

MACU Curriculum Services 2019-2022 Program Review

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Standard 1: Mission

Overview

The mission and vision of MACU Curriculum Services were developed by its staff members just this year (2022) due to this Program Review. The department was originally part of the Center for Learning and Technology but branched off in 2019. Since then, the department consisted of two instructional designers and a director, but since December 2021, we have added two instructional technologists—one full-time and one part-time. In late 2019, we began developing a set of evidence-based [MACU](#)

[Course Design Standards](#) that would serve to improve the quality of the course design process. Although we did not have a mission statement at the time, these standards were part of our first departmental WIGs.

Working backward from the course design standards and [standard operating procedures \(SOPs\)](#) that were also developed around the same time, it was a simple task to develop the department’s mission and vision. Additionally, it is part of our second nature to continuously refine our practices by researching and trying out new technologies and innovative best practices. In our second year (2020), one of the [departmental WIGs](#) focused on increasing faculty support through the development of a [knowledge base](#) and through training sessions. This newly added service was, therefore, added to the department’s mission statement.

1.1: Mission Statement

The mission of MACU Curriculum Services states, “MACU Curriculum Services exists to provide innovative teaching and learning experiences through quality curriculum development and faculty support so that MACU students successfully reach their educational goals.” This mission aligns with the [university’s mission](#) (to prepare “students thorough a Wesleyan perspective to create, collaborate, and innovate to solve local and global problems for the glory of God through Jesus Christ and the good of society”). Although Curriculum Services does not have a direct connection to students, we do have a direct impact on their learning experiences through curriculum development and faculty support. Further evidence of this is provided in Standards [2](#), [4](#), and [5](#).

One purpose the Curriculum Services program was created was to provide consistency among the design and delivery of courses in the College of Adult and Graduate Studies (CAGS). Offerings in CAGS are both on-ground and online, and although the delivery modes may differ, it is important that the students in both modalities receive the same content, the same

Mission: MACU Curriculum Services exists to provide innovative teaching and learning experiences through quality curriculum development and faculty support so that MACU students successfully reach their educational goals.

Vision: To provide college students everywhere learning experiences that are the most innovative, the most engaging, the most scholarly, and the most effective.

assessments, and the same services. Further, the students' experiences in navigating courses and engaging with their instructors, their classmates, and the content should be consistent from one course to the next. Curriculum Services incorporated research-based industry standards ([OSCQR Course Design Review Scorecard](#)) into the Course Design Standards we follow for designing courses and developing curriculum with that quality experience in mind.

In 2020, Curriculum Services began providing design services to the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) when they began offering online courses to concurrent enrollment students and students in the School of Teacher Education. Since then, additional CAS courses have been added, and they continue to grow as online learning becomes the mode of choice for many traditional students needing a more flexible schedule.

1.2: Summary Statement

Three years ago, MACU Curriculum Services changed its name and has since undergone several structural changes:

- added the Curriculum Services Director position,
- moved under the leadership of the Vice President for the College of Adult and Graduate Studies, and
- added two instructional technologists—one full-time and one part-time.

In addition to restructuring the program in 2019, Curriculum Services has completed a total of 302 course development projects, redesigned the MACU-adopted Learning Management System, improved the course development process, created a website and online knowledge base, fulfilled countless minor course revisions requested by faculty and staff, and successfully met five Wildly Important Goals.

As new academic programs are developed and continuous quality improvement in existing programs is maintained, we envision growth in the department over the next three years with the addition of at least one additional instructional design specialist. Currently, the Director performs instructional design duties in addition to their administrative responsibilities. Adding another instructional design specialist would allow for more focused leadership and expansion of services without losing the quality we have committed to maintain.

In 2019, the Curriculum Services team began expanding its services to include training for faculty—both full-time and adjunct instructors in both colleges. We created a [Curriculum Services website](#) that includes an ever-expanding [knowledge base](#), as well as began planning live training offerings, both in-person and via web conferencing. In 2021, we surveyed faculty to determine what topics they need the most and what delivery methods they prefer. The results of that survey have been and are still being used to develop new offerings. In the next three years, our goal is to not only provide a consistent portfolio of faculty support in all modes of delivery but to partner with MACU faculty in development and delivery of that support.

Another goal for the next three years is to be more intentional about the complete design process. The [ADDIE model of instructional design](#) consists of five phases: Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation. Our department has the first four phases

covered, but we have neglected the Evaluation phase. It is our intention to add that component into all areas of service. Below are ways we plan to do so:

- **Evaluate the effectiveness of our design processes and services.** After course development projects are completed, we will survey the Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) regarding their experiences. Questions will focus on the efficiency of the processes, project timeline, collaboration with the instructional design specialist, and communication with the department.
- **Evaluate the quality of the curriculum.** We will develop a communication plan whereby instructors provide timely feedback on a recently completed course while it is being taught. This will allow our department the opportunity to address issues promptly to mitigate the chances for problems—both present and future. We envision embedding a feedback form into every course to make it convenient for the instructors to give just-in-time feedback. We will also develop notification protocols and processes for handling issues that need immediate attention.
- **Evaluate the effectiveness of our faculty support services.** We will gather feedback from faculty regarding the [knowledge base](#) articles and training that we provide. We will also continuously maintain the existing content for these so that it does not get outdated or become irrelevant.
- **Make Data-Driven Decisions.** Every quarter, the Curriculum Services team will collaborate on ways we can improve our processes and services based on the results of the above-mentioned evaluations.

