Governors State
U N I V E R S I T Y

ASSURANCE ARGUMENT

REPORT TO THE HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 26 & 27, 2024

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Report to the Higher Learning Commission

Published 2024

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Governors State
UNIVERSITY

MISSION

1: MISSION

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

1.A - Core Component 1.A

The institution's mission is articulated publicly and operationalized throughout the institution.

1. The mission was developed through a process suited to the context of the institution.

2. The mission and related statements are current and reference the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development and religious or cultural purpose.

3. The mission and related statements identify the nature, scope and intended constituents of the higher education offerings and services the institution provides.

4. The institution's academic offerings, student support services and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.

5. The institution clearly articulates its mission through public information, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans or institutional priorities.

Argument

Response

The University's mission statement is clear, publicized and focused on the educational offerings in support of the public good. It also reflects a commitment to and awareness of the global world in which the University functions and the constituents it serves.

Introduction

GovState uses its mission statement to reflect its identity within the educational and campus communities. The language and commitments of the mission statement are used to inform academic programs, student support services, budgets and strategic directions. The responses in this narrative illustrate the extent to which the mission statement captures GovState's role in fostering meaningful actions and relationships that foster the public good.

1: MISSION

Narrative

[Governors State University's (GovState) mission statemen](#)t, *"Governors State University is committed to offering an exceptional and accessible education that prepares students with the knowledge, skills and confidence to succeed in a global society,"* guides all its actions. To further help in decision-making, [GovState's Strategic Plan, Strategy 2025](#), identifies six core values that guide GovState's actions and decision-making processes:

- **Invest in Student Success** through a commitment to mentoring and a deliberate university focus on student achievement of academic, professional and personal goals.
- **Provide Opportunity and Access** to a first-class public education to residents of our surrounding communities and all those traditionally underserved by higher education.
- **Serve as an Economic Catalyst** for the citizens of the State of Illinois and our larger Midwest region, so that our communities grow and flourish.
- **Prepare Stewards of our Future** to thrive in the global economy, to contribute to ongoing innovative research and to serve as stewards of the environment.
- **Demonstrate Inclusiveness and Diversity** to encourage acceptance of wide-ranging perspectives among students, staff, faculty and members of the broader community.
- **Promote Quality of Life**, which encompasses civic, personal, professional and cultural growth.

GovState believes that by following its mission and core values it achieves its vision of *creating an intellectually stimulating public square, serve as an economic catalyst for the region, and lead as a model of academic excellence, innovation, diversity and responsible citizenship.*

1.A.1.

GovState's mission, vision, and values were developed through a collaborative process involving an internal steering committee, the University community, and Board of Trustees as part of the previous Vision 2020 strategic plan development. Vision 2020 was adopted by the Board of Trustees at its [February 27, 2015 meeting](#). The Board of Trustees re-affirmed the mission, vision, and values at its [February 14, 2020 meeting](#) as part of the development of the current University strategic plan, [Strategy 2025.](#)

[Strategy 2025](#) delineates GovState's guiding strategy for 2020-2025. [The Strategy 2025 development process](#) was a comprehensive, campus-wide, inclusive endeavor in institutional strategic planning that started in February 2018. At that time, GovState convened a 27-member Strategic Planning committee with membership reflecting the Campus Community: Students, Faculty, Deans, Chairs, Academic Advisors, Administration, Student Affairs, Enrollment Management, Development, Sponsored Programs, Finance, Civil Service Senate, Information Technology Services, Library, International Services, and Budgeting. In order to fulfill its charge, that committee performed a SWOT analysis, a gap analysis between Vision 2020 and GovState's current standing, and offered

suggestions for Strategy 2025. Those suggestions were then presented to a larger audience of campus constituencies and college and program external advisory boards by conducting face-to-face and online charrettes to gather feedback and suggestions. The committee then incorporated the recommendations into an edited version of Strategy 2025 and posted it in GovState's internal Share Point portal for further campus-wide discussion. The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness monitors progress based on key performance indicators and routinely updates the Board of Trustees, most recently at its June 9, 2023 meeting.

At GovState, the development of strategic plans embraces the diverse and inclusive culture of the University and advances the University mission. Subsequent to the adoption of Strategy 2025 and its core values, the instructional units within the University were encouraged to develop their own strategic plans in alignment with Strategy 2025. For example, the College of Business Strategic Plan was developed and approved by the College's faculty and staff. Similarly, the strategic plan for the College of Arts and Sciences was developed through an iterative and inclusive process. Admissions information and recruitment materials are developed by the Colleges and programs and published through Marketing and Communications. The marketing materials provide a resource for publishing the University and the College's mission statements; illustrating and referencing alignment to strategic goals and the University vision; and accurately documenting curricular and co-curricular opportunities. For example, the Division of Student Affairs publishes print and online brochures including "At GSU We Care" which describes mental health resources and discusses the role of the CARE Team in supporting students who are at risk due to changes in their personal, physical and/or emotional well-being. Samples of current recruitment materials can be found in Sources.

1.A.2.

The mission informs all aspects of GovState's work. As noted above, GovState's Strategy 2025 includes goals and objectives tied to teaching and learning including Academic Excellence (Goal 1), Student Success (Goal 2), and High-Quality Faculty and Staff (Goal 3). GovState also developed a mission-led Strategic Enrollment Plan (2022-2026) focused on enrollment and student success that includes strategies related to student retention. Supporting Instructional Excellence that led to the rebranding and strengthening of what became GovState's Center for Teaching and Learning to support instructional excellence. GovState's vision and values describe serving as an economic catalyst for the region.

An additional example is found in the faculty evaluation processes for promotion, tenure and post-tenure review. The academic units' Division/Department Criteria emphasizes the importance of teaching in faculty evaluation processes as part of faculty primary duties. The Criteria address performance expectations in the areas of teaching/primary duties; research/creative activity; and service. The evaluation process reflects the mission of the University and provides clear expectations for faculty to ensure consistency in the alignment of their activities with the University's mission. As a regional comprehensive university, our mission requires that our faculty be active in research/scholarly activities while providing exceptional and accessible education to our students.

1: MISSION

1.A.3.

GovState is committed to offering high quality, accessible undergraduate and graduate programs. As listed in the University Catalog, GovState offers 35 undergraduate programs, 28 master level programs, and five doctoral programs. These programs represent a strong blend of the liberal arts with professional studies. Programs are offered through academic units located in GovState's four degree-granting academic colleges: Arts and Sciences; Business; Education and Human Development; and Health and Human Services.

GovState's accessibility mission has been in place since its founding in 1969 as the result of the Illinois Board of Higher Education's recommendation that Illinois create a university for commuters in the Chicagoland area. From 1969-2014, GovState was an upper division (transfer) and graduate university before transitioning to a full-service comprehensive university admitting its first class of freshman students in 2014. The University student population continues to include a significant portion of transfer (73.1% UG) and part-time (33.9% UG) learners. With limited student housing, the majority of students continue to commute to campus and/or take online courses.

Given its ongoing adult, part-time, and commuter population, evening programs remain popular along with growing demand for online and hybrid programs and class offerings. Distance education including online and hybrid courses are offered through the academic colleges and supported by GovState's Center for Teaching and Learning.

GovState's student population includes a diverse set of transfer, graduate, and direct from high school audiences as well as an intersection of diverse ages, races, socioeconomic status, and first generation population.

The Fall 2023 GovState Fast Facts published by the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness provides a snapshot of GovState's student diversity. GovState's total headcount is 4,338 with FTE enrollment at 3,057. The average age is 27.3 for undergraduate and 32.7 for graduate students. Of degree-seeking students, 59.1% are undergraduate, 35.4% graduate, and 5.4% are doctoral students; 56.8% of students identify as a racial/ethnic minority; 40% of enrolled students are defined as first generation college students and 14.3% are international students, primarily pursuing master's degrees. According to the Illinois Board of Higher Education's comprehensive institutional performance report, known as the Big Picture data set, 51.4% of the undergraduate students are Pell Grant recipients. In Fall 2023, 73.1% of the undergraduate students (new and continuing) are transfer students who began their higher education journey elsewhere before choosing to come to GovState.

GovState's demographic profile aligns with its mission and vision. As a regional comprehensive university, students come primarily from the Chicago metro region with 85% residing within a 50-mile radius, and 60% within a 20-mile radius. Consistent with GovState's mission to "prepare students with the knowledge, skills and confidence to succeed in a global society," since 2020 and with the easing

of COVID-related restrictions, the institution has increased enrollments of international students to a record headcount of 620 in Fall 2023. GovState also continues to provide options for study-abroad and travel-abroad opportunities, enabling the native Illinois students to experience a wider range of cultures and gain a better understanding of the global economy.

1.A.4.

Following its mission, informed by its core values, and looking to accomplish its vision, GovState transitioned from an upper-division institution to a regional, comprehensive university in 2014. With close to a decade as a full-service, regional comprehensive institution, GovState continues to refine and expand academic offerings at all levels. In Summer 2022, the campus initiated a six-week, residential, immersive summer bridge program, Jaguar LEAP, to assist incoming first-time, first-year students with the transition to college. The program provides seven academic credits, academic and social supports to foster student success. GovState expanded its growing honors program into an Honors College (approved by the Board of Trustees at its June 12, 2023 meeting and by the Illinois Board of Higher Education). At the same time, the University established a College of Graduate Studies (approved by the Board of Trustees at its June 12, 2023 meeting and by the Illinois Board of Higher Education). Both colleges, which serve as academic units within the Division of Academic Affairs, are designed to enhance the campus' ability to coordinate accessible and exceptional education offerings and student support services across the institution.

To serve the breadth of the student populations, GovState continues to increase its student support services. This includes the centralized Undergraduate Academic Advising Center, a centralized Academic Resource Center, and Counseling and Wellness Center (CWC). The CWC includes GSU4U, which strives to offer a wide range of services, bridging the gap and connecting students experiencing basic needs insecurities with on-campus and community resources. Together, the Counseling and Wellness Center and the GSU4U provides comprehensive support, ultimately enhancing services which aid in supporting students' persistence, retention, and graduation completion. Based on the institution's Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan (Strategy 5: Latinx Recruitment and Support), and guided by its mission and core values, GovState hired its inaugural director of the Latinx Resource Center in Spring 2023. In Fall 2023 the First-Generation Center opened offering student programming, intrusive advising, peer mentoring, resources, and support for first generation students throughout their academic career to graduation.

As shown in 1.A.3's demographic discussion, GovState's enrollment profile is very diverse and consistent with the University's accessibility mission and values that address "…opportunity and access to a first-class public education to residents of our surrounding communities and all those traditionally underserved by higher education." The enrollment profile diversity in race/ethnicity, adult learner and transfer population, first generation, and Pell eligible population indicate the University profile is consistent with our mission, values, and strategic plan.

1: MISSION

1.A.5.

The mission, vision and values statements for GovState are made available to faculty, staff, and students through printed materials, the website, and the internal portal. The University Catalog and Student Handbook also provide a venue for the University's publicly articulated commitments. The mission statement is explicitly present in every class as one of the required statements included in course syllabi. For on-campus courses, the mission is displayed on the home screen of every classroom computer. The mission is also articulated and demonstrated to the region through campus units that service external constituencies. These include units focused on providing education to community members from children at the Family Development Center to adults and seniors through the School of Extended Learning. The mission is communicated to the public through arts and cultural programming of the Center for the Performing Arts, Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park, and the Center for Community Media and through our industry and business community through the Supply Chain Innovation and Business Incubator. Starting in September 2020, all employee business cards included the mission statement on the reverse side. The mission is included in each issue of The Agora, the GovState's monthly newsletter sent by email to over 47,000 people in the GovState community. The University's values and commitments are reflected in other communication to internal and external members of the community while they also inform each college and program mission and are the building blocks for focused strategic plans for each college. Progress is shared with internal and external stakeholders through Annual Reports.

Institutional priorities are clearly demonstrated through the annual budgeting process at GovState and operationalized through the Planning and Budget Advisory Council (PBAC) as described in Core Component 5. PBAC is composed of faculty, students, staff, and administrators and co-chaired by the Provost and the Executive Vice President of Finance and Administration. PBAC establishes annual guidelines for budget requests from all units of the University, and those guidelines follow the corresponding GovState strategic plan. This process demonstrates the close alignment between institutional mission, strategy, resource allocation, and operational performance.

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1: MISSION

1.B - Core Component 1.B

The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

1. The institution's actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public, not solely the institution or any superordinate entity.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its external constituencies and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Argument

1.B.1

GovState's mission is evidenced in actions that underscore its commitment to the greater good. The University actively endeavors to provide higher education opportunities to a wide and diverse spectrum of individuals, thereby creating pathways for those who might otherwise lack access. This inclusive approach fosters social equity and paves the way for underserved communities to benefit from education. By equipping students for "success in a globalized society, "GovState not only ensures their academic readiness but also cultivates a global perspective, increasingly vital in today's interconnected world. A well-rounded education that imparts knowledge and skills enhances the likelihood that individuals will make positive contributions to their communities, the workforce, and the collective welfare through their professional and civic involvement. GovState's mission to nurture self-assurance in its students plays a pivotal role in empowering them to confront challenges, assume leadership roles, and spearhead constructive transformations within their communities, ultimately enabling them to make substantial contributions to the greater good.

GovState was founded in 1969 on the basis of diversity and inclusion with a primary focus of serving community college graduates pursuing baccalaureate degrees. During the five intervening decades, GovState has continued to embrace its role of educating students in the southern region of the Chicago metro area. GovState provides educational and extra-curricular activities for students of all ages and has a long record of serving varied constituencies both on and off campus. At the leadership level, each summer the University President hosts a two-day planning retreat with the Cabinet. During this time, Cabinet members have the opportunity to discuss goals and ideas for improving the mission and reputation of GovState. In the Summer 2022, for example, the president led the group in a discussion of Tia McNair's 2022 monograph, *Becoming a Student-Ready College*, which has been subsequently used in support of socializing the strategic plan, the Strategic Enrollment Managment plan (SEM), and other actions that demonstrate commitment to the public good.

1: MISSION

Students are GovState's most important internal constituency and while internal stakeholders are important, the University also interacts with and offers a wide variety of services to its external constituents – community members of all ages, local businesses, community non-profit agencies, industry associations, workforce and economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, state agencies, elementary and high school districts, numerous employers, municipal officials, law enforcement professionals, the U.S. military, and many more.

The scope of curricular offerings at GovState is indicative of its ability to perform an educational role in serving the needs of the public in our region, as well as statewide and nationally. Through the curricula of the Colleges of Education and Human Development, Health and Human Services, Business and Arts and Sciences, the University offers graduate and undergraduate education in such fields as accounting, early childhood education, communication disorders, and the liberal arts, including computer science and information technology. Through community service efforts such as Kaleidoscope, students have opportunities to combine service learning with social justice and leadership. The University also offers support to local food pantries, such as the Greater Chicago Food Depository, and connects students to community service and leadership through career and volunteer fairs hosted by the Colleges and the division of student affairs. Additional examples focus on family counseling and family services such as F.U.T.U.R.E. (foundation youth services) that focuses on after school enrichment activities for low-income youth and Wayne Winfield Youth Family Services (WAYS), which develops societal support to help families grow and achieve positive roles in the community through counseling, parenting classes, and behavioral modification training.

As a cultural resource, GovState houses The Center for Performing Arts, the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park (The Nate), the Visual Art Gallery, Social Justice Initiative, the Illinois Black Hall of Fame, and Center for Community Media that collectively contribute to the quality of life in the region.

