amount of student interest was generated from the campus population for a program to include graduate and transfer students. Modeled after the Global Scholar Program, the program launched with the same goal of encouraging student engagement in global activities and providing distinction among students for this engagement. Recognition of Global Learners supports the QEP SLOs and Goal 2 of “cultivating an environment that supports, encourages, and enhances the QEP programs.” As a comparable distinction to the Global Scholar program, students upload evidence of involvement along with reflection to their ePortfolio to be reviewed against a rubric. Benefits include certificate of completion, medallion for graduation, opportunity to complete the GCAA and letters of recommendation. Global Learners are not eligible for travel awards and are not required to complete the GCAA. In fall 2017, the QEP department began outreach to eligible students targeting those who applied for graduation in a given term. The QEP has received 134 applications in Fall 2017 through Fall 2019. Fifty-four students have received the Global Learner Recognition.

Staffing and Reporting Structure: The assessment of the QEP remains under a QEP director who maintains close, working relationships with Institutional Effectiveness and Research and other campus partners, both in academic and student services. To continue institutionalizing the programs associated with the QEP, data collection and recognition pieces for the QEP moved to the University's Honors College in January 2017. Under the leadership of a QEP director, program assessment reports through to the Dean of the Honors College and to the Associate Provost of Academic Foundations. Previously, the Executive Director for Global Learning and QEP reported directly to the Vice President for Student Access and Success, a position dissolved in 2017. Moving the QEP to an established college providing premier academic opportunities recognizes the Global Scholars Program as a high-impact accomplishment for students.

Assessment Rubrics: In the initial QEP narrative, the rubric used for Global Scholars possessed only a quick yes or no regarding recommendation for a travel award. After conducting the first round of review, the QEP committee noted a quantitative format was needed for clearer distribution of limited travel grant money. The rubric now mirrors the Global Fellow application rubric for consistency and allows for point-based scoring.

GCAA Tool & System: Beginning in Fall 2014 every incoming first-time, full-time freshman is issued an assessment code to complete the Global Competence Aptitude Assessment (GCAA) through a secure, online portal. Through frequent upgrades, the system now allows for easier data management and tracking. In both the baseline assessment and initial implementation year, codes were not directly traceable to the student. All data was matched through spreadsheets and individual files. While no data is lost, there seems to be incomplete data from the baseline year. The portal now allows for tracking codes to student-specific results, drastically simplifying the process and making the data more useful.

New Strategic Plan: For the academic year 2019, the university debuted a new strategic plan. This will be the third strategic plan since the QEP's implementation and its goals and student learning outcomes remain part of the university's overall priorities and goals. The goals of the QEP are maintained as a tenant of this 2019-2025 strategic plan and are mapped below:

| Strategic Priority | Priority Goal | QEP Goal | QEP SLO |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Student Preparedness | Develop students' global competence, which will contribute to increased placement rates | Goal 1: Develop students' global competence, which will contribute to increased placement rates | 1. Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the interconnectedness of global dynamics (issues, processes, trends, and systems). 2. Students will be able to apply knowledge of the interconnectedness of global dynamics. 3. Students will be able to view themselves as engaged citizens within an interconnected and diverse world. |
| Create an Inclusive Community | Create occasions for meaningful interactions across the university, including opportunities that enhance global awareness | Goal 2: Increase students' global learning and participation in travel/study abroad by cultivating an environment that supports, encourages, and enhances the QEP programs. | |
| Align Our Initiatives | Leverage the assets of the university for the economic, cultural, health and social benefit of the region | Goal 3: Insure the quality and sustainability of the new and innovative initiatives by effective and responsible leveraging of human, physical and financial | |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | | resources allocated and reallocated to the QEP | |
|--|--|--|--|

4. Conclusion

The QEP at A&M Commerce retains its original objective to better prepare students and graduates for an interconnected world. The information collected generates a picture of where the metaphorical needle has moved on student learning. A review of global courses, study abroad participation and student perceptions of their experiences allows the institution to see what students are learning and how it resonates. Overall, for those who get involved, learning outcomes are met and goals are achieved. Students recognized as Global Scholars have demonstrated the greatest gains in global competence, and the university is studying more closely what specific experiences most contribute toward development of global competence for these students.

While the QEP's scope remains broad, the campus continues to unify around a commitment to increase global competence. Throughout the past five years a QEP committee of 35-40 collaborators, the QEP Director and QEP Faculty Chair, have met 2-3 times per term to discuss and evaluate assessment findings. This team, which includes representatives from academic departments, student affairs and services and students, is pivotal to the QEP's continued momentum and success. Meetings focus on soliciting feedback, sharing information and making decisions about continued implementation. Information discussed in this report catalogs an overview of the data shared with this committee, university administration and the campus over the past five years further supporting the goal to cultivate an environment that supports, encourages, and enhances the QEP programs.

An additional element of the QEP's overall success is attributed to the ability of individual departments to shape their own globally-focused experiences. Because of the broad learning outcomes associated with the QEP, departments and programs determine what content prepares their students. In upcoming semesters, the QEP is expected to enhance students' learning by encouraging more consistent use of the ePortfolio tool and monitoring increased engagement as a retention strategy. Currently, the QEP is assisting other campus departments with implementing ideas on "micro-credentialing" or "badging" in regards to global competence, making programming part of a competency universally accessible to students, something already started through the creation of the Global Learners program.

While the rollout of the Global Scholars Program in fall 2016 was a large undertaking, much work remains to keep students invested in the process from first to third year. Additionally, discussions are taking place to move the Global Scholar application to sophomore year for increased travel abroad opportunities but with the recognition that this shortens students' opportunities for engagement/reflection on the campus environment. With the program housed in the university's Honors College, the promotion of the program and ability to recognize students for their work continues until 2022 with funding secured both for assessment and travel, meeting the goal to leverage the human, physical and financial resources allocated and reallocated to the QEP.

In the Fall of 2019, Texas A&M University- Commerce was awarded by the Global Competence Associates, creators of the Global Competence Aptitude Assessment, with the **Global Competence Organization** designation. This award recognizes the university's commitment to foster and measure the critical workplace competency of "global competence" among all A&M-Commerce students through our greater Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) objective of "Preparing Students for an Interconnected World." Also noted was a commendation for the holistic approach towards assessing every TAMUC student with the GCAA from orientation and again at various stages of education, up to graduation. "The A&M-Commerce commitment to global competence development—which benefits the graduates themselves as well as all workforce stakeholders—is a model for all institutions of higher education. We acknowledge your comprehensive efforts and we celebrate your work." (Christi Hunter, TAMUC GC Badge Letter, 25 Nov 2019.)

Overall, the QEP at A&M Commerce has been successful in creating and maintaining an environment where the development of global competence is possible. With plans to continue these efforts the hope is that each student who graduates from the university will be prepared to utilize their acquired knowledge and skills to effectively operate in an interconnected world. This mission and verbiage ties specifically to our institutional mission and

state initiatives to help our students label and explain skills which make them marketable. While much has been accomplished, there is more to be done to help students understand and articulate the value of global competence.