Standard 2: Program and Services

Overview

MACU Curriculum Services provides services in the area of curriculum development, instructional design, and faculty support. More specifically:

- We work alongside subject matter experts (SMEs) in developing master course content to be taught by all instructors assigned to the associated sections. All CAGS courses, and a few select CAS courses are developed using our department's services.
- We research and recommend instructional tools and strategies to be integrated into master courses according to research-based best practices for higher education. Consideration is given for the fact that these courses may be delivered in both on-ground and online modalities.
- The tools provided in the MACU-adopted Learning Management System (LMS) are considered when designing master courses; however, the LMS does not dictate the curriculum.
- All course content undergoes a multi-step quality assurance process involving several individuals: SME, instructional design specialist, program director and/or school chair, and instructional technologist.
- We provide faculty support through professional development training sessions, online tutorials, and [knowledge base](#) articles.
- We document and refine our processes, standards, and guidelines so that every staff member in the department delivers the same message and provides the same experience for all stakeholders on every project.

The program goals and objectives are rooted in its mission, which aligns with the mission of the institution. We operate with the ongoing goals of facilitating new program and new course development, maintaining course content as needed, and providing faculty support. Furthermore, every year, the team sets for itself two Wildly Important Goals (WIGs) that we commit to achieving in addition to our ongoing departmental goals.

2.1: Program and Services Goals

As previously mentioned, the ongoing goal of the Curriculum Services program is to facilitate new program development, new course development, existing course revision, and faculty support. Above and beyond those goals are the WIGs, which for the past three years have been as follows.

2019-2020: Develop and pilot a Quality Assurance system for both new program development and existing program enhancement. This WIG aligned with the University's Strategic Objective #5 (Resources).

2020-2021: (1) Expand its list of major service categories from five to six and (2) ensure CAGS master courses will go from having 0% to 50% of their grading rubrics in

the D2L format. The first WIG aligned with the University's Strategic Objective #1 (Customer Experience), and the second WIG aligned with the University's Strategic Objective #5 (Resources).

2021-2022: (1) Increase its knowledge base content by 25% and (2) reduce the number of master courses with no grading rubrics by 50%. The first WIG aligned with the University's Strategic Objective #1 (Customer Experience), and the second WIG aligned with the University's Strategic Objective #5 (Resources).

All three years, Curriculum Services met or exceeded our WIGs. We held [weekly meetings](#) during which we assigned to ourselves tasks that would help us to accomplish the objectives (lead measures) by their assigned benchmark dates. In the case that we required collaboration with other departments or personnel outside of Curriculum Services, we were careful to make reasonable requests and respect their time. The past two years' WIGs did involve program directors to either approve existing rubrics or write new ones for WIG #2. We had great success with those, which is likely due to the fact that digital rubrics made grading much more objective and efficient for them and their instructors. Furthermore, we communicated our progress and accomplishments with school chairs and faculty at their [regular meetings](#), and we informed faculty about the new rubrics by embedding a [notification](#) into the courses, along with a link to our [Knowledge Base](#) article that explains how to use rubrics.

2.2: Program Design, Structure, and Framework

In 2019, the position of Director was created and filled. Upon arrival, the Director was provided well documented processes and procedures, which was instrumental in the onboarding process. Since then, more formal, detailed [Standard Operating Procedures \(SOPs\)](#) were written and have been revised as needed. The SOPs are located in a Shared Google Drive, along with the design standards and resources, forms, templates, standard email verbiage, and standard content that are used within those processes.

Another important resource that has been created by and for Curriculum Services is a [workbook containing the CAGS structure with program names and their respective personnel](#). This is updated as structural and personnel changes are made, and it has been very useful in determining whom to go to for what.

2.3: Program Documentation

Documented in the Curriculum Services [SOPs](#) are multiple points of communication with stakeholders. This program accomplishes very little without interdepartmental collaboration. Design projects begin with communication from program directors [requesting our services](#). After the requests are approved, the director sends an [email](#) informing all parties who have a need to know, namely, the program director, the CAGS senior coordinator, the school chair, and all Curriculum Services personnel. The SME is then emailed an [agreement](#) and is asked to reply with their acceptance of the terms and conditions. Upon commencement of the project, the instructional design specialist, the program director (if applicable), and the SME begin collaborating. After the project is completed, the program director or school chair is asked to

[review](#) the course before it is built in the LMS. Textbook adoptions and course offerings are communicated as needed between the Curriculum Services team and the registrar, IT Services, and the CAGS senior coordinator. As the course is being taught, the instructor(s) communicate with their program directors about minor revisions that may be needed, and those messages are forwarded to Curriculum Services for implementation.

A [project tracking log](#) is kept and shared with all stakeholders so that the status of every project is readily available to them. Included with the tracking log is a course load schedule, which is shared with IT Services so that both they and Curriculum Services can record their progress on loading content into upcoming sections in the LMS.

Other curricular matters often require library services; therefore, frequent communication occurs between Curriculum Services and the librarian. Since 2019, the following projects have involved [collaboration](#) between the two:

- Accessing videos to embed into courses
- Adding library access buttons into the LMS
- Finding discipline-specific content for courses
- Embedding EBSCO Discovery links into course content in the LMS
- Ensuring copyright laws and Fair Use Doctrine are properly followed

Standard 3: Student Learning, Development, and Success

Overview

Standard 3 does not apply to MACU Curriculum Services because it is not an academic program; however, it does play an indirect role in student learning, development, and success through the services that it provides. Details are addressed in [Standard 6](#).

3.1: Program Curriculum Map

Not applicable.

3.2: Assessment of Student Learning and Development

Not applicable.

3.3: Program Contribution to Student Learning, Development, and Success

Not applicable.