The University will continue to support these highly valued artistic and cultural venues as they demonstrate our commitment to our role as an educational entity for the public, including our students and community members. These endeavors are actively integrated into relevant curricula. Incorporating these resources into academic programming enriches students' educational experiences, enhances their practical skills, and fosters a deeper understanding of various fields and social issues. They also encourage interdisciplinary collaboration and community engagement as such efforts will increase public awareness of the University and further enhance GovState's value to the south suburban region. GovState will continue to demonstrate and increase its presence as an important venue for dialogue and problem-solving related to these critical issues.

As suggested by the land mass of the University, GovState is focused on environmental preservation as described in Policy 40 on Land Use, which beyond the Manilow sculpture park, includes the monarch butterfly habitat, Biological Field Station and the environmental viewing stations. The University engages in sustainable waste and energy practices through recycling and LED construction.

1: MISSION

1.B.2.

GovState remains steadfast in its core mission, which revolves around the delivery of exceptional education and academic resources to students while nurturing their personal growth and success. Recognizing the significance of financial sustainability, GovState diligently directs its resources towards elevating the quality of instruction. This involves investing in classroom enhancements, offering diverse modalities to cater to various learning styles, establishing specialized offices dedicated to first-generation and Latinx students, and implementing a robust programming framework to ensure a successful transition for incoming freshmen, transfer, honors, and graduate students. In doing so, GovState reaffirms its unwavering commitment to providing a holistic and empowering educational experience.

As presented in 5.B.3, the PBAC process establishes budget request guidelines that are aligned with the University's mission and strategic plan and plays a crucial role in allocating budgets to GovState's strategic goals and initiatives. As a public, state institution, GovState relies on state appropriations and tuition/fees as primary revenue sources and provides no returns for investors or to any parent organization (does not apply).

In response to student interest in course offerings delivered through different modalities, GovState invested nearly $100,000 to develop nine Hyflex classrooms with basic Hyflex technology. Technologies include a room camera with preset views such as the full room, zoom to the projection screen, and zoom to the podium. Each room is equipped with a webcam at the podium that can be used for either faculty up close or to swing around for classroom views. All classrooms have speakers so in-classroom students can hear online students. Via the use of GovState's Learning Management System and the projector, in-classroom students can see online students. Faculty are provided lapel microphones to be connected to the podium computer so online students can clearly hear the faculty as they move around instructing the class.

Beyond investing in the educational infrastructure, GovState is creating an environment where every student at Governors State University thrives, excels, and achieves their highest potential. The First-Generation Center (FGC) is committed to empowering and supporting first-generation students throughout their educational journey while ensuring equitable access to opportunities and resources that promote academic success, personal growth, and professional development. The mission of the newly established Latinx Resource Center is to intentionally serve GovState's growing Hispanic student population. The Latinx Resource Center provides resources, support services, and an environment where students can thrive academically. Jaguar LEAP is a Summer Immersion Program for new students entering their first year at GovState. Students can earn seven college credits as they live on campus in Prairie Place and participate in exciting cultural and academic programming designed to equip them with the academic and social support necessary for success.

1: MISSION

1.B.3.

GovState actively engages with its external constituencies by collaborating with local communities, businesses, and organizations to identify shared goals and address mutual needs. This often includes joint projects, internships, clinical, apprenticeships, and service-learning opportunities that benefit both the University and its external partners. GovState regularly solicits feedback from external stakeholders, such as students, alumni, employers, advisory board members, and the broader community. This input helps the University refine its programs, services, and outreach efforts to better align with their expectations and requirements. GovState conducts ongoing needs assessments to identify emerging challenges and opportunities within the region which enables GovState to adjust its offerings and resources to meet the evolving demands of its constituencies. GovState tailors its educational and outreach programs to address specific needs in the community, whether it is creating workforce development initiatives, continuing education courses, or research projects that target local issues. A list of current local business partnerships may be found in the Evidence for this standard. The University organizes events, seminars, and workshops that engage external constituencies, encouraging them to participate in discussions, share insights, and collaborate with GovState on shared interests. GovState has established partnerships with various industry sectors to place students in internships, externships, clinicals, and apprenticeships to provide on-the-job training and real-life experiences for students. GovState is engaged with many local chambers, industry associations, workforce and economic development organizations, state and non-profit agencies, and community-based organizations to identify resources for students and collaborate on grant initiatives and opportunities.

The College of Business [Supply Chain Innovation Center and Business Incubator](#) has provided two thought leadership programs around [Reimagining the Electric Vehicle Industry](#) bringing together policy makers, private sector leaders, and other stakeholders to share progresses, discuss opportunities and challenges they are facing in galvanizing Illinois Governor JB Pritzker's' bold vision to bolster Illinois manufacturing as a top destination for electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing and grow the ecosystem to create new capacity for EV vehicle and component parts production.

By actively engaging with external constituencies and being responsive to their needs, Governors State University ensures that its mission remains relevant and that it continues to contribute positively to the communities it serves. As noted in 1.b.1, the local community is able to attend public events such as art show openings in the campus gallery. The University is contracted by the community in a variety of ways such as athletic competitions, dance competitions, community enrichments such as the All Girls Matter program, local government meetings such as meetings of the Will County Board, and governmental events such as the signing of legislation that has recently included the Stroke Awareness Bill. In collaboration with the University's production unit, [Digital Learning and Media Design (DMLD),](#) students in the athletics program are able to intern with DLMD and serve as sports broadcasters on video feeds as well as learn the basics of sports media production.

1: MISSION

GovState has more than 45,000 alumni throughout the United States and around the world. The University continues to solicit advice and input from graduates as it assesses its performance and plans for new and modified programs and services. The Alumni Association continues to support alumni and the University through a wide range of intellectual events, social gatherings, and other programs and services throughout the year. Alumni are invited to special networking events and are notified of and welcomed to the University on other occasions throughout the year.

GovState serves students with children as well as parents and children from throughout our community at our Family Development Center (FDC). Part of the College of Education and Human Development, the FDC was designed by educators to serve the educational needs of children and families. The childcare, preschool, and home-visiting programs model the best practices in Early Childhood Education and draw extensively on the expertise of University faculty and staff in Early Childhood Education, Nursing, Communications Disorders (speech and hearing), Psychology, and Counseling. University students in these programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels are active participants in the Family Development Center.

The School of Extended Learning (SXL) serves as the continuing education and workforce development center for the University. SXL offers learning opportunities for all ages with a camp for middle and high schoolers, short term training programs that individuals to enter the workforce, professional development and continuing education for individuals to advance in their profession, academic and professional certification at the testing center, and the knowledge exchange for retirees and semi-retirees. SXL also provides customized training opportunities for local and regional businesses by identifying training gaps and providing workable solutions. An annotated source of programmatic offerings is posted to the SXL website.

GovState supports veterans by providing a dedicated welcoming and comfortable space and to help navigate VA Education Benefits, offer career planning assistance, and immerse them in campus life, including cultural events and sports. GovState is also a participating school with Air Force ROTC, and our staff represents military-connected student interests on many regional, statewide and national associations and boards.

By actively engaging with external constituencies and being responsive to their needs, GovState ensures that its mission remains relevant and that it continues to contribute positively to the communities it serves.

1: MISSION

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1.C – Core Component 1.C

The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

1. The institution encourages curricular or cocurricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success.

2. The institution's processes and activities demonstrate inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations.

3. The institution fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff and administrators from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives.

Argument

1.C.1.

Diversity is celebrated and supported throughout GovState as reflected in our mission statement: "Governors State University is committed to offering an exceptional and accessible education that prepares students with the knowledge, skills and confidence to succeed in a global society."

This commitment to diversity is also reflected in our Core Values, where GovState highlights the commitment to serving diverse populations and to being a venue for sharing diverse perspectives and

ideas. For example, the core value *Demonstrate Inclusiveness and Diversity*, calls upon the University to encourage acceptance of wide-ranging perspectives among students, staff, faculty and members of the broader community.

Dedication to fostering civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world is further operationalized in the University's strategic plan. Strategy 2025 includes specific objectives to: *hire, develop, and retain diverse and exceptional faculty and staff; increase enrollment of and support for our Hispanic student population; demonstrate a commitment to ethics, equity, inclusiveness, diversity, and accountability for all students, faculty, and staff; and to realize the University's public responsibility to stimulate educational, cultural, environmental, and economic development in Chicagoland and beyond, with particular emphasis on community members historically underserved by higher education.*

Co-curricular activities are often demonstrated through collaboration between academic and student affairs. The mission of the Division of Student Affairs is to provide a seamless and supportive pathway from the prospective student to alumni, focused on personal and academic success in to ensure that students are career ready and positioned to be leaders and active citizens in the community. Within GovState's Division of Student Affairs and Support Services, the Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs (CSEIP) promotes a sense of belonging and connectedness through clubs and organizations, campus programming, leadership development, civic engagement, intercultural education and service learning as partners with all campus community members. Students interested in campus leadership positions are encouraged to collaborate with peers and participate in Jaguar Leadership Workshops to gain skills. Through Student Senate, Kaleidoscope Service Council and Student Activities Council, the opportunities are boundless. CSEIP provides students with holistic programs and activities to enhance the collegiate experience of all students.

Civic engagement opportunities are available for students, faculty and community members with a dedicated emphasis on social justice, community service and civic responsibility. Students interested in service opportunities, faculty interested in incorporating service and civic engagement activities in their classes, and community partners interested in recruiting volunteers, are able to bridge resources through CSEIP.

Civic engagement is also included in one of GovState's undergraduate general education outcomes on Social Responsibility. The outcomes are infused in undergraduate program curricula and typically introduced or reinforced in the junior seminar course or the capstone course, required for every degree program, according to GovState Policy 72 on Junior Seminar and Undergraduate Capstone Requirements for Undergraduate Degrees. GovState's Students Learn, Students Vote initiative was recognized for its efforts to increase student voter turnout with an award by the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge.

1: MISSION

[Alternative Spring Break (ASB)](#) is a service-learning program that takes place during the week of spring break. The objective is to give students opportunities to learn and build relationships through direct experience locally, nationally or abroad. The goal is to partner with service-based organizations working for social change while allowing students an opportunity for personal transformation by serving others.

The [GovState Food Pantry](#) is another campus resource available to GovState students. Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs staff manages the Food Pantry in partnership with the Northern Illinois Food Bank. The GovState Food Pantry offers non-perishable and perishable food, including produce, meat, and dairy, as well as toiletries and over-the-counter medication to GovState students and their families.

Each month [GovState's Dual Degree Program](#) (DDP) coordinates a community service event with the help of its student staff. Since Fall 2020, 217 DDP students have participated in over 645 hours of community service. The service projects are a perfect opportunity for students to become active members of their community, which has a lasting positive impact on society at large. Federal Work Study students that work within DDP, called "Student Transition Assistants" or "STAs," are responsible for connecting with a non-profit organization to plan and execute a service project for 5-20 students.

Students have opportunities to participate in faculty-led international [study abroad](#) service learning opportunities including participation in the Health Brigade trip to Ghana focused on public health and a Business Brigade trip to Panama, focused on assisting local entrepreneurs with accounting and inventory (described in 1.C.3).

GovState prepares students for workplace success in many ways including the [First Year Experience](#) which places first-and-second year students within one of seven [Focus Area](#)s around common intended majors. Focus Areas are designed with schedules including common general education courses and introductory major courses to give students a foundation on which to build during the their college career and for life after GovState. As part of a challenging academic community, students learn strategies and skills to become critical thinkers. Students become confident in their abilities and as members of a diverse community. Many degree programs allow an optional internship for academic credit or require an internship or practicum experience. [GovState's Office of Career Services](#) offers workshops, resources, internship and career fairs, and other resources to prepare for workplace readiness and explore career options.

Students have the opportunity to participate in conference recognized [athletics teams](#) and intermural sports. Sports offered on campus include men and women basketball, cross country, golf, indoor track, outdoor track, volleyball, soccer and women's bowling.

The University has one residence hall that is professionally staffed called Prairie Place. Programming for the students is offered by the Residence Hall personnel, the Division of Student Affairs and through the [faculty-in-residence (FIR) program.](#) The FIR organizes an annual Friends Giving for the Thanksgiving break and serves meals in the residence hall over break periods.

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1.C.2.

As noted in 1.C.1, GovState provides civic engagement applied learning through its alternative spring break and through global and national study away programs that introduce students to diversity and inclusive practices (see I.C.3). As a Minority Serving Institution in STEM fields and an emerging Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), GovState is committed to achieving equity and inclusive excellence through our participation in the Illinois Equity in Attainment Initiative (ILEA) from the Partnership for College Completion which seeks to eliminate institutional achievement gaps in college degree completion for low-income, first generation, African American and Latinx students in the region by 2025. Through participation in ILEA, GovState has bolstered its commitment to equity. Simultaneously, GovState is pursuing the Seal of Excelensia in order to increase institutional capacity for serving Latinx students.

The Office of Access Services for Students with Disabilities provides academic and technical assistance to students and works closely with faculty to facilitate access in the learning environment in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Students who are veterans also have access to a strong support network on campus. The Veterans Resource Center/Military-Connected Student Services, was established in 2011 and provides special services to veterans by certifying veterans' education benefits and by helping student veterans and dependents connect with available resources. This is done through staff and peer-to-peer support, both inside and outside of the classroom, for all military personnel. Information on VA benefits, education support, employment opportunities and other resources are provided through the Veterans Resource Center.

In addition to addressing its role in a multicultural society, GovState attends to human diversity in the context of our mission and service to our students. The Office of International Services serves many populations at GovState, including international students, faculty, staff, scholars, study-abroad students, and the local community. Programming includes day trips to Chicago, international mixer events, employment workshops for international students, an annual multicultural fashion show, International Education Week (IEW) events, and study abroad fairs.

1.C.3.

GovState has multiple sites of engagement to educate the campus community, share ideas and explore diverse perspectives to foster a multifaceted climate of respect and to demand a respectful campus. Through student research on inequities and social injustices, through courses focused on societal disparities and differences, and co-curricular activities including participation in the Beloved Community and Ghana Service Brigade programs, students have the opportunity to travel and experience diverse worldviews and human experiences in person. These curated learning opportunities are designed to confront inequity through education and community based service learning projects. As discussed below, the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Business provide representative examples of how students gave valuable learning experiences through study abroad.

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The College of Arts and Sciences has developed relationships with universities in Italy (University of Insubria) and Brazil (Universidade Federal do Pará), which has included hosting visiting faculty and scholars on J1 visas at GovState. While on campus, they conduct research and guest lecture in our classes. Faculty have partnered on grants and travel abroad that showcase their leadership through travel to Brazil in April 2024 to share research on environmental restorative justice five criminal justice students traveled to the University of Insubria to share their research on restorative justice in the United States and engage in comparative analysis with Italian students. In addition, one GovState faculty member and a graduate student in criminal justice were invited by the Brazilian National Council (CNJ), the administrative branch of the Supreme Court of Brazil, to serve as guest speakers at their first National Brazilian Seminar on Restorative Justice.

Two other faculty in the College received a Department of Education grant award, "Making Spanish & Global Studies Accessible to All (UISFL)." The grant provided funding to develop a [Language and Culture Resource Archive](#) in the library and provided students with funding for study abroad experiences. In addition, GovState was named a Fulbright Award host site for 2024-25 and has had two faculty members awarded Fulbright awards for the 2023-24 and 2024-2025 academic years.