Standard 4: Assessment

Overview

Assessment is a regular practice in the Curriculum Services program. As this program is highly service-oriented, the needs of our constituents and the effectiveness of our work are what drive our short- and long-term goals. Our assessment culture, plans, processes, and outcomes have come a long way since the department was created in 2019; however, there is still more to accomplish.

4.1: Establishing a Culture of Assessment

The culture of assessment within MACU Curriculum Services was established primarily through university-mandated assessment practices, such as identifying annual WIGs, conducting performance appraisals, and analyzing retention data to report on new program objectives each quarter. In addition to those, however, additional internal assessment processes have emerged—some more formal and intentional, and others more informal and spontaneous.

4.2: Assessment Plan and Process

Assessing the effectiveness of the Curriculum Services program and the accomplishment of its goals has been and/or is achieved through the following means.

- **Faculty professional development survey** – In 2021, MACU Curriculum Services developed a [survey of professional development needs for all faculty](#), both full- and part-time. The [survey results](#) provided valuable data regarding training topics faculty need the most, as well as the modes of delivery for training that they prefer.
- **WIG Meetings and Scoreboards** – The Curriculum Services team meets once per week to assess progress toward WIG achievement and records their progress in weekly [WIG meeting notes](#). During the meetings, each staff member provides an update on how they met their assigned objective from the previous week, and then they assign themselves new tasks for the upcoming week. Over time, the team updates the [WIG scoreboard](#) to reflect movement toward the lead and lag measures.
- **Knowledge Base article request form** – The [Curriculum Services Knowledge Base](#) is where faculty can access training in the form of help documentation called “articles” for quick reference. At the bottom of the articles list is a [link to a form](#) where faculty can request other training topics to be added.
- **Course development quality checkpoints** - The course development process includes an embedded system of checks and balances through peer evaluations. By the time that a newly developed or revised course is offered, it has been reviewed by at least five individuals: the Subject Matter Expert (SME), the Instructional Designer, the Program Director or School Chair, the Instructional Technologist who builds the course in the LMS, and the Instructional Technologist who loads the content into the course

section. After the course is offered, End of Course evaluations often reveal discrepancies. Data collected along the way not only provide information on how the course content should be revised, but also how course development processes could improve.

- **Continuous Improvement Discussions** – The Curriculum Services team meets every two weeks to discuss current projects and issues that they experienced. Shared experiences are considered useful data for assessing the efficiency of processes and effectiveness of policies. Meeting notes are recorded by the Director and [saved in the team's shared drive](#). Staff members are tagged on assigned action items in the meeting notes.
- **Staff performance appraisals** – Performance appraisals are performed on a regular basis to provide not only accountability to the team but to raise both parties' awareness of the employees' professional goals, priorities, and growth opportunities. Since 2019, four [evaluations have been completed](#) with three staff members. The two remaining staff members that joined the team in early 2022 have not yet been involved in a performance evaluation but will be by the end of the year.

Missing from these assessment plans and processes are two additional measures that we look forward to implementing in the next three years. The first is to streamline just-in-time reporting of curricular issues. Currently, when instructors identify problems in the curriculum, they may or may not report it to their program directors, and if they do, the methods for program directors to report them to Curriculum Services are all different. Our plan is to create a form that is highly visible and convenient for instructors to report the issue as soon as they encounter it. A second measure is to evaluate the course development process by surveying SMEs at the end of a course development project. This will allow us to further refine our processes, as well as improve communication between designers and the SMEs with whom they worked.

4.3: Reporting Results and Implementing Improvement

The results of each assessment method listed in [Section 4.2](#) are used to refine processes and enact changes for improving the teaching and learning experience for faculty and students. The 2020 Faculty professional development survey was instrumental in providing direction in the expansion of the program's services. The results offered helpful insight regarding the topics faculty wanted to learn more about, as well as what method they preferred for learning them, and we have since used those insights to develop and accomplish our annual WIGs. The [2020-2021](#) WIG resulted in our development of the [Curriculum Services Knowledge Base](#) for just-in-time training and support through well-organized help documentation. The [2021-2022](#) WIG included measures to increase that knowledge base, resulting in a very robust set of articles. Our upcoming [2022-23](#) WIG based on faculty support will focus on offering other methods of training and support, such as webinars and on-ground sessions.

Many other decisions are made during the bi-weekly Curriculum Services team meetings. Each team member is provided a spot in the agenda where they are asked to share the projects that

they have been working on and issues they have encountered. On an annual basis, the Director also shares [data relevant to course design derived from EoC \(End of Course\) Evaluations](#). These discussions inevitably reveal the need for change, such as a process flaw, a gap in the flow of communication among stakeholders, or a resource that is needed. The diverse skillsets possessed by the Curriculum Services team members allow for effective problem-solving and execution in most every case under their purview. The decisions that have come out of those meetings in the past three years are too numerous to list, but they are documented in the [meeting notes](#).

Communication to stakeholders regarding WIG progress, new support services, and other data-driven decisions made in the Curriculum Services program are communicated to faculty and staff as appropriate. Decisions that affect internal processes are merely reflected in the [SOPs](#) or other course development resource documentation, which may or may not be visible to stakeholders. The department's [WIG scoreboard](#), on the other hand, is highly visible; it is hung in the hallway where the team members' offices are located, so anyone walking through will see our progress. Additionally, the Director provides [updates in faculty and chair meetings](#).

Standard 5: Access, Diversity, and Inclusion

Overview

Online learning provides students access to learning with no boundaries of time and space, which reduces barriers that would normally prevent them from obtaining higher education. However, online learning also requires digital resources and means of assessment, which presents additional barriers for students with different abilities. MACU Curriculum Services has developed both instructional design standards and support services that work together to minimize those technical accessibility hindrances, thereby providing equal opportunity learning for all students.