Within the GovState College of Business, Global Business Brigades is an international movement of university students and professionals that seek to build economic opportunities for the poor and marginalized in the developing world. Brigades work with entrepreneurs in remote and under resourced areas of countries such as Honduras, Panama, Ghana, and Nicaragua to create financial opportunities and sustainable businesses. Between July 23 and 31, 2023, 10 students participated in a Business Brigade trip to Panama. During this immersive experience, they engaged in a multifaceted mission that involved studying the business practices of entrepreneurs within an underserved community in rural Panama and offering valuable business advice. The students also dedicated their efforts to strengthening the capabilities of the community bank that plays a pivotal role in addressing the financial needs of these enterprising individuals.

Further, with funding from a subgrant from the Center for International Business Education and Research at Kelley School of Business, Indiana University, students have consulted for businesses in Brazil since the spring semester of 2021. This impactful experiential learning opportunity provides students with a unique opportunity to participate in real-life consulting and case projects for large companies in Brazil. The program provides opportunities for applied international experience and cross-functional business interactions. Along with students from a top university in Brazil, undergraduate and graduate students engage with leaders of the local business, and experienced faculty mentor from Brazil. They are prepared by a GovState faculty member.

A significant indicator of GovState's success in pursuing diversity is the character of the various groups represented in the community is composed. In Fall 2023, 66.3 percent of GovState's domestic student population came from a racial or ethnic minority (41.6 percent African American, 18.5 percent Hispanic, 3.3 percent multiracial). International students comprise 14.3 percent of the total student population. Diversity is also reflected in gender with 63 percent of our students being female.

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According to the Fall 2022 Profiles of Academic Majors, 49.1 percent of all degrees conferred over a three-year period were earned by minorities and 67 percent of all degrees were earned by women. The graduation rates at GovState for African American and Hispanic students are higher than their counterparts across the nation.

University President Cheryl F. Green created the cabinet-level position of Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) in 2021. The CDO is responsible for leading the development and implementation of the University's diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) strategies. The Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion has identified four primary goals to guide its work. These include support for students, faculty, and staff from underrepresented communities, inclusive excellence in the formal curriculum (and co- and extra-curricular experiences), and engagement with alumni and community partners. The DEI Council includes representatives from faculty, staff, administration, students, and alumni. The office sponsors Lunch and Learns twice a month and launched DEI mini-grants in 2023. The Office completed a campus climate survey in Spring 2023 and a faculty trend report in Fall 2023. In the campus climate survey, 81% of respondents were generally or very satisfied with the campus climate (compared with 72% at other four-year public universities). Additionally, 94% of respondents (compared with 88% at other four-year public universities) agree or strongly agree that diversity improves campus interaction.

In the Fall 2023, GovState conducted its first comprehensive "Diversity and Equity Campus Climate Survey". Sponsored by the Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusive, and Belonging, this instrument captured data on the HEDS model regarding campus stakeholders' perceptions or experiences of aggressive or micro-aggressive conversations or biased actions generated from race and gender and harassment or discrimination that referenced gender, identity or religious orientation. There were 404 respondents with undergraduate students and faculty and staff comprising the largest respondent groups. Broadly summarized, the results of the survey indicate that 80% of participants state they are satisfied with the campus climate. Additionally, the survey results are posted on the DEI webpage and publicly available. Action items that resulted from the Climate Survey include launch of a report on faculty trends in hiring with a focus on diversity requested by the Provost and additional campus programming through the DEI Lunch and Learn series to address themes that surfaced through the report.

In conjunction with the School for Extended Learning, the Office of DEI created 10 mini-courses on a range of topics on learning and leading through diversity, equity, inclusion, access, and belonging. The Achieving Completion with Excellence program aims to provide learning equity at the postsecondary level for individuals who have experienced foster care. Other initiatives and centers mentioned in 1.B. support students including the Latinx Resource Center, Veterans Resource Center, First Generation Center, and Jaguar Jumps. GovState's faculty is 37.9 percent minority, which is higher than the national average for American universities (28.5%). In 2022, 63 percent of the faculty were women, which is significantly higher than the national rate of 49.8 percent. The 22 percent of

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African American faculty members is three times the national average based on the [College Professor Demographics and Statistics in Higher Education.](#) In Fall 2023 GovState's Chief Diversity Officer published a [Faculty 5-Year Trend Report](#) finding important insights to help attract and retain faculty and to help the GovState community understand how the University is fulfilling its mission to educate and prepare students for a global society. Of the full-time administrative and staff employees, 37 percent are Black/African American, 9 percent are Hispanic/Latinx, and 67 percent are women.

The Title IX Office ensures compliance with [GovState Policy 5](#)2 on avoiding harassment and other forms of discriminatory behaviors. Board Regulation 2.A.21 created the [Title IX policy](#), and the related office was implemented in 2021. All faculty and staff are required to take this training annually. In addition, the University provides a civility policy and employs a dedicated Labor Relations expert to address issues related to employee conduct. These trainings and the HR labor relations focus further foster a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff and administrators regardless of their backgrounds, ideas or perspectives on equity and responsible conduct. Section Two of the GovState [student handbook](#), entitled Student Rights and Responsibilities, includes the [Civility Statement](#) that is rooted in the [University's mission statement.](#) In addition the [student handbook](#) outlines five tenets that students will follow and four tenets the University will uphold.

Launched in 2022, the Social Justice Initiative began as a University presidential mandate to create a resource for the campus and the community to better understand injustice and to develop action plans, research and campus programming to educate and transform the local community. The SJI was approved by the Ilinois Board of Higher Education as an initiative on track to become a center in the next five years. The SJI's work is funded by the University's E&G budget and supplemented by grants from the Illinois Equal Justice Foundation to underwrite the campus' ability to provide a pro bono legal clinic. [The SJI](#) is managed by an Executive Director who reports to the University provost. The SJI webpage makes information about the programs and services available to on-and off-campus stakeholders.

The University also supports [centers](#) with a variety of operational and support functionalities. Some of these have been described above as part of the School of Extended Learning.

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1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

Summary

GovState publicly articulates its mission in its admissions documents, catalog, on the website, through on campus signage and elsewhere to remind the campus and community of its commitments to educate, enrich and improve the lives of those the University serves. The goals outlined in Strategy 2025, the college and program mission statements and core values delineate approaches to meeting the GovState mission statement. The University adheres to the mission statement in activities ranging from budget and hiring to grant writing, educational offerings including co-curricular activities, and cultural and community programming. The Social Justice Initiative, begun in 2022, expands the mission statement into community outreach through the pro bono legal clinic, for example, just as the addition of the role of the Chief Diversity Officer as a Cabinet member codifies the campus' commitment to diversity and inclusion. The University has a transparent and understood culture of excellence driven by the mission.

Sources

There are no sources.

INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

2. INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

2.A - Core Component 2.A

The institution establishes and follows policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty and staff.

1. The institution develops and the governing board adopts the mission.
2. The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources and auxiliary functions.

Argument

Response

GovState is compliant with Core Component 2. The governing board follows policies and engages in procedures that reflect an ethical culture. The University's Marketing and Communication unit collaborates with other units on the campus to insure accuracy in all reputations of GovState regardless of the communication channel. The narrative below outlines the ways in which the University meets the standards for board training, board deliberations based in priorities that enhance the institution, and the processes of board review that independence and delegation of management responsibilities to the institution's administration.

Introduction

As a public institution, GovState is accountable not only to the U.S. Department of Education and its accreditors, but also to the people and laws of Illinois. Specifically, state agencies, including the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), the Illinois Office of the Auditor General (OAG), the Illinois Legislative Audit Commission (LAC), and the Office of Executive Inspector General for the Agencies of the Illinois Governor (OEIG), provide oversight, guidance and governing principles for the University in alignment with state-level expectations. GovState is subject to annual financial and compliance audits by independent auditors, monitoring of action to correct any weaknesses disclosed by these audits and external complaint resolution processes as needed. Additionally, the University's Office of Internal Audit provides independent, objective assurance and consulting services designed to add value and improve the University's operations. The Chief Internal Auditor reports directly to the University President and Board of Trustees (BoT).

2. INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

Narrative

The University strives to ensure its operations are compliant and ethical in all respects through the establishment of sound policies, procedures and practices reflecting its legal obligations, coordination with internal and external auditors and regulators, and the dedication of appropriate resources to effectuate its ethics and compliance programs. These compliance efforts are subject to annual, independent audit as described below. In 2020, the University installed its sixth president, President Cheryl Green, PhD, who has demonstrated her commitment to ethics and compliance by extending mandatory human resources training in ethical practices and responsible behaviors, requiring all-campus training in cybersecurity which includes alumni who wish to retain GovState email addresses, and establishing and filling inaugural positions for both a Director of Compliance, who has a shared reporting relationship to the BoT, and a Chief Diversity Officer, who is a member of the President's Cabinet.

The University's student handbook, GovState internal policy 78, the new draft omnibus "Employee Code of Conduct and Personnel Policies" (November 2023), Board of Trustees (BoT) policies and regulations, University policies and procedures, union contracts and annual mandatory trainings reach across the campus community to establish the importance of integrity in organizational operations and personnel management. The Administrative Policy Committee (APC) and the Institutional Policy Committee (IPC) engage faculty, staff and administration in the development, review and implementation of policy development, the foundation of any ethics and compliance program. For example, Policy 79 on assemblies addresses the right to peaceful assembly; the expected conduct of participants; and respect for individuals, safety considerations and adherence to applicable federal, state and local laws.

Through these combined approaches, the University has established fair and ethical policies and processes for its governing board, administration, faculty and staff as reflected in the discussion regarding (a) the governing board and governance structure; (b) the University's financial integrity; (c) the University's ethics and compliance programs; (d) academic policies and procedures supporting ethics and compliance; (e) human resources policies and procedures supporting ethics and compliance; and (f) auxiliary services policies and procedures supporting ethics and compliance.

2.A.1.

As noted in Core Component 1, the University follows a consultative process of campus stakeholder engagement and collaboration to review the mission statement as part of the strategic planning process. The governing board has the opportunity during its annual retreat to review the mission statement and other assumed practices documentation. In 2015 and in 2020, the mission statement was reviewed. In 2020, the original two-sentence mission statement from 2015 was restructured, resulting in a concise one-sentence mission, while the second sentence evolved into the Vision Statement. The mission statement will be reviewed again in 2024 as part of the launch of the 2030 strategic plan.

2. INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

2.A.2.

Independent, External Financial Audits

The best evidence of GovState's commitment to operating with financial integrity is its annual independent financial audits conducted by certified public accountants through the Illinois Auditor General's office pursuant to generally accepted auditing standards (GAAP). As set forth in the Illinois State Auditing Act, 30 ILCS 5/, GovState is subject to regular financial audits. See 30 ILCS 5/3-2. These audits and examinations inform the public, the Illinois Legislature, and State officers about the obligation, expenditure, receipt and use of University funds, and provide the University with specific recommendations to help ensure compliance with state and federal statutes, rules and regulations.

The University's audit reports are published online. Financial audits check to confirm "whether financial statements are presented fairly in all material respects in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles." 30 ILCS 5/1-13.5. Depending upon the scope of work, the financial audits may also evaluate:

1. Specified elements, accounts or items of a financial statement;
2. Interim financial information;
3. Processing of transactions by service organizations; and
4. Auditing compliance with regulations relating to federal award expenditures.

For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2020, 2021, and 2022 (the last available), independent auditors found that the University's financial statements were fairly stated in all material respects.

Office of Internal Audit (OIA)

Pursuant to Illinois law, the University must maintain a full-time program of internal auditing. 30 ILCS 10/2001(a). The University employs a Chief Internal Auditor and, as of 2023, an Internal Audit Associate. The University Chief Internal Auditor reports directly to the University President and the Board of Trustees, and administratively to the Vice President for Administration and Finance.

The mission of the OIA is to enhance and protect organizational value by providing risk-based and objective assurance, advice and insight. It helps the University accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes. Its website and charter can be found here:

- The Office of Internal Audit
- Internal Audit Charter

2. INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

The OIA at GovState is an independent appraisal function, which was established to provide independent, objective assurance and consulting services designed to add value and improve the University's operations. It maintains a two-year audit plan to ensure regular, periodic auditing of all major systems of internal accounting and administrative control (2020, 2021, 2022). Annually, the OIA submits to the President and the BoT an audit report detailing how its work was carried out as well as any major findings. Additionally, the OIA conducts a university-wide risk assessment annually to determine the priorities of Internal Audit activities. The results of the risk assessment, including the listing of relatively high-risk areas, are shared with senior management to prioritize risk mitigation efforts. Further, the OIA is responsible for facilitating the annual internal control evaluation across campus to determine if the systems of internal fiscal and administrative controls of the University fully comply with the statutory requirements (30 ILCS 10/3003). The University President, based on the evaluation conducted, issues a certification letter to the OAG stating whether the University's internal controls are in full compliance.

The University's Compliance Function

The University's regulatory compliance efforts are led by a Director of Compliance, a new position as of Spring 2021, who has a shared reporting relationship to the BoT and reports administratively to the General Counsel. The Director of Compliance oversees regulatory compliance, while specific departments handle compliance functions pertinent to their respective responsibilities. Further elaborated below, the University's dedication to compliance is best evidenced by the outcomes of its annual independent compliance audit.

The Director of Compliance and Compliance Committee

High ethical standards are a mark of integrity, and GovState meets these standards and complies with the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430/) and other federal and state mandates. The Director of Compliance is an attorney and member of both the National Association of College and University Attorneys (NACUA) as well as the Society of Corporate Compliance and Ethics (SCCE). The Director chairs the Compliance Committee. The Director is responsible for coordinating ethics and compliance efforts across the University, including serving as the University's Ethics Officer, Title IX Director and FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) Officer. The University supports an annual ethics and compliance survey and, in consultation with the Office of Human Resources Department, hosts an anonymous GovState Compliance Hotline. The Associate Director of Talent Management and Training in Human Resources assists the Office of Compliance and Ethics with administering Ethics Act Training to new University employees. A paper/PDF course that satisfies the statutory ethics training and the statutory harassment and discrimination prevention training requirements for all new University hires is provided to every new University employee (except for student workers, graduate assistants, temporary and extra-help employees) during onboarding or new employee orientation. HR enforces the 30-day deadline for completion of the new hire ethics training and collects the signed

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certificates of completion from each new employee. Among other topics, the Ethics Act training explains the gift ban, prohibition on certain participation in political activities, and prohibition on discrimination and harassment of protected classes including a prohibition of different types of sexual harassment.

A mandatory web-based course that satisfies the statutory annual ethics training requirement and the statutory annual harassment and discrimination prevention training requirement for all State employees is administered by the Office of Compliance and Ethics to all current University employees (except for student workers, graduate assistants, temporary and extra-help employees) developed by the University of Illinois and approved by the Office of Executive Inspector General (OEIG). The Ethics Act Training is mandatory for all University employees, as well as for the BoT, and the University tracks completion of the web-based training through its learning management system (LMS). Additionally, all employees are required to complete the Mandated Reporter Training required under the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, 325 ILCS 5/, at least once every two years, as well as a cybersecurity training developed by the University annually.