5.1: Inclusive Educational and Work Environments

Curriculum Services provides an inclusive work environment for all personnel and students. While we do not hire faculty or recruit, advise, or enroll students, we do take proactive measures through curriculum development to ensure no one is prevented from accessing and using the digital content in the online learning environment. Technical accessibility is partially addressed below in Section 5.2 and in greater detail in [Standard 9](#).

5.2: Implementing Aspects of Access, Diversity, and Inclusion

At the heart of the MACU Curriculum Services program is online learning, which organically meets students' needs for a flexible schedule; the learning environment is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. By utilizing our expertise in online instructional design, we facilitate the efficient, timely creation of online learning opportunities. As a majority of instructional personnel at MACU are adjunct faculty, developing an online course that meets the program outcomes and is consistent with other offerings in the programs would be a challenge. Curriculum Services eliminates the need for individual instructors to create their own course content, allowing them to focus their time and energy on instruction instead.

In addition to bearing the load of course development, Curriculum Services follows [Universal Design for Learning guidelines](#) and [WCAG \(Web Content Accessibility Guidelines\)](#) to ensure course content is accessible and equally useful to all learners. Not all courses contain 100% accessible content, but due diligence is being practiced to proactively address most of them. An entire section of the [MACU Course Design Standards](#) is dedicated to accessibility, team members remain current on accessibility practices through professional development opportunities, and accessibility tips are passed on to faculty through training and support.

Standard 6: Leadership, Management, and Supervision

Overview

Four Curriculum Services employees are led by the Director who works alongside them in the accomplishment of the program's responsibilities. Decisions are based on academic program requirements, faculty support needs, and student success and retention data. The team also collaborates on its annual strategic planning initiatives, which are aligned with the MACU strategic objectives and accreditation criteria.

6.1: Leadership and Supervision

MACU Curriculum Services is a team of two instructional designers and two instructional technologists led by the Director (see [Organization Chart](#)). In addition to leading the team, the current Director, Christie Smith, serves the institution as a member of the Grants subcommittee, is a co-chair of the HLC Criterion 4 committee, and leads a CORE-group for MCORE training. She also provides guidance to the LMS Administrator and collaborates with Information Technology Services on the procurement, testing, and implementation of other various instructional technology tools.

The Director of Curriculum Services is required by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to submit [retention reports](#) showing the use of data to inform decisions regarding program goals and continuous improvement. Excluding internally collected assessment data explained in the [Standard 4](#) section, [EoC \(End of Course\) Evaluations](#) results are the primary sources of institutional data that drive decision making for the program. On the EoCs, questions 8, 9, 10, and 11 directly pertain to items that Curriculum Services is able to affect; therefore, those results are extracted and analyzed to find patterns of similar concern. Those patterns are then prioritized based on how often they occurred in student responses. Finally, the Curriculum Services team discusses the data at team meetings and determines new practices that have the potential for improving the student experience in future terms.

The Director is a working manager who shares instructional design and WIG responsibilities along with the other team members. Leadership is accomplished through side-by-side collaboration, delegation, project management, and both internal and external staff development. Team members' [accomplishments](#) are acknowledged by the Director and/or other MACU employees in both informal and formal venues, such as celebration lunches for work anniversaries, mentions at faculty and chair meetings, introductions at the annual awards ceremony, and Remarkable Employee Award announcements.

6.2: Strategic Planning

The Director of Curriculum Services participates in MACU's Strategic planning initiative each year by completing a [Strategic Planning Workbook](#). This workbook consists of (1) the

program's WIGS, which are identifiably aligned to both HLC criterion and MACU strategic objectives, (2) the resources needed to accomplish the program's WIGS, (3) each staff member's completion of professional development activities, (4) images of the program's WIG Scoreboard showing progression from start to finish, and (5) a summary of the program's goal accomplishment at the end of the year.

The goals included in the past three Curriculum Services Strategic Planning workbooks have always included a faculty support component, which were discussed in the [Standard 2](#) section. Below is a list of ways in which faculty support for improving teaching and learning has been offered as a result of Strategic Planning:

- [Curriculum Services Knowledge Base](#)
- [Professional Development in Faculty meetings](#)
- [Professional Development at the 2021 CAGS Faculty Gathering](#)
- [Professional Development at Adjunct Faculty Meetings](#)

Standard 7: Human Resources

Overview

The recruitment, hiring, and support systems for Curriculum Services personnel ensure a fair, inclusive, and positive work environment. All employees possess the education and experience needed to perform their duties well, and they are provided multiple opportunities for professional development in order to remain current and contribute to the overall mission.

7.1: Staffing and Support

MACU Curriculum Services team consists of one Director, two Instructional Design Specialists, and two Instructional Technologists (one full-time and one part-time). All staff members hold degrees and possess relevant professional experience that qualifies them to perform their duties. Furthermore, because the program requires expertise in a highly technical field (online teaching and learning design), staff members are expected to participate regularly in professional development activities to stay up to date in the field. They accomplish this through formal training (webinars and conferences), as well as informal, on-the-job training. In addition to learning skills and concepts that are directly relevant to their job responsibilities, they also participate in university-based compliance training (e.g., [FERPA](#)), annual campus-wide [strategic planning exercises](#), and [MCORE/GiANT Worldwide Leadership training](#).

7.2: Employment Practices

Curriculum Services personnel are hired and evaluated according to the standard practices set forth by the Human Resources office. [Recruitment](#) is achieved through the [Paycor Recruiting](#) system, and typically, a committee of five to eight MACU staff members reviews applications and résumés to determine whether a candidate is invited for an interview. Subsequently, the same committee conducts the interview. Interviewees for Instructional Design Specialist positions are also asked to give an instructional demonstration before the interview committee.

Every three years, members of the Curriculum Services team submit updated professional résumés, and every year they submit lists of professional development opportunities that they have completed. These items are kept on file in the Director's office, and the professional development information is also submitted in the program's strategic planning workbook at the end of May every year.

[Job titles and descriptions](#) are reviewed and revised as necessary to meet the changing needs of the program. For example, in December 2021, the two instructional technologists (formerly LMS Specialists) were moved from Information Technology (IT) Services to the Curriculum Services team, and their titles and job descriptions were rewritten to better align with their new roles and responsibilities.

All personnel that report to the Director of Curriculum Services participate in an [annual performance appraisal](#) on or near the date of their work anniversary. The current appraisal

system is entitled [MACU Moments](#). The MACU Human Resources department reminds the director and staff member that an appraisal is coming due, and the staff member begins by completing a self-reflection and planning form. The director then reviews those sections and discusses them with the employee, summarizes their comments, and submits the signed copy to HR. As of the date of this review, both instructional design specialists have completed annual performance appraisals, and the instructional technologists will complete theirs by the end of 2022.

7.3: Paraprofessional Personnel

MACU Curriculum Services does not currently employ paraprofessional personnel; however, we have discovered the need for paraprofessionals in the future for tasks such as video captioning, data entry, and reporting.

Standard 8: Collaboration and Communication

Overview

MACU Curriculum Services collaborates with multiple constituent groups across the institution for both its regular, day-to-day operations, as well as special projects. Decisions are rarely made without first obtaining and considering data and advisement from other individuals and/or departments. Timely and substantive communication is essential to this collaboration; therefore, we use multiple methods of communication with our constituents. We also work to improve collaboration for students and faculty through continuous improvement of curriculum design and placement of tools in the Learning Management System.

8.1: Collaboration

As the name implies, MACU Curriculum Services is a service. We provide course development services to academic programs, training and support to faculty, and advisement as needed to various other groups regarding teaching, learning, curriculum, and technology. Below are detailed explanations of how Curriculum Services collaborates with each group.

- **Academic Affairs and Institutional Effectiveness**

As curriculum development requires alignment with accreditation standards, outcome assessment, and teaching and learning strategies, it is essential to collaborate with the Academic Affairs and Institutional Effectiveness offices. Both are consulted regularly regarding decisions on policies and practices that affect course design and technologies, such as Subject Matter Expert (SME) credentialing, course outcomes, and [instructional hour equivalencies](#) between on-ground and online course offerings. For convenient recordkeeping, this information is recorded in the [course design template](#) for each course that is developed. The Director of Institutional Effectiveness (IE) also provides consultation and accountability in the areas of data collection, analysis, and reporting. Implementation of our program's data-informed goals is made possible through collaboration with IE. For instance, we gather student retention data provided by IE, analyze it with the help of IE, and discuss ways that we can contribute to improving future results. Another example is in the area of aligning program outcomes and course objectives: in 2021, we collaborated with IE on how we can best communicate that alignment in the [CAGS syllabus template](#), and in 2022-2023, we will begin streamlining the assessment process from a [cumbersome, manual system](#) to a more [automated alignment and reporting process inside the LMS](#).

- **Program Directors**

As program directors continually work to maintain the relevancy and freshness of curriculum in their programs' courses, they receive assistance from Curriculum Services. They appoint a Subject Matter Expert (SME) to develop the curriculum, [request](#) a course development service from our program, advise the SME and instructional designer throughout the process, and then provide a [final review](#) of the curriculum before it is

finalized in the learning management system. Program Directors also collaborate with Curriculum Services as they provide training and support for their faculty—from passing on important announcements and how-to documentation to requesting presentations at their faculty meetings.

- **Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)**

SMEs are appointed by program directors to develop curriculum alongside a Curriculum Services instructional design specialist. They confirm their [formal agreement](#) to collaborate and complete the project by a certain due date, and they are paid a [stipend](#) for their work, provided it is not part of their regular job expectations. Curriculum Services facilitates the process from the initial agreement, to collaborating on course development, to closing out the project and paying the SME.

- **Deans and Department Chairs**

Curriculum Services consults regularly with deans and department chairs on all course development and learning environment decisions. The Director attends bi-weekly [one-on-one meetings with the Dean of CAGS](#) and monthly [CAGS Department Chair meetings](#) to discuss course development projects, provide the latest program news, and consult on any decisions that require their approval. The CAS Dean and Chairs are also consulted when necessary. These are less frequent because there are much fewer CAS programs that utilize our design services.

- **Faculty**

Curriculum Services provides training and support for faculty in various ways. Faculty members request technological assistance (usually regarding learning management system tools and other instructional software) from the Instructional Technologists through IT tickets, emails, and phone calls. Additionally, we attend monthly CAS and CAGS [faculty meetings](#) and special events such as the annual [Faculty Gatherings](#) to provide the latest program news and training presentations as needed.

- **IT Services**

IT Services employs one Learning Management System (LMS) administrator who works very closely with Curriculum Services because the LMS drives much of the teaching and learning experience for faculty and students. In addition to daily interactions regarding questions and technology support issues that arise, the LMS administrator attends all [Curriculum Services team meetings](#). This is essential for instructional designers and technologists to understand how their decisions and duties translate into the learning environment. Additionally, as the learning management system is updated once per month, the LMS administrator provides valuable information to the Curriculum Services team regarding upcoming changes and their effects on design, development, training, and support.