Results of Compliance Audits

As a state agency receiving federal funds, the University is subject to a "single audit" pursuant to the federal Single Audit Act of 1984, as amended, and to federal Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133. Independent certified public accountants, through the Illinois Auditor General's office, conduct the University's single audits, which are posted online. For the fiscal years ending June 30, 2020, 2021, and 2022 (the last available), independent auditors found that the University complied in all material respects with the type of compliance requirements that could have a direct and material effect on the University's major federal programs.

Academic Integrity and Compliance

- At the beginning of the academic year, the Provost's Office conducts the new faculty orientation. The sequenced orientation programs focus on academic policies, teaching, scholarship and service expectations. Training sessions are also provided during orientation on Blackboard, the University's LMS. In addition, professional development activities are offered throughout the academic year at the college level, through the Provost's office, and through the Professional Development Committee of the Faculty Senate.
- University administrative and academic policies are posted on the University's website behind the portal at "My GSU" for faculty, staff, students and outside constituents to view. For example, the University is a member of the Illinois Articulation Initiative, (IAI) and transfer guides, developed internally by the Provost's office, for 21 partnering community colleges are published on the transfer student information webpages. University policies on acceptance transfer credits are detailed in policy 31 for undergraduate, policy 30 for graduate students, policies addressing ethical behavior in the workplace, sexual harassment/abuse, and mandatory child abuse reporting (including Family Development Center staff), are available on the Human Resources

2. INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

website. Also posted on its website are the six collective bargaining agreements with unions representing certain University employees. These agreements govern evaluation processes, working conditions, rights and responsibilities of employees and the administration. The largest bargaining unit on campus is the University Professionals of Illinois (UPI), representing the faculty and academic support professionals. Their contract guides the development of the Division Critera for retention, tenure, and promotion.

- As part of new student orientation, students are apprised of the importance of using their University provided username and password to ensure privacy and for unique identification for login to email and online classes. Students are directed to the website for relevant materials, such as the Student Handbook and important policies such as Policy 64 – Acceptable Use Policy for Computing and Networking, Network Security and Wireless Computing and Policy 61 – Privacy, Legal Notices, and Security Notification. They are also required to complete cybersecurity training.

- Students are required to adhere to the University policy on academic honesty (Policy 24). This policy appears in the GovState Catalog and in the Student Handbook. All syllabi must conform to the University syllabus template, which includes a statement on academic honesty and reference to the policy. University Library and the Center for Active Engagement and Scholarship collaborate to offer workshops copyright and plagiarism.

- All research that involves human subjects conducted by GovState faculty, staff and students must be approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and/or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) prior to commencing. Faculty and students involved in research must complete training in social/behavioral or biomedical research, or animal use research before they can obtain IRB and/or IACUC approval. The IRB and IACUC ensure compliance with federal and state laws protecting the welfare of human subjects and animals in all research activities conducted at or sponsored by GovState.

- The Office of Sponsored Programs and Research (OSPR) supports the GovState community by securing external funding in the form of grants and contracts and by facilitating faculty and staff involvement in research, community outreach, student support and other creative activities. OSPR oversees pre-award and post-award externally funded grant and contract activities and coordinates institutional review boards for research with human and animal subjects. OSPR ensures compliance with federal and state regulations, University policies and sponsoring agency policies and procedures related to proposals, awards, and contracts. The OSPR provides the University community with education and compliance training related to pre- and post-award activities and award reporting. The OSPR remains current with federal and state regulations and compliance standards related to externally funded programs and research. To ensure that GovState is compliant, OSPR reviews current policy and procedures and determines if new policies or procedures need to be developed or if current policies and procedures need to be revised.

Faculty and staff of the University have the obligation to scrupulously maintain the objectivity of their research and educational activities by avoiding any financial conflicts of interest. GovState developed Policy 68 to protect the integrity of externally sponsored research and educational activities and to comply with federal regulations. The purpose of this policy is to promote objectivity in externally

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funded research and educational activities by establishing standards that provide a reasonable expectation that the design, conduct and reporting of research and educational activities funded under external grants or cooperative agreements will be free from bias resulting from the investigator (including the investigator's spouse and dependent children) having significant financial conflicts of interest.

Human Resources Department's Ethics and Compliance Efforts

GovState is strongly committed to fair and transparent employment practices. Following the 2020 HLC report, the University has taken significant steps to enhance its organizational structure. This includes the appointment of a dedicated Vice President of Human Resources, a member of the President's Cabinet reporting directly to the President, responsible for driving strategic and operational improvements. Additionally, an Executive Director of Process and Procedure has been appointed to contribute to the development of policies, with a focus on personnel-related matters. Furthermore, the Human Resources Department has introduced a dedicated Director of Employee and Labor Relations, tasked primarily with investigating complaints involving University personnel. The Human Resources Department (HR) supports the University community in providing administrative, consultative and support services. Specific areas of responsibility include strategy and policy development, human resources information system operations, classification and compensation, employment services, salary and wage administration, staff development and training, benefits enrollment and administration, worker's compensation, collective bargaining and employee relations. They provide new employee orientation covering University policies, including ethics and compliance, departments, procedures and benefits enrollment.

Other Auxiliary Functions' Ethics and Compliance Efforts

The University's Business Office, under the direction of the Vice President for Administration and Finance, employs generally accepted accounting principles to ensure consistent and transparent financial processes.

The annual budget and the annual schedule of tuition and fees are submitted to the BoT each year for review and approval prior to being submitted to the Illinois Board of Higher Education. The BoT receives regular budget-to-actual reports presented by the Vice President for Administration and Finance throughout the year.

The University's expenditure of funds for goods and services is administered and monitored by the Office of Procurement, also reporting to the Vice President for Administration and Finance. As an Illinois public institution, the University's procurement operations are governed by an extensive Illinois Procurement Code, 30 ILCS 500/. The Procurement Code ensures that material purchases (e.g., in excess of $100,000) are subject to a public, open and fair bidding process, which encourages the use of businesses owned by veterans, minorities, women and people with disabilities where possible.

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The University Procurement Office is designated to obtain commodities, equipment and services to support the educational mission of GovState by following sound business methods consistent with the Higher Education Procurement Rules, the Illinois Procurement Code and other applicable state and federal regulations.

The Office of Financial Services and Comptroller is dedicated to supporting the mission of GovState by:

- Safeguarding GovState's financial assets;
- Serving students by providing student account information and assistance, distribution of financial aid resources, and administration of payments, Perkins loans [the Perkins loan program has been discontinued], and tuition waivers; and
- Providing financial leadership, support, and outreach to the University community.

The Office of Financial Services and Comptroller is also responsible for coordinating the external audit activities conducted on the campus. The Office of Financial Services and Comptroller provides Public Funds Investment Reports per the Investment of Public Funds Act.

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- 2.A.2_015 GovState Policy 31
- 2.A.2_016 GovState Policy 78
- 2.A.2_017 Mandated Reporting Child Abuse
- 2.A.2_018 UPI Agreement
- 2.A.2_019 GovState Policy 64
- 2.A.2_020 GovState Policy 61
- 2.A.2_021 GovState Policy 24
- 2.A.2_022 IRB
- 2.A.2_023 OSPR
- 2.A.2_024 GovState Policy 68
- 2.A.2_025 Office of Procurement
- 2.A.2_026 The Office of Financial Services and Comptroller Website
- 2.A.2_027 Investment of Public Funds Act GovState Website
- 2.nar_001 GovState Policy 79

2. INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

2.B - Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public.

1. The institution ensures the accuracy of any representations it makes regarding academic offerings, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, governance structure and accreditation relationships.
2. The institution ensures evidence is available to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through research, community engagement, experiential learning, religious or spiritual purpose and economic development.

Argument

2.B.1.

GovState's external and internal communications are coordinated through the Office of Marketing and Communications (MarComm), led by the Vice President for External Affairs and the Chief Executive Officer of the Foundation. The University uses its webpages and its [annual academic catalog to represent its academic enterprise and mission to students and to the public](#). MarComm is supported by a public information officer and a writing staff to manage the website, ensure compliance with principles of universal design, and collaborate with the campus community in the development of marketing materials, public announcements, required state and federal disclosures, and in emergency notifications. MarComm adheres to an institutional publication guide and assists campus stakeholders in developing marketing and educational materials. The University follows an internal review process for the development of the catalog that engages the Offices of the Registrar and the Provost as well as college leadership in assuring that course descriptions, degree pathways, admissions and completion requirements and other disclosures are accurate and complete. In addition, the University maintains its internal portal, MyGOVST, accessible to all students, faculty and staff, which houses its policies and procedures. Individual webpages, such as those for admissions and new student orientation, outline the degree offerings in the aggregate that overview publicly available information on degree requirements, admission and financial aid. The University links directly to accreditation information from the homepage and on the Institutional Research webpage. It is also housed on all colleges' webpages for their programs.

MarComm works with members of the campus community to:

- Publish an annual report ([since 202](#)2) regarding the [University's operations and impact](#);
- Manage the University's accessibility-compliant website, which is the primary electronic communications interface with the student body and public;
- Ensure compliance with standards guaranteeing accessibility of its electronic communications to people with disabilities;
- Manage the University's social media presence;

2. INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

- Manage the University's recruitment and retention marketing campaign efforts;
- Influence public and media perception of the University;
- Publish Inside GovState, a weekly newsletter distributed via email highlighting all upcoming campus events; and
- Publish feature stories highlighting students, alumni, faculty and staff.

A link to the University's "Consumer Information" can be found on the footer of every webpage on its website. The Consumer Information, which includes information required to be distributed by law or regulation, includes information and University policy on: FERPA; drug and alcohol abuse prevention; copyright infringement; accreditor and state licensor information; IDPH Meningococcal disease; Meningitis; Volunteer Emergency Worker Policy; Student Optional Disclosure of Private Mental Health Information; Illinois voter registration form; GovState Annual Security and Fire Safety Report; Illinois Department of Human Rights Sexual Harassment in Higher Education; Title IX and Anti-Sex Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation; and reporting and grievance procedures for Title IX. Given the importance of this information, starting in Fall 2022, the University collated it into a single packet of approximately 200 pages and distributed it to all enrolled students via email.

In the course of reissuing the packet the University reviews and updates the University's disclosure requirements, as necessary. Simultaneously, the University ensures the accuracy of all Consumer Information communicated through the website. The Director of Compliance oversees and manages this process.

Academic Programs: A complete list of Governors State University's academic programs can be found on the University website and in the Academic Catalog (which also appears on the website). This information is readily accessible from the homepage via the navigation tab "Academics" or GovState Catalog.

Requirements: Requirements for admission to GovState for both undergraduate and graduate programs can be found in the Academic Catalog and on the Admissions webpage, which is navigable from the homepage via the "Admissions and Aid" navigation link. By clicking on "type of admission" (e.g., Freshman), prospective students can locate the admissions requirements specific to their situation.

Accreditation Relationships: The University publishes its accreditation information on the homepage, on the HLC webpage, on IR webpage, on pages of individual colleges and programs and in the catalog.

Faculty and Staff: On the navigation link at the footer of every page is the link to "Directory." The Directory webpage contains links to both a faculty directory and staff directory, as well as other key contact information. Faculty and staff credentials are identified in the Catalog.

Cost to Students: The tuition information webpage includes information regarding tuition costs and fees. It also includes a tuition calculator, which helps prospective students estimate total tuition and fees depending on type of program.

2. INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

The printed materials that GovState develops and disseminates contain most of the same information, consistent with what is accessible through either the website or the portal. In fact, most of the printed materials are directly accessible through the website as well.

Institutional Research and Effectiveness Reports such as the annual Profile of Academic Majors (PAM) and Fast Facts are available on the website.

2.B.2.

The University supports claims it makes regarding the educational contributions of its research through sharing of faculty accomplishments in campus newsletters and through individual faculty members' voluntary participation in the annual Research Day. For human subjects research and for surveys, the University follows IRB guidelines (GovState Internal Policy 68) and requires Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) training for researchers. Since GovState is master's level institution, the research reporting is largely limited to individual faculty and staff projects. As regards for community engagement and experiential learning, the University's School of Extended learning maintains a website providing information on training, workshops and enrichment opportunities. Experiential learning is managed at the college level and those programs offering co-curricular opportunities use MarComm to promote them. Through the Supply Chain Innovation Center and Business Incubator (SCICBI), the University engages in economic and workforce development and executes grant funded projects on supply chain and supply chain logistics.

Sources

- 2.B.1_028 MarComm Academic Advertising
- 2.B.1_029 Annual Fiscal Report Year 2022
- 2.B.1_030 Annual Report Fiscal Year 2023
- 2.B.1_031 Inside GovState and 25Live
- 2.B.1_032 Consumer Information
- 2.B.1_033 GovState Accreditation Website
- 2.B.1_034 GovState Fast Facts
- 2.B.1_035 Profile of Academic Majors
- 2.B.2_036 GovState Policy 68
- 2.B.2_037 Supply Chain Innovation Center and Business Incubator
- 2.B.2_038 Advancing Smart Logistics Project

2. INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution in compliance with board policies and to ensure the institution's integrity.

1. The governing board is trained and knowledgeable so that it makes informed decisions with respect to the institution's financial and academic policies and practices; the board meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
3. The governing board reviews the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
4. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties.
5. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the institution's administration and expects the institution's faculty to oversee academic matters.

Argument

2.C.1.

GovState is governed by the Board of Trustees of Governors State University (BoT), as described on the Board of Trustees' webpage on the University's website. The BoT is responsible for the governance of the University. By law, it is charged with the duty to "operate, manage, control, and maintain Governors State University . . . ." 110 ILCS 650/15-10. In turn, pursuant to Article I, Section 3 of its Bylaws, the BoT delegates authority to manage the University to the President with the caveat that "provisions shall be made for participation by the faculty, staff and students in University decision-making." Thus, while the BoT maintains ultimate responsibility for governing the University, it has established a shared governance structure for decision making among the BoT, the President, and three established senates: the Faculty Senate, the Student Senate and the Civil Service Senate. Appropriate BoT oversight is maintained through regular reporting by the President to the BoT via monthly updates to the BoT chair and quarterly meetings with the BoT, as well as the reservation of certain decisions to the BoT itself (such as approval of tenure and approval of certain contracts in excess of $250,000). This structure is clearly outlined in the Academic Catalog.

The BoT is comprised of eight members, seven of whom are appointed by the Governor of Illinois and confirmed by the Illinois Senate for a term of six years, and one student member who is elected by the student body for a term of one year. With the exception of certain personnel matters, such as tenure and promotion for faculty, the student trustee participates fully in BoT decisions. Members of the GovState administration are designated as the ex-officio treasurer and general counsel, and the University's President is a non-voting, ex-officio member of the BoT. Also, both the Chief Internal Auditor and Director of Compliance have direct reporting lines to the BoT. During all Board of Trustees

2. INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

meetings, the leadership from each of the Senates—Faculty, Student, and Civil Service —have a seat at the meeting and are invited to provide formal reports. Through the leadership of the BoT, the University governance systems are freely, independently and rigorously focused on the welfare of the institution and its students. The BoT takes the lead in ensuring that there are clear, explicit requirements for ethical practice by all members of the institutional community in all its activities through the development of policy and regulation and through active oversight.

Trustees (and employees) are well trained on ethics and compliance. The Ethics Act mandates annual training regarding ethics and compliance, as well as harassment and discrimination prevention. 5 ILCS 430/5-10 and 5 ILCS 430/5-10.5. As demonstrated by the annual report submitted for calendar year 2022, the University has a compliance rate with training requirements exceeding 90 percent.

In addition, pursuant to the Illinois Higher Education Act, each trustee must complete at least four hours of professional development training every two years. 110 ILCS 205/13. Agendas for the professional development trainings offered by the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) in 2020-2022 are included. Every trustee is current on their training obligations.

Annually, trustees (and certain University administrators) complete two disclosures regarding potential conflicts of interest. The first, called a Statement of Economic Interest, is submitted to the Illinois Secretary of State pursuant to the Illinois Governmental Ethics Act. 5 ILCS 420/4A-101(d). A sample form, which is evaluated by the University's ethics officer as well, is included. Pursuant to the Illinois Executive Order 15-09, the trustees and certain University officers also complete a Supplemental Statement of Economic Interests annually, which is submitted to the Illinois Ethics Commission. A sample form, which also is evaluated by the University's ethics officer, is included.

For board orientation, each new trustee is required by law to complete a two-hour training regarding the Illinois Open Meetings Act. 5 ILCS 120/1.05. The then-sitting appointed trustees each received board orientation shortly after appointment, on August 30, 2019. In addition, in September 2020, the BoT received training by a consultant from the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) regarding trustee roles and responsibilities. The BoT received additional training on the Illinois Open Meetings Act and Freedom of Information Act delivered by an attorney consultant in 2022. On August 25, 2022, the BoT received a presentation by the University's general counsel regarding the process of formalizing board orientation for future members. Frequently, as evidenced by the collection of BoT books submitted with this report, the BoT receives departmental updates at regular meetings in an ongoing effort to orient the BoT to University operations.

While the BoT delegates authority to the President for managing the University via its Bylaws (Art. I, Section 3), it maintains responsibility to directly approve certain actions, such as the award of tenure to faculty; the expenditure of funds in excess of $250,000 in certain circumstances; tuition and fees; and the annual budget as well as capital requests and appropriations requests made to the Illinois Board of Higher Education. See also BoT Policy, Art. I, Sect. 1 ("Although the Board is responsible for assuring that its policies and regulations are followed, it shall not participate in the details of institutional management, which are hereby delegated to the President.").

2. INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

In adherence with Illinois law and a commitment to transparent governance, GovState maintains a website for its Board of Trustees. This platform lists all scheduled meetings for the year, publishing agendas at least 48 hours in advance of meetings, as per the Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/2.02(a)). Unless closed under the Act, the meetings are public and allow an opportunity for public comments. Livestreaming is in place, as evidenced in the agenda, with recordings available on the website and the University's YouTube channel starting from the Academic Year 2022-23.

In conformity to Illinois law and a commitment to transparent governance, GovState maintains a website for its Board of Trustees. This platform lists all scheduled meetings for the year, publishing agendas at least 48 hours in advance of meetings, as per the Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/2.02(a)). Unless closed under the Act, the meetings are public and allow an opportunity for public comments. Livestreaming is in place, as evidenced in the agenda, with recordings available on the website and the University's YouTube channel starting from the Academic Year 2022-23.

2.C.2.

[The Board Policies and Procedures](#) outline the duties of the board members. [The webpage for the Board of Trustees](#) and the [meetings materials (agenda, minutes and board book)](#) reflect the activities of the BoT and document their priorities to preserve and enhance the institution. Annual activities of the BoT include review and approval of operating budget, the faculty candidates for tenure and the performance of the University President. In 2021-2022, the BoT approved the campus facilities masterplan, which will increase the footprint of the campus. In 2023, the BoT approved the Social Justice Initiative and the creation of two new academic units, The Honors College and the College of Graduate Studies. Cyclically, the BoT also approves the University strategic plan.

The BoT is entrusted with the authority to govern the University:

There is hereby created a body politic and corporate which shall be styled the Board of Trustees of Governors State University (hereinafter called the Board), and which shall operate, manage, control, and maintain Governors State University in accordance with the rights, powers and duties now or hereafter vested by law in that Board.

110 ILCS 670/15-10

The BoT's responsibilities, as enumerated in its governing statute, include: "To make rules, regulations and bylaws, not inconsistent with law, for the government and management of Governors State University and its branches. . . ." 110 ILCS 670/15-45. They also include:

- Appointing a president and all other necessary employees, such as deans, professors, etc.;
- Prescribing courses of study to be followed;
- Issuing degrees and diplomas;

2. INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

- Examining the conditions, management and administration of the University and provide for requisite buildings, apparatus, equipment, and auxiliary services; and
- Fixing and collecting tuition and fees.

The BoT Bylaws enumerate the trustees' key obligations Art. I, Sect. 4.

2.C.3.

As noted above, seven of the eight voting BoT members are independent members of the public and cannot be employed by or do business with the University. This ensures that the interests of the People of Illinois are considered in every BoT action. By law, no more than four of these seven trustees can be members of the same political party, further ensuring the diversity of interests considered in every decision. 110 ILCS 670/15-15. Moreover, as part of compliance with Open Meetings Act, each Board session, either of the Executive Committee or of the Committee of the Whole, is open to the public with narrow exceptions and features the opportunity for public comment. 5 ILCS 120/2(a)-(b) (openness with narrow exception); 5 ILCS 120/2.06(g) (opportunity for public comment). As such, the business of the BoT is conducted in the public eye and the BoT has a formal mechanism in place to receive regular feedback from the public and external constituencies.

The BoT has formal mechanisms to receive and consider feedback from internal constituencies as well. As noted above, one of the eight voting trustees is an elected student representative. As such, the views of the student body are espoused in deliberations and via vote. Furthermore, each of the senates—Faculty, Student and Civil Service—have a formal opportunity to address the BoT at each full BoT meeting. In addition, members of the GovState community, including students and employees, may address the BoT directly during each meeting's opportunity for public comment. Therefore, the BoT hears from key internal constituencies at least once per quarter. Moreover, the BoT includes the President as a non-voting member, and is guided by a treasurer who is also the University's Vice President for Administration and Finance and a general counsel who is also the University's Vice President and General Counsel. It also has direct reporting lines with the University's Director of Compliance and Chief Internal Auditor—ensuring open and robust communication with those key areas.

At the end of every fiscal year, the University compiles a full record of all board activities over the prior year. This compendium is entitled "Proceedings of the Governors State University Board of Trustees" and includes (1) minutes of all committee and full board meetings, (2) copies of all resolutions considered and enacted by the Board, and (3) all supporting documentation presented to the Board for its consideration. Even a cursory examination of one or more of these "Proceedings …" documents will demonstrate that the BoT entertains a variety of perspectives, solicits and receives a substantial amount of information and analysis, and hears from a variety of stakeholders at and beyond the institution as it addresses the business of GovState.

2. INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

2.C.4.

Appointed trustees are independent. By law, the trustees cannot be employees of the University or State government, nor may they be directly or indirectly involved in any contract made by the BoT. 110 ILCS 670/15-20. They receive no compensation for their service. Id. As noted above, the University is a state institution, which holds its assets for the benefit of the People of Illinois, and has no parent organization or investors.

The BoT is governed by its bylaws, which precludes conflicts of interest, as well as myriad Illinois laws regarding ethics and compliance. Chief among those laws is the Illinois State Officials and Employees Ethics Act, 5 ILCS 430/ (the "Ethics Act"). The Ethics Act contains a prohibition against receiving gifts from prohibited sources to avoid undue influence (5 ILCS 430/10-10), and also contains a so-called "revolving door prohibition" to preclude current trustees (or employees) from influencing a major contract and then going to work for that contractor (5 ILCS 430/5-45). The Ethics Act also requires annual training on ethics as well as harassment and discrimination prevention. See 5 ILCS 430/Art. 10 (The Gift Ban); *and* 5 ILCS 5-10 and 5-10.5 (training). In addition to training under the Ethics Act, the BoT members must complete four hours of professional development training offered by the IBHE, on topics including ethics, every two years. 110 ILCS 205/13.

Trustees affirm their independence on an annual basis. Annually, trustees and certain University administrators complete two disclosures regarding potential conflicts of interest. The first, called a Statement of Economic Interest, is submitted to the Illinois Secretary of State pursuant to the Illinois Governmental Ethics Act. 5 ILCS 420/4A-101(d). Publicly filed conflicts of interest forms are included for each current trustee. Pursuant to Illinois Executive Order 15-09, the trustees and certain university officers also complete a Supplemental Statement of Economic Interests annually, which is submitted to the Illinois Ethics Commission.

2.C.5.

The organizational structure of the University provides the mechanism for delegation of authority and directs the BoT, through the Office of the President, to the appropriate institutional units while navigating them through frames of reference for decision making reflective of institutional priorities.

The President is supported in her leadership efforts by the Cabinet. The President's Cabinet is comprised of: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Vice President for Administration and Finance; Chief Diversity Officer; Chief of Staff and Head of Strategic Initiatives; Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs; Vice President, External Affairs; Executive Director of Government Relations; Vice President of Human Resources; President's Executive Assistant; and Vice President and General Counsel. They meet weekly to discuss strategic and key operational issues. They also meet twice annually for a multi-day retreat. One topic covered in their January 2022 retreat was "Board Governance and Compliance," presented by the University's general counsel. In addition, "Compliance and Enterprise Risk Management" was covered in January 2021. The President's Cabinet further collaborates to lead the University and advise the BoT.

2. INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

As part of the institutional commitment to shared governance, BoT Policy Art. II, Sect. 3(B) provides: "Faculty are curriculum experts for their disciplines and are responsible for maintaining program integrity, excellence and quality." Furthermore, the University Faculty Senate, per its Bylaws, is charged with management of the curriculum. The Senate meets twice a month during the academic year and holds professional development workshops twice annually. In the Summer of 2023, the Office of the Provost coordinated the first training session for faculty leaders in the Senate, which provided an opportunity for them to receive uniform guidance on completing such committee-based tasks as academic program review, promotion and tenure applications, development of new academic programs and the program approval process.

The Faculty Senate maintains committees and working groups related to management and quality of the curriculum. Through the Academic Program Review Committee (APRC), faculty evaluate the adherence of the degree offerings to the IBHE program review guidelines and use the program reviews to inform strategic planning, enrollment management and assessment of student learning outcomes as part of the continuous quality improvement cycle. The University Curriculum Committee is responsible for assisting faculty in the development of new courses and programs and revising and updating existing courses and programs. The Institutional Policies Committee (IPC) reviews academic policies to assure adherence to compliance mandates and smooth operations across the academic units.

Sources

- 2.C.1_039 BoT Webpage
- 2.C.1_040 BoT Bylaws Art 1 Sec 3
- 2.C.1_041 BoT Meeting Agendas
- 2.C.1_042 BoT Bylaws and Governing Policies
- 2.C.1_043 ILCS 430 5-10 and 5-10.5
- 2.C.1_044 IBHE Professional Development Agendas
- 2.C.1_045 Trustee Training Compliance
- 2.C.1_046 Statement of Economic Interest
- 2.C.1_047 Illinois Ethics Act 420
- 2.C.1_048 Illinois Executive Order 15-09
- 2.C.1_049 Supplemental Statement of Economic Interest
- 2.C.1_050 BoT August 30 2019 Meeting Notes
- 2.C.1_051 BoT Sept 2020 Trustee Role Training
- 2.C.1_052 BoT Policy Article 1 Section 1
- 2.C.2_053 BoT Bylaws and Governing Policies
- 2.C.2_054 BoT Bylaws Art 1 Sec 4
- 2.C.4_055 IBHE Professional Development
- 2.C.4_056 BoT Statements of Economic Interest
- 2.C.5_057 BoT Bylaws Article 3

2. INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

2.D - Core Component 2.D

The institution is committed to academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

Argument

2.D

Academic freedom and academic responsibility are respected and valued at GovState. The BoT Bylaws provide that the boards' duty and responsibility is to "preserve and protect University autonomy, and academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning." Bylaws Art. I, Sect. 4. According to the Board of Trustees Governing Policies:

The protections of academic freedom together with academic responsibility apply to all persons associated with the University who exercise teaching and/or other professional responsibilities . . . . Academic freedom is essential to the mission of the University and applies to teaching, research, and service. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. Academic freedom in its teaching aspect is fundamental for the protection of the rights of the faculty member in teaching and of the student in learning . . . .

BoT Policy Art. II, Sect. 3(A). Faculty members in exercising academic freedom should be accurate in the information shared and show respect for the opinions of others. BoT Policy Art. II, Section 3(B). All research involving human subjects is overseen by the Institutional Review Board.

The University Professionals of Illinois's collective bargaining agreement with the University provides a comprehensive statement on academic freedom.

The GovState Vision statement implies support for academic freedom in this statement, "*GSU will create an intellectually stimulating public square, serve as an economic catalyst for the region, and lead as a model of academic excellence, innovation, diversity and responsible citizenship.*" This statement exemplifies the strong commitment that GovState has to freedom of expression, the pursuit of knowledge and the acceptance of wide-ranging perspectives among students, staff, faculty and members of the broader community. To encourage faculty to explore diverse viewpoints and engage in intellectually stimulating research, curriculum development and events, the Office of the Provost and the Chief Diversity Officer provide grants for faculty development.

The Office of the Provost offered mini grants for innovative research on the first-year experience starting with the fall 2014 semester and the admission of the first freshman class at GovState. These mini grants of up to $3,500 each, provided a platform for collaboration among faculty members who share research interests. The purpose of the Innovative Research on the FYE mini-grants was to enhance the culture of inquiry and research across the University by encouraging conversation,

2. INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

best practices, collaboration, research and scholarship that focused on the first-year experience; to support and encourage faculty involvement in the modeling of innovative teaching, assessment of student learning and student engagement, as well as the application of these results for continuing improvement of experience programs and curricula; and to strengthen policies and procedures for innovative instruction and assessment of the first-year experience at GovState. In academic year 2019, the provost used the findings of past grants to continue to fund the work of Faculty Learning Communities in the assessment and continued development of first-year experiences and practices.

Faculty may also apply for an Intellectual Life Grant, which is funded through the Provost's Office and implemented by the dean of the Library and the Intellectual Life Committee. The Intellectual Life Grants are awarded twice each year for up to $500 for events in the fall or spring semester that promote and increase awareness of the arts, humanities and other intellectual topics of universal interest. These grants include funds for lecture series, faculty research salons, workshops, panel discussions, film screenings, exhibits, presentations in local communities and field trips. Typically, eight to 10 grants are funded each year.

In 2023, the Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) launched DEIB mini-grants, which awarded up to $5,000 each to five projects that "demonstrated inclusiveness and diversity to encourage acceptance of wide-range perspectives among students, faculty, staff and members of the broader community." One newly funded project will create an archive of the cultural and socio-economic history of the University's service area and will also include a panel of scholars in the spring 2024 speaking on the history of race and ethnicity in the formation of the "Southland," the local name for areas in Will, Cook and Kankakee counties that surround GovState.

Faculty and Academic Support Professionals may also be recognized through the annual Excellence Awards. These awards, recognizing outstanding achievement in the areas of teaching/performance of primary duties, research/creative activity and service, are awarded to tenured/tenure track faculty and to full-time lecturers and academic support professionals. Three awards are available annually and the maximum award to an individual shall be $6,000. Half of the award shall be applied to the employee's base salary, and the other half of the award shall be a one-time payment. If all three awards are not used in any one academic year, the money will be placed in a professional development fund for bargaining unit members.