- **Other Constituents**

Curriculum Services provides reporting, course development and design information, training and support, and advice to other constituents as needed. For instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Curriculum Services attended Fall 2020 Schedule Options

Subcommittee [meetings](#) to provide input on ways to provide instruction at a distance to students enrolled in on-ground courses.

8.2: Communication

Fostering effective relationships with constituents listed above requires a high degree of communication that is timely and relevant to their need to know. Such communication occurs through email, Google Apps, web conferencing, live meeting and event presentations, the [Curriculum Services website](#), and the [Learning Management System news feed](#).

Another, less direct yet highly relevant area of communication on which Curriculum Services facilitates is faculty-to-student and student-to-student communication. Although we do not collaborate directly with students, we do make it possible for faculty and students to collaborate more efficiently and effectively. One way this is accomplished is through course design. We strive to provide multiple means of interaction in the learning activities that we design, including but not limited to asynchronous discussions, group projects, and peer reviews. A few examples of how we have facilitated the improvement of communication in the online learning environment are explained below:

- In 2019, a [full redesign of the D2L Brightspace LMS](#) was completed through collaboration with the LMS administrator. This design provided more intuitive navigation and eliminated confusing duplication of tools.
- In 2020, [digital grading rubrics were introduced to faculty](#) and began being added to courses in the LMS, providing more efficient, substantive, and timely feedback to students by faculty.
- In 2021, [Library tools were added to the LMS](#) in locations that made it very convenient for students and faculty to access Library Services. Ask the Library, EBSCO Discovery, and Research Guides buttons were added to the LMS landing page; and later, an EBSCO learning tool was added to course content editors, providing convenient searching and embedding of library resources at the exact point of need.
- In 2022, the [QuickEval tool](#) was added to all courses in the LMS to provide faculty a more visible way of determining what needs to be graded and a more efficient way of getting to those submissions. This facilitated timely grading and feedback to students.

Standard 9: Ethics, Law, and Policy

Overview

MACU Curriculum Services staff are highly cognizant of the many policies, guidelines, laws, and ethical practices required of them as they perform their duties. In addition to having the expertise necessary for a job well done, we must be educated about legal and ethical obligations and communicate them to our constituents as we work alongside them.

9.1: Ethical Statements and Practice

There are many legal and ethical obligations that MACU employees are required to uphold, but Curriculum Services most frequently and directly works to impact the following: the [Digital Millennium Copyright Act](#) (DMCA), [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#) (FERPA), [Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act](#), and the application of Christian values in ethical issues as they relate to the [MACU Statement of Faith](#).

- **Copyright**

With curriculum development, we are expected to ensure Copyright law is not violated. This is an issue with (1) embedding digital resources into course content, (2) linking to other resources that were created or obtained illegally, and (3) plagiarism. We frequently advise faculty on the limitations of the [Fair Use Act](#). In 2022, Curriculum Services began talks with the MACU Librarian regarding the purchase of a possible license from the [Copyright Clearance Center](#) that would allow faculty and SMEs to legally use copyright-protected resources in their courses without being required to obtain permission. The Librarian and Vice President of Academic Affairs expect to purchase this license in the next budget year as funds allow.

Further, plagiarism on the part of student work is monitored through a subscription to [Turnitin](#), a plagiarism and detection service that is coordinated through our program in conjunction with IT Services. Course design also includes adding Turnitin plagiarism detection to high-stakes assessments where necessary.

- **Privacy**

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requires all employees to protect the privacy of our students. As required by the institution, the Curriculum Services employees have all completed [FERPA compliance training](#) and are, therefore, highly cognizant of its impact on the program's standard operating procedures. All online courses that are developed through the MACU Curriculum Services program are designed solely for delivery through the institution's adopted learning management system and content provider sites—all of which require student and faculty authentication, thereby protecting their privacy. Assessments are designed for electronic submission via tools that allow only the instructor and student to view the student's work and the instructor's feedback except in cases whereby student groups

collaborate on projects, peers review one another's work, or classmates discuss topics in course discussion forums. No assessments are designed to force students to submit identifiable work via email, public site posts, etc., unless it is understood and agreed to by all stakeholders ahead of time.

- **Accessibility**

Digital course content is vetted for accessibility by Curriculum Services prior to using it in the courses they design. The program included digital accessibility as one of the criteria that must be met in their [design standards](#), as it is imperative that students with disabilities are provided the same learning opportunities as those with no disabilities. A few examples are:

- Captions must be provided on audio and video content for students with hearing impairments.
- Text alternatives must be provided on graphic images for students with visual impairments.
- Where varied text and/or background colors must be used, they must have high contrast for students with visual impairments.
- Keyboard navigation options must be available and functional for students with visual and/or mobile disabilities.

These and many other standards are defined by the latest [WCAG guidelines](#) set as mandatory by the federal government. While we attempt to format content to be as accessible as possible to people of all abilities, we have a way to go in making it 100% compliant. This is an ongoing initiative that requires our continued attention and additional resource allocation.

- **Christian Values and Ethics**

When developing courses alongside SMEs, Curriculum Services normally requires [Scripture references](#) to be placed at the beginning of each weekly module. Further, we encourage the application of Christian values into activities and assessments that deal with ethical dilemmas. We realize that many authentic assessments requiring application of learned concepts may not lend themselves to direct spiritual application; however, where there is a place for ethical issue discussion, there is likely also a place for the application of Christian values.