In addition, as documented in the *GovState-UPI Agreement 2022-2025–Article 16.3.5,* faculty may apply for three credits of reassigned time to pursue research/creative activities each year. In some limited instances, reassigned time of more than three credit hours may be considered in consultation with the respective dean and supported with evidence of superior level of professional activity as described in the Division Criteria. Faculty may also apply for several internal grants supported through the Provost's Office.

2. INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

Sources

- 2.A.2_022 IRB
- 2.C.2_054 BoT Bylaws Art 1 Sec 4
- 2.D_058 Academic Freedom UPI Agreement
- 2.D_059 Strategy2025
- 2.D_060 Intellectual Life Grants OPUS
- 2.D_061 Faculty Excellency Awards
- 2.D_062 UPI Section 16.3.5 Research and Creative Activity

2.E - Core Component 2.E

The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, staff and students.

- Institutions supporting basic and applied research maintain professional standards and provide oversight ensuring regulatory compliance, ethical behavior and fiscal accountability.
- The institution provides effective support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students.
- The institution provides students guidance in the ethics of research and use of information resources.
- The institution enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Argument

2.E.1.

The Office of Sponsored Programs and Research (OSPR) has a dedicated professional staff that includes the director, the coordinator of Institutional Review Board (IRB), awards specialists (pre- and post-) and grants accountant. In addition, the University Finance Office has a grants accountant, and the School of Extended Learning (SXL) has a grants specialist for federal awards. The oversight of this responsibility falls to OSPR since it serves the entire campus.

GovState has an IRB and an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) with accompanying Policy 53 – Policy for the Protection of Human Research Subjects and Policy 57 – Policies and Procedures for Pertaining to Research Involving the Use of Animals. This follows federal laws enforced through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal Welfare Act (AWA), and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW). The IRB's Federalwide Assurance (00005375) and registration

2. INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

with DHHS Office for Human Research Protections (0002357) attest to the University's commitment to protecting the rights and welfare of human subjects of all research activities conducted at or sponsored by GovState, regardless of whether the research is subject to the U.S. Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects known as the Common Rule.

The IRB and IACUC maintain standard operating procedures in accordance with federal regulations, ethical considerations and best practices. All research conducted by GovState faculty, staff or students must be approved by the IRB and/or IACUC prior to commencing. Faculty and students involved in research must complete the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Basic Course in Social/Behavioral or Biomedical research before they can obtain IRB approval. In the review and approval process the IRB and IACUC consider if risks to human or animal subjects have been minimized. The IRB reviews if the selection of human subjects is equitable, informed consent has been obtained, and the research plan includes adequate provisions to protect the privacy and confidentiality of subjects.

2.E.2.

A key area in integrity for grants is focused on reporting how funds are used and assuring that funds are correctly applied. At GovState, the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research (OSPR) follows Policy 68 - Financial Conflict of Interest in Externally Sponsored Research and Educational Activities and other policies listed on the public OSPR website to ensure the integrity of research by GovState faculty, staff and students. OSPR also complies with NSF's requirements to provide appropriate training and oversight in the Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research to GovState investigators involved in externally funded research and to have a plan in place for the Safe and Inclusive Work Environment for Off-Campus Research. In addition, OSPR provides workshops and consultation with faculty to ensure the integrity of research practices.

2.E.3.

Graduate students in the social sciences receive direct instruction in ethical research conduct and the use of information resources through their IRB applications for their thesis or research projects. In addition, the OSPR's Director of IRB provides workshops in the academic year to explain the IRB process. Library staff members are committed to educating students on the ethical use of information through instruction sessions and by placing resources for students on the University's websites. Information on copyright laws and proper citation is provided through library workshops and classroom sessions.

The Writing Center, which is part of the Academic Resource Center (ARC), employs writing assistants who are available to help students with proper citation and to offer instruction on avoiding plagiarism. The following services are offered by the Writing Center: one-on-one sessions with trained consultants; email submissions for revision suggestions; workshops on topics concerning academic writing; library availability of tutors to answer quick questions; Back to Basics and Library Jam presentations; and Graduate Writing Camp.

2. INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

The Writing Fellows program, a component of the Writing Across the Curriculum initiative, offers support to instructors of writing-intensive courses in guiding student writers. Selection for fellows is based on their writing proficiency, recommendations from faculty members familiar with their work, and their enthusiasm for assisting peers with writing. This diverse group, consisting of both undergraduates and graduates, undergoes mandatory professional development before assuming their roles as fellows. Each fellow is responsible for working with a limited number of students, typically ranging from 10 to 15, allowing for personalized attention. Given the workload, larger courses may be assigned multiple fellows. Fellows dedicate around 10 hours per week to tasks such as responding to writing, planning and participating in meetings with faculty, students and the program director.

The General Education Student Outcomes emphasize four areas: Foundational Knowledge, Practical Skills, Social Responsibility and Integrative Learning. Under "Practical Skills," students demonstrate written and oral communication skills in addition to critical and creative thinking information literacy, quantitative literacy and collaborative skills. Specifically, students are expected to demonstrate the following learning outcomes:
- Use relevant disciplinary conventions, including citation of sources.
- Demonstrate the ability to define an information need and then locate, retrieve, critically evaluate and use that information.
- Demonstrate the ability to translate verbal problems into mathematical or logical language and the ability to construct valid arguments using the accepted symbolic system of mathematical reasoning.
- Construct quantitative analyses and evaluation of data.
- Use analytic inquiry and written, oral and visual modes of communication to explain theories and approaches to problems.
- Generate evidentially supported and well-developed arguments that reflect sound interpretations and analysis of social and ethical issues.

In addition, individual disciplines introduce students to the appropriate citation format and types of scholarly sources. SafeAssign, a plagiarism detection software, is available through the Learning Management System (Bb) to teach and reinforce the ethical and appropriate use of information. Instructors encourage students to submit rough drafts for review and self-check prior to submitting a final assignment.

2.E.4.

GovState has an Academic Honesty Policy (Policy 24), a Student Conduct and Procedures Policy (Policy 4) and a Community Standards Student Handbook, all available on the University website. The policy provides definitions and examples of cheating, plagiarism and other academic misconduct. Instructors are urged to include references to the University policies on academic honesty and integrity and note student conduct policies in syllabi as shown below:

2. INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

Academic Honesty Statement

Students are expected to fulfill academic requirements in an ethical and honest manner. This expectation pertains to the following: use and acknowledgement of the ideas and work of others, submission of work to fulfill course requirements, sharing of work with other students and appropriate behavior during examinations. These ethical considerations are not intended to discourage people from studying together or from engaging in group projects. The University policy on academic honesty appears in the [catalog appendix](#), located on the website.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

At GovState, we acknowledge the growing impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on education and strive to create a learning environment that promotes innovation, academic integrity, and responsible use of technology. All students are expected to adhere to the following guidelines regarding the use of AI in the classroom:

1. Responsible AI use: While AI can be a valuable tool for learning, it is essential to use it responsibly and ethically. AI might be used to expand your understanding of course content, not as a substitute for your own work. All work submitted in this course must be your own, completed in accordance with the University's academic regulations.
2. Academic Integrity: Using AI-generated content as your own work, including but not limited to essays, assignments, and exams, constitutes academic dishonesty. If you would like to use AI, please obtain prior permission from your instructor before using AI to complete an assignment. Any instances of academic dishonesty may be subject to disciplinary action.

According to the policies, the faculty member has jurisdiction over any instances of academic misconduct that occur in association with a course being taught by the faculty member. When there is an incident of dishonesty, the faculty follows the procedures outline in Policy 4. If the issue cannot be resolved by the faculty member, then the faculty must discuss the matter with the division/department chair to determine if the misconduct warrants disciplinary sanctions. If the offense warrants disciplinary action, then the chair and faculty member submit a letter to the college dean and the Dean of Students outlining the alleged incident and recommended sanctions. If a hearing is warranted, then the administrative hearing officer will meet with the student to discuss the misconduct, decide on the student's level of responsibility, and determine the sanctions, if appropriate. These student conduct policies and procedures apply to both undergraduate and graduate level students.

2. INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

Sources

- 2.A.2_021 GovState Policy 24
- 2.A.2_022 IRB
- 2.A.2_023 OSPR
- 2.A.2_024 GovState Policy 68
- 2.E.1_063 Organization Chart
- 2.E.1_064 GovState Policy 53
- 2.E.1_065 GovState Polic 57
- 2.E.2_066 Responsible Conduct of Research
- 2.E.3_067 Writing Center
- 2.E.3_068 Academic Resource Center
- 2.E.3_069 Writing Fellows
- 2.E.3_070 General Education Student Outcomes
- 2.E.3_071 Safe Assign Plagarism
- 2.E.3_072 Blackboard Learning System
- 2.E.4_073 GovState Policy 4

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Summary

GovState's campus culture is informed by its adherence to integrity, ethical actions, and shared governance. GovState has a scaffolded assurance structure that includes mandatory personnel trainings in legal and cultural topics as well as in cyber security. The University strictly follows state, federal and local regulations for compliance through institutional guidance provided by the Compliance Officer (new since 2021, which includes oversight of Title IX), a policy specialist assigned through Human Resources to the campus, and the University's General Counsel. The University has well-developed, comprehensive and topic-specific conduct, performance, and operating policies that nuance ethical expectations in specific ways. The Board of Trustees' Bylaws and Procedures are supplemented by the Faculty Senate Bylaws, the Student Handbook, and collective bargaining agreement of the University Professionals of Illinois that govern campus actions. Governing documents publications address key definitions such as academic freedom, outline conduct expectations, and provide clearly guided frameworks for resolution of complaints and grievances. Matters of ethics, transparency and integrity are managed by multiple offices and personnel across the campus to ensure objectivity is maintained.

Sources

There are no sources.
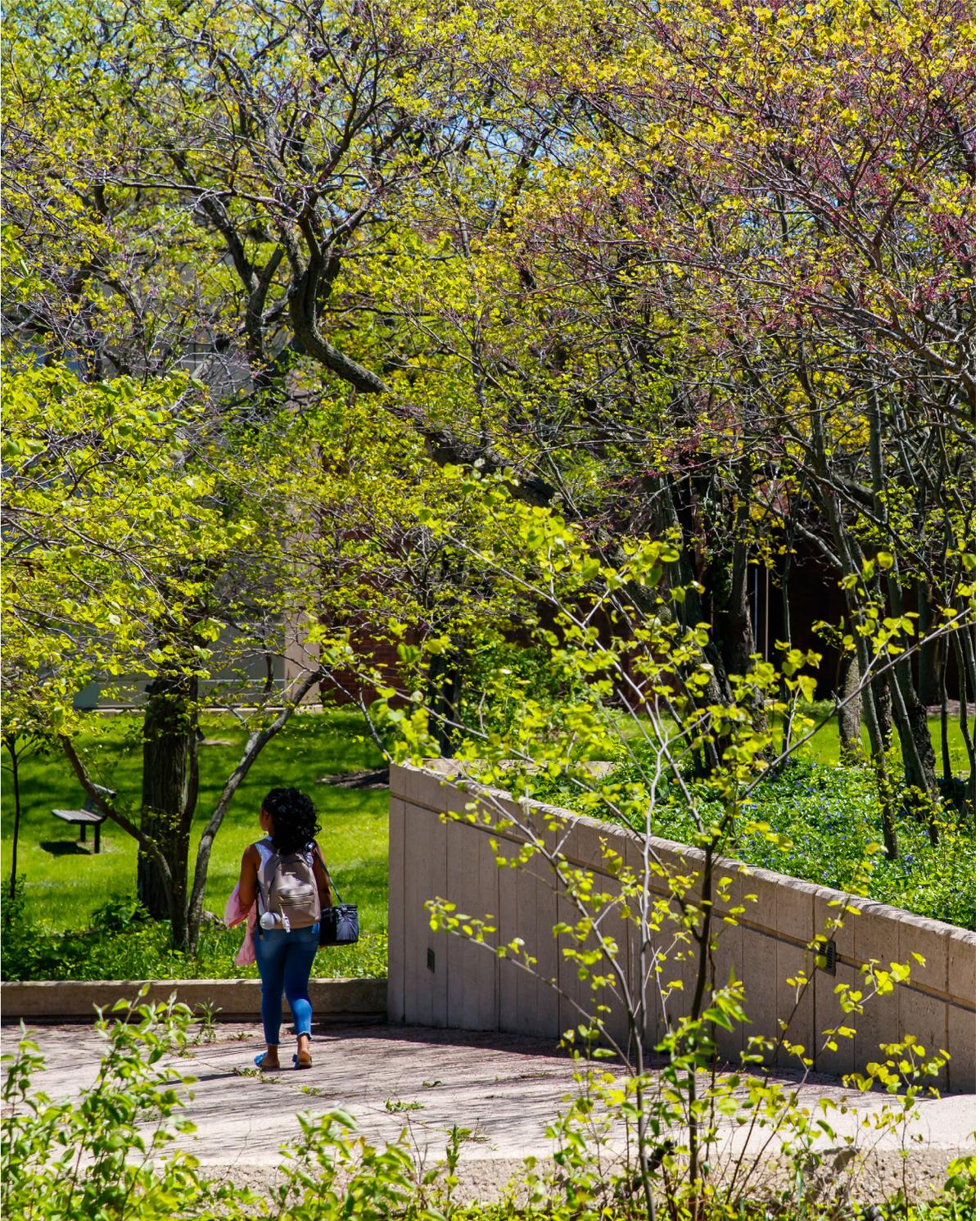
TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

The institution provides quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

3.A - Core Component 3.A

The rigor of the institution's academic offerings is appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of student performance appropriate to the credential awarded.

2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate and certificate programs.

3. The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

Argument

Response

GovState is compliant with Core Component 3. The University provides a rigorous curriculum appropriate to the degree fields and students it serves. Students, through their programs of study, are encouraged to collect, analyze, and communicate existing information while having the opportunity to create new knowledge through curricular and co-curricular experiences. Faculty and staff support student success and the institution maintains resources that support student learning and effective teaching.

Introduction

GovState provides a high-quality education across its programming including the differentiated student learning outcomes and goals for its undergraduates, its graduates, its post baccalaureates, and its post-graduates. The faculty at GovState have developed student learning outcomes and goals that are consistent across multiple delivery modes and locations. Furthermore, the framework of its general education program is founded on a commitment to offering exceptional and accessible liberal arts education that is designed to accommodate traditional students as well as students who transfer to the University while completing a program of study.

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

Narrative

In accordance with the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) approvals and established HLC procedures, GovState offers academic programs that meet and exceed higher education standards and practices. As listed in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalog, GovState offers distinct undergraduate degrees from four of six academic colleges with various concentration areas. In addition, master's degrees, one joint degree program, one education specialist (Ed.S.), five doctoral degrees (including one Ph.D.), and 23 certificate programs are offered. These degrees and certificates serve the community by providing appropriate qualifications to meet the state's workforce needs. GovState is committed to measuring the quality of its programs through internal assessment and external accreditation. The Academic Program Review Committee (APRC) conducts program reviews on a five-year cycle. All courses follow University Policy 2 and undergo a University Curriculum Committee (UCC) review every five years to address currency, accreditation, and alignment to curricular objectives. Pursuant to Board Regulation III(C)(5), every program must be reviewed by the President for recommendation to the Board of Trustees (BoT) at least once every eight years.

The undergraduate student learning outcomes are based on the Essential Learning Outcomes created by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U).

Each degree program has a curricular map and degree audit aligned to specific student learning outcomes. Courses that form the basis of the general education program are chosen and approved for the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI).