9.2: Communication of Ethical and Legal Obligations

The Curriculum Services personnel remain current on legal and ethical obligations through professional development and employee meetings so that they can pass the information on to its constituents. Communicating is accomplished through our [course design standards](#), the [SME guide](#), and training and support. As mentioned above, the course design standards delineate copyright and accessibility compliance. The SME guide, which provides detailed explanations and stipulations for writing course content, also mentions these legal and ethical

issues in the context of where they would normally be considered in the process. Below are a few examples of how training and support have addressed these issues:

- In 2020, the Curriculum Services Director presented a series on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) at monthly CAS faculty meetings and later posted the [presentation resources](#) on the [Curriculum Services Knowledge Base](#). UDL is a model for improving teaching and learning for all learners, regardless of ability.
- [Best practices for complying with accessibility laws](#) are provided on the [Curriculum Services Knowledge Base](#).
- Information regarding [Turnitin plagiarism detection](#) is provided in the [Curriculum Services Knowledge Base](#).
- Faculty have consulted with our team on multiple occasions regarding ways to make their content more accessible, how to prevent plagiarism, and whether the resources they are using are within copyright compliance.

Standard 10: Financial Resources

Overview

The Curriculum Services program possesses a healthy budget for accomplishing its mission, as well as planning for future growth. We also safeguard the funds we are provided by using low- to no-cost resources and sharing with our constituents similar ways to be frugal yet effective.

10.1: Funding

MACU Curriculum Services is not a revenue-generating program; rather, it contributes to the provision of quality course offerings and, therefore, can potentially affect student retention and word-of-mouth advertising. The largest allocations in the [Curriculum Services budget](#) for the past three years have, consequently, been directed toward resources that contribute to quality, namely personnel salaries, professional development, technology, and SME stipends.

- **Personnel Salaries** – The four full-time and one part-time personnel allows Curriculum Services to effectively manage 10-12 course design projects per month, along with other initiatives such as WIG tasks, faculty training and support, and other institutional service. Rarely do we exceed the number of maximum projects in a given month, but if we do, the team finds ways to meet demand without sacrificing quality.
- **Professional Development** – As described in the [Standard 7](#) section, Curriculum Services personnel must continually update their knowledge and skills to stay current in the latest instructional design and technology practices; therefore, funds for relevant professional conferences and association dues are a significant part of the program's budget.
- **Technology** – As most of the work completed by Curriculum Services involves online collaboration, communication, and creation of content, quality technology tools are necessary. Creation of content by SMEs involves document and web page development and audio/video recording, editing, and captioning. In recent years, [hardware and software](#) have been purchased to meet these needs, but Curriculum Services has not been required to pay for some hardware. IT Services has graciously funded hardware needs such a monitor mounting bracket for a common meeting space, a laptop, a Mac workstation, and an external microphone for audio/video recording.
- **SME Stipends** – Next to personnel salaries, stipends for Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) are the largest line item in the Curriculum Services budget. Program Directors and full-time faculty in CAGS are expected to develop courses in their programs as part of their normal position responsibilities; however, more course design projects are needed than those individuals are able to manage. This results in the need to contract with other SMEs for the completion of many projects. Roughly half of all projects are completed by full-time faculty, leaving the other half for part-time SMEs (see [breakdown here](#)).

Curriculum Services recently increased the [amounts that they pay SMEs](#) by approximately 50% to \$300-\$600 per credit hour, depending on the complexity of the project (new course development vs. major or minor revisions) and the degree level of the course (undergraduate vs. graduate).

10.2: Financial Planning and Management

For the past three years, the Curriculum Services program has been able to keep expenses lower than the total amount allocated. The 2021-2022 expenses were much closer to the allocated amount, which is likely due to the increase in SME stipend rates. While the program attempts to forecast expenses for each new fiscal year, it proves difficult due to the many variables that determine the costs of course development: number of course development projects that will be requested by program directors, complexity of the project, level of the course being developed, and whether the assigned SME will be paid or not. Another consideration that is difficult to plan for is new program development. While we know that one or two new programs will be developed in a year, we may not know how many new courses will need to be developed or how many existing courses will need to be redesigned.

The program has been blessed, however, by the institution's approval of our budget requests for the past three years. This is due to MACU's priority for maintaining a strong online learning program that is of high quality and meets accreditation standards.

Being responsible stewards of the program's funds is important, and we are pleased to report that we often find alternatives to some potentially price-prohibitive options. Where some software applications would improve the efficiency of program processes and procedures, we have found comparable applications at no cost. We also provide a [list of free educational technology tools](#) in the [Curriculum Services Knowledge Base](#) for faculty to consider. Further, we have been able to take advantage of free or low-cost virtual training opportunities, which has significantly reduced our professional development expenses, and because we are able to pass that knowledge on to our faculty, they may also reduce their professional development expenses.

Standard 11: Technology

Overview

Technology is the resource that is in highest demand in Curriculum Services, and it is sufficiently provided through both the IT Services department and our own program's budget allocations. The hardware and software provided not only allow for our personnel to perform their job duties while complying with institution policies and legal obligations, but they also make it possible for us to support other programs in their use of technology.