3.A.1

The university offers 35 degree-granting programs across the graduate and undergraduate levels. These are divided into 35 undergraduate majors; 42 undergraduate minors; and 29 graduate programs. The 2023 Hanover Research Economic Impact study confirmed that the University's appropriate courses and programs for its four degree-granting colleges and the offering of programs leading to high-demand careers in business, health care, and mental health.

The policy for curriculum review is outlined in GovState Policy 2 . After the Provost approves programs, the college Deans perform an additional review of the catalog language. Office of Institutional Research then processes new programs for submission to the Illinois Board of Higher Education for external approval.

By state law, the IBHE "is authorized to review periodically all existing programs of instruction, research, and public service at the State universities and colleges and to advise the appropriate board of control if the contribution of each program is not educationally and economically justified." 110 ILCS 205/7. The University must submit an annual report to the IBHE regarding program review. IBHE Program Review Guidelines provide that each program be reviewed at least once every eight years. More frequent "progress reports" are due every three years for new programs.

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

3.A. 2

The University differentiates and articulates distinctive learning goals for undergraduate and graduate programs and certificates. The evidence for this component is housed in Academic Policy 16 and the course catalog, reflected in the levels of performance in the course numbering statement on the Office of the Provost's webpage, syllabi (course content, projects, and SLOs), and course program sheets; and verified through program review processes and external accreditation. Syllabi must delineate the modality and demonstrate rigor and fidelity across modalities.

Graduate-level degree programs have outcomes appropriate for advanced degrees. Courses and qualifications of graduate faculty are guided by Academic Policy 16. Graduate programs require a capstone or other culminating experience. There are rigorous guidelines for all graduate scholarly capstone/project experiences, detailed in the graduate handbook. The Graduate Council, led by the Dean of Graduate College, provides guidance and oversight to University policies and practices related to high-quality graduate education.

Undergraduate program learning goals are divided between courses within the General Education curriculum and degree coursework outside of General Education. For most undergraduate programs, the student learning outcomes are published in the University catalog within the description of the individual degree programs.

3.A.3

The program quality and learning goals are consistent across multiple delivery modes and locations. On-campus courses account for 85 percent of GovState curriculum delivery.

GovState offers 10 online programs at all academic levels. Current offerings include: three bachelor level degrees, three master level degrees, one doctoral degree, and two certificate programs. As with the off-campus locations, these programs are taught by qualified GovState faculty and use the same syllabi as the on-campus offerings. Hybrid programs that offer courses in both online and on-campus formats regularly review the course content and outcomes for consistency. As one example, the College of Business has addressed this issue by designating a full-time faculty member as the course leader, with specific responsibilities to maintain quality across all delivery modes.

GovState also offers off-site instruction to meet the needs of students and employers. For example, in the Fall 2022, the Master of Art in Educational Administration (Principal Leadership) opened two sites at Lincoln-Way Central High School (New Lenox, IL) and Kankakee Community College North Extension (Bradley, IL). The rigorous curriculum at off-site locations is identical to the rigorous curriculum taught on campus. High-quality classrooms are monitored for learning conditions such as network access, furniture, comfort, safety, and accessibility. Off-site students have identical access to campus resources such as the Academic Support Center tutoring, financial aid advising, counseling and wellness support, library services, and a learning management system (Blackboard).

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

More information about the success of our off-site programs is provided through the [2023 HLC Multi-location Visit Report](#)

Sources
- 3.A.1_001_UndergraduateandGraduateCatalog
- 3.A.1_002_JointDegreeProgram
- 3.A.1_003_ExternalAccreditation
- 3.A.1_004_UniversityPolicy2
- 3.A.1_005_PursuantToBoardRegulationIIIC.5
- 3.A.1_006_EssentialLearningOutcomes
- 3.A.1_007_IAI
- 3.a.2-1_011_Policy16
- 3.a.2-2_012_GraduateCouncil
- 3.a.3-2_013_HLCMultiLocationReport
- 3A.1-3_009 IBHE Program Review Guidelines
- 5.c.3_080_hanover

3.B - Core Component 3.B

The institution offers programs that engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in mastering modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution. The institution articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements.

2. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.

3. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity and provides students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world.

4. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their offerings and the institution's mission.

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

Argument

3.B.1

GovState is committed to offering an exceptional and accessible education that prepares students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to succeed in a global society. The curriculum for the General Education core is shown. The University Faculty Senate Bylaws (2020) provide the description and charter for the General Education Council (GEC), which oversees the general education program. General Education requirements and student learning outcomes are described in Academic Policy 51.

The general education curriculum is also designed to accommodate students who transfer to GovState with 45-60 credit hours from other institutions. These students constitute the majority of GovState undergraduates and are integrated throughout the four-year program. General education continues through upper-level courses per Policy 72.

3.B.2

The framework for the general education program is the grounded in the AAC&U Essential Learning Outcomes. The program features a highly structured course sequence, intentional learning communities, and extensive student support, but also clear pathways based on their intended majors. The pillars of the learning outcomes are published in the course catalog:

- Foundational Knowledge,
- Practical Skills,
- Social Responsibility, and
- Integrative Learning

As noted in 3.B.1, the curriculum is comprehensive and appropriate for the undergraduate liberal arts core.

3.B. 3

As part of the general education curriculum, GovState students are required to take 18 hours of fine arts, humanities, and social sciences, which examine human society and behavior, as well as culture and social constructs. These courses are designed to help GovState students clarify their values by comparing and contrasting them to other people's values and thoughts in a multi-cultured world. One of the humanities, fine arts or social behavioral science courses taken must include a course that includes improving race, ethnicity, gender and other issues related to improving human relations to address racism and sexual harassment.

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

Through the Division of Student Affairs, the University offers co-curricular programming recognizing human and cultural diversity to support a multicultural world. The Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs (CSEIP) is predicated on creating programs and services that are holistic and provide integrated learning opportunities for students through high-impact practices. The CSEIP provides support for affinity clubs and organizations, Greek life, special events, workshops, and thematic programs that recognize the ethnic and cultural diversity of the campus as a community strength.

The Center for Performing Arts works closely with Student Affairs and Academic Affairs with its "Creating and Cultivating Compassionate Communities" events, where issues around diversity are explored through a range of different mediums, from dance to theater to music to pre- and post-show discussions. The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion offers regular cultural knowledge programs as evidenced in the DEI annual calendar. Other DEI initiatives include the Achieving Completion with Excellence (ACE) program which is designed for college students who experienced foster care. The ACE program provides the support and resources needed to help students achieve their fullest potential. The University library also supports a subscription to the History Makers collection and other unique resources on Black Americans. In Spring of 2024, GovState launched the Latinx Resource Center. The mission of the Latinx Resources Center (LRC) is to intentionally serve Latinx students by creating an intersectional and empowering space where they are supported, appreciated, and culturally represented.

In 2022-23, the CDO conducted a Diversity and Equity Campus Climate Survey. Results from the Diversity and Equity Campus Climate Survey Report collected feedback from four separate focus groups with students, faculty, staff, and administrators are used to inform programming, resources, and curriculum. In Summer 2023, GovState was named a Fulbright host site and routinely provides one or more Fulbright scholars in addition to having a faculty member serving on the Fulbright regional leadership board for the Midwest region.

3.B.4

The University provides spaces for the dissemination of scholarships by faculty and students. The Open Portal to University Scholarship (OPUS) is hosted by the University Library as an online scholarship repository for GovState faculty and students. All student theses and dissertations are publicly disseminated on OPUS. All University faculty and students can apply to participate in Research Days, an annual student and faculty research conference with paper presentations, poster sessions, and keynote speakers. Research Day participants publicly archive their work within OPUS.

The Journal of Applied Disciplines is hosted by the College of Education and Human Development, and two GovState faculty serve as co-editors. This open source, peer-reviewed academic journal publishes in the fields of social sciences, education, human services, policy, program evaluation

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

and related fields. Each issue publishes student research, and undergraduate and graduate students are eligible to submit articles as primary authors. Student works are subject to peer review, but are evaluated using modified criteria and scaffolded feedback is provided for revisions.

Support for faculty/student research collaborations is available through mini-grants. Mini-grants offered by the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion are available to all faculty, staff and student organizations. Aligned with the University mission, $25,000 was allocated for academic year 2024 mini-grants for projects to demonstrate inclusiveness and diversity to encourage acceptance of wide-ranging perspectives among students, faculty and members of the broader community and our institutional commitment to fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion across the GovState community.

Undergraduate students have opportunities to conduct supervised research either as part of their course curriculum or external to coursework. For example, biology majors take Undergraduate Research that is required for graduation. During the two-course sequence, students write and present a research proposal, conduct research and collect data, analyze data, and write up and present research results. In addition, students of color in the STEM disciplines may receive faculty mentoring and monetary support for independent research through the NSF-funded Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LS-AMP) program. GovState students in the STEM disciplines regularly present research results at the annual LS-AMP Student Research Symposium.

The Honors College offers high-achieving students' opportunities for research, scholarship and student publications. Honors students have 206 scholarly authorships and have made 22 state and national conference presentations (90 and 12, respectively since the Spring of 2021), including five student presenters (four projects) at the 2022 National Collegiate Honors Council Conference.

Students can also engage in media production through The Center for Community Media (CCM), which is a faculty-led and student-driven media production, teaching and research center. Governors State University's TV is a student-produced monthly television program reporting on news, sports, and culture that airs on Chicago Access Network Television (CAN TV). The student journalists for the

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

Phoenix Digital News report on campus and community news. Starting in Fall 2023, GovSt launched *Radio Jaguar*, an Internet streaming radio station that features music, news, and podcasts tailored for the GovState and Southland communities.

The learning outcomes for graduate courses require students to demonstrate knowledge and skills within the discipline with an emphasis on scholarly inquiry. Graduate program learning outcomes are stated in the GovState Academic Catalog and reflect expectations for students to demonstrate analysis, integration and investigation during the completion of their degrees. Doctoral students are expected to achieve even higher levels of performance as articulated in their learning outcomes. Graduate capstones (e.g., theses, dissertations) in many disciplines are the culmination of original research conducted under the supervision of the faculty research advisor and in consultation with the graduate research committee. Policies and procedures outlining completion of graduate capstones are detailed in the Graduate Handbook.

Sources

- 3.a.3-2_013_HLCMultiLocationReport
- 3.B.1-1_014_AcademicPolicy51
- 3.b.1-2_015_Policy72
- 3.B.2-1_016_AAC U
- 3.b.3-1_017_GEcurriculum
- 3.B.3-2_018_CSEIP
- 3.b.3-3_019_DEIcalendar
- 3.B.3-3_020_ACE
- 3.b.3-3_021_LRC
- 3.B.3-3_022_Climate

- 3.b.4-1_023_OPUS
- 3.B.4-1_024_ResearchDay
- 3.b.4-2_025_JAD
- 3.B.4-3_026_DEI
- 3.B.4-5_027_HonorsCollege
- 3.b.4-5_028_CCM
- 3.b.4-6_029_GraduateHandbook

3.C - Core Component 3.C

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

1. The institution strives to ensure that the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflects human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.
2. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance, assessment of student learning, and establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff.

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

3. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual and consortial offerings.

4. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.

5. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.

6. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.

7. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising and cocurricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their professional development.

Argument

3.C.1.

GovState is a racially, ethnically and gender-based diverse campus. GovState is recognized as a minority-serving institution in the STEM fields and an emerging Hispanic-serving institution (HSI).

Human Resources (HR) has engaged in pivotal work to increase the diversity and inclusiveness of faculty and the workforce. Recruitment strategies are carefully crafted to not only attract a wide range of applicants from various backgrounds, industries, and experiences but also to ensure that all potential candidates are assessed on an equal footing.

HR interview panels are structured to represent a diverse mix of perspectives, helping to ensure that the hiring process is equitable and inclusive. HR also monitors and analyzes our recruitment data to understand the effectiveness of our diversity recruitment efforts and identify improvement areas Faculty Trend Report. HR is committed to continually refining recruitment strategies to support an inclusive work environment where all employees can thrive. By actively pursuing these practices, Human Resources strives to build a workforce that not only reflects the diversity of the global markets we serve but also fuels innovation, drives creativity, and enhances decision-making across the organization.

Here is an example of a 90- day applicant tracker we use to ensure our applicant pools are diverse and inclusive, which provides HR the ability to pivot recruitment strategies as necessary.

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

3.C.2

The institution has a sufficient number and continuity of faculty. GovState employs 330 full-time faculty, including tenure-track faculty (Unit A), non-tenure-track lecturers (Unit B). During academic year 2023, the Unit A faculty of 165 includes 158 teaching faculty and six faculty librarians. The full-time tenure-track Unit A faculty teach 48 percent of the courses, while Unit B lecturers teach 25 percent of courses. Adjunct faculty and non-negotiated employees (such as staff adjuncts and visiting faculty) taught 27 percent of the courses. According to NCES, the average ratio of students to faculty is 18:1.

Unit A faculty have terminal degrees and are hired after a national search process. All Unit A faculty are expected to pursue research/creative activities and to provide service on and off campus. Unit A faculty are represented by an elected Faculty Senate, and Unit A faculty are responsible for overseeing curricular processes. Unit B Lecturers and Senior Lecturers teach on 12-month contracts; they carry a higher teaching load (27 credit hours) than Unit A (21 credit hours), and are not required to meet research or service obligations. GovState employs 18 professional advisors who are one subset of the ASP classification; 11 of these are on the staff of the Undergraduate Academic Advising Center (UAAC) and seven graduate advisors are housed in the academic colleges in which they are assigned.

3.C.3

All instructors are appropriately qualified. The university adheres to the HLC Guidance on Determining Qualified Faculty: Guidelines for Institutions and Peer Reviewers in the faculty collective bargaining agreement (CBA) and the evaluation, retention, and promotion procedures. Faculty hold the appropriate credentials and experience to understand their discipline, engage professionally with peers, determine appropriate learning outcomes for students and analyze student learning. The terminal degrees for each faculty position are defined in the CBA as "a doctoral degree, MFA degree, or the MLS degree with an additional master's degree. A degree in fine arts or library science from an accredited graduate school which is recognized by the granting institution and the major professional association in a relevant field or discipline as the academic equivalent of an MFA degree or MLS degree will be treated as the equivalent. Discipline-specific terminal degrees are listed under Section VI Article 5.6.a.(2).All off-campus programs assign faculty with the same qualifications as the equivalent on-campus programs. The University maintains the same requirements for faculty for all courses, regardless of location or delivery mode. Tables documenting faculty credentials are found in the Evidence Room in Canopy.

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

3.C. 4

Instructors are evaluated regularly following institutional policies and procedures. The framework for faculty evaluation, retention and promotion is negotiated in the CBA Article 17. Additional processes are delineated in the Division/Department Criteria (DC). All faculty evaluations (Unit A and Unit B) include teaching as primary duties. These evaluations include analysis of data from student evaluations, critiques from peer evaluations of teaching, and discussion of teaching and primary duties. Students in all courses are surveyed near the end of each course term using the SmartEvals online software for Student Evaluations of Instruction (SEI).
Per Academic Policy 39, Unit A faculty evaluations include a review of teaching, service and research/scholarship. Departmental criteria, developed by faculty and approved by the provost and the president, delineate the standards for service and research/scholarship based upon the faculty member's service length.