11.1: Systems Management

Curriculum Services is fortunate to be able to operate almost solely with the technology that is provided by IT Services. With the exception of a few software applications that we recently purchased from our budget for content creation (Camtasia, Respondus, and Adobe Acrobat Pro), IT Services has covered most all other technology expenses: employee workstations with two monitors, a departmental laptop with external microphone, the Google Apps suite, Zoom, Panopto, Turnitin, and the D2L Brightspace learning management system. Because IT Services funded these technologies, they are also responsible for managing the inventory and maintaining subscriptions and licenses. As mentioned in [Standard 10](#), we are able to operate at a low cost in the area of software applications, and that is largely due to our ability to integrate free browser extensions and other free cloud-based applications to efficiently perform most of our duties:

- [Grammarly](#) Extension – Proofreading for spelling and grammar
- [Data Director](#) Extension – Form processing automation
- [Screencastify](#) Extension – video recording, editing, and sharing
- [AirTable](#) – cloud-based data management and reporting
- [WAVE](#) Extension – web content accessibility checker

Also mentioned in previous standards is our service to faculty in the form of training and support. When possible, we partner with IT Services to provide [knowledge base articles](#), training, and presentations to help support the technology they provide. Furthermore, in order to provide such support, our personnel must first learn the technology, which is made possible through either on-the-job, self-directed learning or train-the-trainer options when provided by the vendors.

11.2: User Engagement

The previously mentioned software applications are used to accomplish our mission in various ways. The most frequent uses are explained below.

Google Apps

Google Apps in general are used to store, share, and collaborate with our team and other departments. More specifically, a number of these apps are used on a regular basis as part of the program's SOPs:

- Each course design project has its own **Google Drive** folder that contains two **Google Doc templates**—a [Course Design template](#) and a [Rubric template](#). These are completed by the SME and instructional design specialist as they work together on a course. Other files that will be used in the course are created and/or stored in the folder as well.
- A **Google Sheet workbook** is used to track the progress of all course design projects and the loading of master course content into the learning management system sections before each new term begins.
- A **Shared Google Drive** is used internally by Curriculum Services personnel for housing meeting notes, template files, standard verbiage and course content, design resources, and many other essential files for completing daily tasks as well as special projects.
- **Google Sites** is used to deliver the [Curriculum Services website](#), which contains an extensive [knowledge base](#) of articles created in Google Docs.
- **YouTube** is used to house audio/video files created by Curriculum Services and SMEs. Minor editing and captioning tools make it possible to customize the videos and share them in both our [knowledge base](#) and courses that we design.
- **Google Hangouts and Meet** are used to communicate daily among staff members as well as with personnel in other departments. These tools facilitate quick conversations where email and phone calls are less efficient, and they provide screen sharing, file sharing, and video when necessary. Regular team meetings are held here as well because we have two attendees that work remotely.
- **Google Forms** are used to gather data from our constituents, from [suggestions for our knowledge base](#) from faculty to [requests for course development](#) from program directors.

Camtasia

Camtasia is a video recording and editing application that is used for [knowledge base articles](#), demos of new tools, and course content. The editing features are much more robust than what is available in YouTube; therefore, Camtasia is where most editing occurs before the video is uploaded to YouTube or other streaming sites.

Respondus

Respondus is used to create and edit test banks and quizzes for use in D2L Brightspace, MACU's adopted learning management system. This software is much more user-friendly than the quiz and test bank tools in D2L, and it provides multiple formats for both printing and importing into D2L.

Adobe Acrobat Pro

Adobe Acrobat Pro is used to create, combine, and edit PDF files for use in courses. This application is useful when it is important to protect document contents from being edited, or

when the layout must appear the same for all audiences regardless of the fonts and other printable elements installed on their computers.

D2L Brightspace

D2L Brightspace is the learning management system from which all online courses are delivered and in which content for most blended and on-ground courses is provided. Curriculum Services designs courses and develops course content for use in D2L, reviews and edits content in D2L, and troubleshoots D2L issues for faculty and staff. All Curriculum Services personnel must have advanced D2L knowledge in order to perform their duties.

11.3: Compliance and Information Security

Compliance with MACU's information security policies and other legal obligations is made possible with several applications that Curriculum Services utilizes. The Google Apps suite allows us to prevent unauthorized access by sharing files only with the individuals whose job it is to see them. Further, D2L Brightspace, Adobe Acrobat Pro, YouTube, and Camtasia provide ways to improve the accessibility of digital content for all readers. Brightspace and Acrobat Pro have accessibility checking tools, and YouTube and Camtasia provide for audio and video captioning.

Standard 12: Facilities and Infrastructure

Overview

MACU Curriculum Services personnel are provided workspaces and equipment sufficient for successful completion of their responsibilities. The size and location of on-site employee workspaces are conducive to close collaboration with one another and their constituents, and technology allows for close collaboration with the remote employee.

12.1: Design and Use of Facilities and Equipment

Curriculum Services has three employees who work locally and one who works remotely. All on-site employees office on the [same floor of Kennedy Hall](#)—three of whom are located adjacent to one another, and the other within just a few yards. Collaboration, however, is made possible among **all five** team members via web conferencing and chat technologies. When the on-site employees do require in-person meetings, the Director’s office has sufficient space with a table, four chairs, and a wall-mounted monitor for screen sharing.

12.2: Workspace

A computer and two monitors are provided each full-time employee in the program. A shared printer is located just outside the instructional design specialists’ offices. Every employee in the program has a workspace that is sufficiently conducive to productive and efficient work. The instructional design specialist offices have large desks with plenty of storage and a chair and desk space for visitors. This is helpful when SMEs come to collaborate on course development projects. The on-site instructional technologist is located in a cubicle but has the same amount of desk space that the design specialists have, except for the extra visitor space. This cubicle setup is not ideal because it is a high-traffic area with many distractions; therefore, finding a more private area for this employee is a future goal.

Most resources needed by staff members are digital and stored and/or accessed online in a shared Google Drive as described in [Standard 11](#); therefore, we do not require file cabinets or multiple bookshelves.

12.3: Equipment Acquisition

The Curriculum Services budget includes allocation for capital expenditures such as furniture and large equipment. Although we have not used those funds in the past three years, they are available to sustain the program and allow for growth when needed.