3.C.5

The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development. Each College budget includes designated funds managed by the deans to support faculty travel to present and to attend professional conferences. The University reports on its faculty travel expenditures annually as part of its budget analysis for IBHE. Faculty are supported through multiple mechanisms, beginning with a New Faculty Orientation conducted by the Provost's Office before the fall semester starts. The new Faculty Guide, a detailed handbook of University resources and procedures, was launched in academic year 2023. The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) offers a wide variety of workshops and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) for faculty development. In addition, CTL supports Quality Matters as the GovState framework for online course design. In 2023-2024, the Provost launched the New Faculty Cohort, a monthly series of luncheons for new faculty to provide professional development on topics such as Title IX, diversity and inclusion, and the University's mission and vision. In academic year 2023, the library implemented Faculty Mixers for Junior Faculty.

The Faculty Professional Development Committee (FPDC) fosters faculty growth through professional development. Composed of Unit A and Unit B faculty members from the colleges and University Library, the members are strategically elected and appointed for staggered two-year durations. The FPDC is instrumental in formulating and discussing growth strategies. In collaboration with the Office of the Provost, they also organize the Faculty Professional Development Days. Faculty may apply for reassigned course load, sabbatical leave (full pay for one semester; half pay for two semesters), and internal grants in support of scholarship and teaching. Faculty are afforded travel reimbursement for conferences and scholarship presentations.

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

The University strives to recognize quality faculty performance. Three faculty members may be awarded annual Excellence Awards per CBA article 21.3 with a cash award and base salary increase, recognizing excellence in teaching/primary duties, service, and research/scholarship. This award is peer-reviewed. Beginning in academic year 2022, the FPDC sponsors the Faculty Connection, Collaboration, & Celebration Event each semester.

3.C.6

All faculty are expected to maintain office hours as negotiated in the CBA. Faculty are available in modes appropriate to the locations of their teaching and primary duties obligations.
The Prairie Place learning community is supported by resident full-time faculty members and administrators who live in the residence hall, providing academic support serving as academic coaches; this allows for residential students to have enhanced access to faculty for academic support. Resident faculty and administrators help connect students to the University and provide periodic educational programming. Some faculty serve as advisors for student clubs, and in some graduate programs, faculty serve as academic advisors.

3.C. 7

GovState provides umbrella services for students to support learning and growth. The University offers onsite counseling, advising, peer tutoring, and sponsorships for co-curricular activities. Below are descriptions of the quality of services offered by the Writing Center, Academic Advising, the Academic Resource Center, the office of Financial Aid and Student Scholarships, the Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs, and a profile of civic engagement. The professionals providing these student support services are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.

Writing Center
To ensure that students receive qualified and trained support in writing, for example, candidates for employees in the Writing Center must be full-time GovState students who hold a GPA of 3.0 or higher and are eligible for student employment. Also, candidates must be in good standing within their discipline and fluent in both spoken and written English.

Academic Advising
The University offers academic advising to graduate and undergraduate students and to pre-enroll students and prospects. The work of the academic advisors is informed by the NACADA standards. The structure of academic advising is determined by level, college, program and enrollment status for active students not currently enrolled or enrolling in a next term. Transfer students participate in the

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

same advising opportunities as native students. Advisors participate in new student orientation and use a variety of contact methods and resources in support of student success. GovState offers professional advising to its undergraduate students and a combination of professional advising and faculty advising to its graduate students.

Graduate advising is divided between the College of Graduate Studies and the academic colleges in which the graduate degrees are housed. The director of advising for College of Graduate Studies Director of Advising is an experienced advisor, who was internally promoted in the Fall 2023, and is an active member and leader in the Illinois academic advising association. The director supervises the schedules and professional development of the graduate advisors and assures consistency and quality in advising work. The advisors are assigned to the academic colleges and faculty provide advising support.

Academic Resource Center

Every semester, ARC Tutoring offers assistance to students in nearly all of our 1000 - and 2000 -level math, science and business courses. ARC tutors are scheduled Sundays – Thursdays, with both in-person and remote (via Zoom) options available. Supplemental instruction supported sections currently include both general biology courses, an applied calculus and college algebra section, intermediate microeconomics, and nearly all of the statistics lab 2101 sections. All SI supported sections offer a weekly study group. ARC tutors are trained through the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) program.

The Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships

The Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships provides students with multiple options for advising including scheduled appointments with financial aid advisors, drop-ins, advising conversations via telephone, and email. The office also provides a variety of presentations and workshops over the course of the year to various audiences, ranging in topic from financial literacy to FAFSA completion and all things financial aid related. Financial Aid personnel also have access to supplemental training and reference resources including FSA Partner Connect, NASFAA, and ISAC, among others. The administrators in financial aid are also available for any questions, training, and/or troubleshooting.

Civic Engagement

Civic Engagement opportunities are available for students, faculty and community members with a dedicated emphasis on social justice, community service and civic responsibility.
Alternative Spring Break (ASB) is a service-learning program that takes place during the week of spring break. The objective is to give students opportunities to learn and build relationships through direct experience nationally or outside of the United States.

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

Sources

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- 3.c.3-1_031_SecVIArt5.6
- 3.c.4-1_032_CBAarticle17
- 3.C.4-2_033_Policy39
- 3.C.5-1_034_BudgetAnalysis
- 3.c.5-3_035_Article21.3
- 3.C.6-1_036_EducationalProgramming

3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and resources for effective teaching.
1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.
2. The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.
3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its offerings and the needs of its students.
4. The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites and museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).

Argument

3.D.1

As stated in C.3.7, GovState has a wide range of student support services designed specifically to meet the academic and social emotional needs of its diverse student population. GovState offers academic, technology, research, athletic, disability, counseling, health, food, housing, veteran, and shelter support for all students.

As noted in 3.B.3, the University has a Latinx Resource Center and has launched a First-Generation Center, initially funded with GEERS money. The selection of population for the TRIO grant was purposeful and aligned with the average age of our undergraduate students at 27. The University hosts a food pantry within the Office of Student Affairs for food insecure students and provides, through the Social Justice Initiative, information on housing rights for housing insecure students. The Mastering

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

College course includes a unit on financial literacy for which community support from Fifth Third Bank is provided through their mobile financial unit. Disability Services provides support for students in need of accommodations and increased efforts to make public programming inclusive include the use of closed captioning at meetings and events. The Testing Center offers accommodations for students who need extra time and readers, for example. Counseling and Wellness Center services have been extended through institutional efforts as well as through a successful grant application for mental health services provided by the IBHE. GSU4U provides a variety of life supports including discounted Metra tickets and bus cards for commuters. Students in need of any type of support services can contact the Dean of Students for assistance. The University also has a faculty in residence program (FIR) to support students living on campus. Student parents have access to grant funds in support of day care services, and the Office of Veterans Services, now augmented by two VISTA volunteers, provides wrap around support for those veterans and military-affiliated students for transition to college, transcript review, and other support services. Lastly, as described in the Athletics Masterplan (2022); student athletes have advising, learning support, and mentorship services in keeping with the University's membership in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA).

The Counseling and Wellness Center (CWC) provides all students with health and counseling services. The CWC promotes and advocates for holistic healing, academic, and professional achievement by collaborating with campus and community partners and providing services to reduce systemic barriers that often stand in the way of success. The department consists of a multidisciplinary team who hold licensures as clinical psychologists, nurse practitioners, certified medical assistants, and licensed professional counselors. The CWC has expanded to include services such as LivingWell@GSU, which provides a telemedicine 24/7/365 counseling support services.

As stated in 3.C.7, the Academic Resource Center (ARC) provides all students (undergraduate, transfer, and graduate) with a comprehensive range of academic support services. In addition, the Writing Center provides students multiple options for assistance. To give students additional supports, GovState offers two programs called Back on Track and the Pathways to Academic Recovery program. The Back on Track program is designed to help GovState students, who are readmitted after academic suspension, get back on track and off of academic probation. The Pathways to Academic Recovery program is designed to support underprepared first-year students placed on academic probation after their first semester at GovState. The Pathways to Academic Recovery workshops series is a 15-week pass/fail course that allows students to explore their individual learning style personal strengths, and receive academic support. The goal of both programs is to support students in achieving academic and personal goals.

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

GovState supports its military veterans population through the Veterans Resource Center/Military Connected Student Services, which is dedicated to helping to ease their transition into academia and providing continued support to Veterans and their families throughout their time here. Among the services that the Veterans Resource Center provides are the promotion of job opportunities, scholarships and other free events and initiatives geared specifically toward the student veteran community. In 2023, GovState was named a "Top Veteran-Friendly Schools" in the 2023 Veteran-Friendly Early Results Lists by US Veterans Magazine.

Career Services provides comprehensive career supports, including individual career counseling sessions, interest inventories and assessments for career exploration, resume and cover letter critiques, job search strategies and interviewing skills workshops, mock interviews, on and off campus job and internship postings, federal work study positions (providing hands-on experience and transferable career readiness skills), career and internship fairs, and networking events.

In 2015, GovState launched competitive intercollegiate athletics as members of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) and the Chicagoland Collegiate Athletic Conference (CCAC). GovState offers men's and women's basketball, cross-country, golf, soccer, outdoor track, and indoor track, plus women's volleyball and bowling. GovState student-athletes are students first and athletes second, and GovState promotes the fair and equitable treatment of all student-athletes with no unusual privileges and equal access to the full range of support available to all students. Furthermore, GovState's athletic programs use "intrusive coaching" by stressing class attendance, full student engagement in their education, and grades as their commitment to academic success. The Student-Athlete Handbook delineates polices and procedures all athletes must follow. As a result, student-athletes posted an 86.7% graduation rate in academic year 2017-18.

The University is launching the First Generation Center (FGC); and the Latinx Resource Center programs, each modeled after the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators' (NASPA) best practices. The FGC offers programming, intrusive advising, peer mentoring, resources, and support for first generation students throughout their academic career to graduation. The FGC mission is to increase retention, persistence, and graduation rates of first generation, minority students.

Students for whom English is not their primary language are served by the English as a Second Language (ESL) Program through the English Language Learning Center in the School of Extended Learning. Participants are provided with specialized course work that includes listening and speaking, reading and writing, integrated studies, multimodal composing, pronunciation, and cross-cultural contexts.

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

3.D.3

The institution provides academic advising services to meet student needs. The Undergraduate Academic Advising Center (UAAC) aims to better serve the needs of our students by providing a central location whereby professional advisors can help the students develop a holistic plan that best meets their career or aspirational goals. The center director supervises the work of 11 full-time advisors and two student workers. The UAAC works collaboratively with Career Services, the Academic Resource Center, and the Center for Junior Year to address student needs. Graduate academic advising is managed by the academic colleges with the support of the College of Graduate Studies.

The UAAC; provides a central location for professional advisors to meet with students to develop holistic plans that best meet their career or aspirational goals. The undergraduate advisors are directly involved in advising from new student orientation through degree completion or transfer. Undergraduate academic advising is a collaborative relationship with the intent to assist students with developing educational goals that are consistent with interests, values and abilities. Academic advisors serve as a primary point of contact, working in collaboration with campus partners and other resources to support students' academic success.

As noted in 3. C.7 and 3.D.1, above, graduate advisors are assigned to majors in the colleges and the College of Graduate Studies provides writing support services for those completing thesis and capstone projects through the Writing Fellows Program.

3.D. 4

Technology

The University provides infrastructure to support effective teaching and learning. Technology is an essential component for a 21st century University. GovState provides substantial technology to its students, faculty, staff and community. Computer labs for instructional use and computing stations for individual use are abundant across the campus, especially (but not exclusively) in the Computer Connection Central ("The Cube"), the adjacent University Library, the Hall of Governors hallway, and individual College labs. The Cube deploys 56 computers in public areas, with an additional 224 available in one of its seven instructional rooms, with computers varying between 16 and 40 per room. The library deploys six computers in its public areas and many in interior instructional rooms. The Hall of Governors and open areas have several computers available for use. Individual colleges also have instructional computing laboratories, where 112 computers are available across those laboratories.

The majority of GovState's classrooms are wired and equipped as "smart" classrooms with instructional technology such as podia with computers and projection technology. Campus and housing facilities are equipped with an extensive wireless environment from leading network providers, thus allowing students, faculty and staff to maintain access as they move between classrooms. Over the past several years, half of the smart classrooms have been upgraded with laser projection technology providing crisp clear images for years to come. A handful of classrooms have added technology to support HyFlex instruction, where faculty can instruct both present students and online students simultaneously.

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

Twice each year, at the start of the fall term and spring term, all incoming new first-year students are offered a free laptop computer capable of running the base University set of software, which includes the Microsoft Office suite and Webex web conferencing. These laptops are the student's personal laptop for their use while at GovState and beyond. In 2020, GovState implemented a student loaner laptop program where any actively enrolled student can request to borrow a laptop for use during the academic term. There are 150 student loaner laptops for the loaner program. A similar loaner program for employees is also available.

Technology software includes state-of-the-art technology from industry leading solution providers such as Ellucian, Blackboard, Hyland, Touchnet, TaskStream, and Technolutions. Physical infrastructure includes 344 Wi-Fi Access Points in the educational buildings alone. Over the past several years, GovState has increased its investment to improve Information Security, such as by implementing new state-of-the-art firewalls, immutable secured backups, multi-factor authentication and improved end user computing security. Additional Information Security staff resources have recently been added to the Information Technology Services department.

The Center for Teaching and Learning
[The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)](#) is housed in the Provost's Office and is dedicated to fostering excellence in teaching and learning by providing comprehensive support for faculty, staff and students. The CTL provides support for intersectional technology, including Blackboard, the learning management software. Faculty teaching is supported by the Center for Teaching and Learning.

The CTL website also provides research-based resources on teaching pedagogy and assessment strategies. The resources and support provided by the CTL also include in-person and hybrid workshops on a wide-range of topics that include Inclusive Teaching, HyFlex instruction and the Flipped Classroom, Generational Needs for All Learners, Visual Design & Psychology for Accessibility in Course Design, Transparency in Learning and Teaching, and Supporting First-Generation Students and Online Student Engagement. Additionally, the instructional designers of CTL provide individualized support, customized training and cohort model workshops based on departmental needs, to support program redevelopment based on Quality Matters standards.

The new development of Professional Learning Communities across campus enables faculty across disciplines to support one another by collaborating on research, instructional strategies and best practices in both face-to-face and online modalities. The faculty learning community at GovState is fostered using a faculty development digital space (FACE course) in Blackboard. This platform is used to share new and existing research, technology trends, conferences, external opportunities for scholarly work, and just-in-time communication to support teaching and learning.

Faculty are actively engaged in training and workshops that enhance their teaching and course design. CTL offers professional development certificates to promote faculty participation with over 179 issued for attendance on a wide array of topics.

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

The CTL also supports implementation of Quality Matters certification of online programming. Additionally, they offer consultation services to support faculty improvement. There are 151 faculty who have completed Quality Matters Training for quality course design, and 18 peer reviewers who are certified to evaluate courses. The CTL has piloted an internal course review process that will deepen the impact of learning experiences through quality course design.

The CTL is guided in its offerings by a [Faculty Professional Development Committee](#) which draws its membership from across the faculty of the four degree-granting colleges and the University Library. Comprehensive support for instructional technology initiatives is provided across campus by collaborating with the Academic Resource Center (ARC) for Jaguar LEAP, Access Services for Student Disabilities (ASSD) for accessibility workshops, and Information Technology Services (ITS) for laptop distribution and training. Students also receive training in-person and virtually to promote online student success strategies and a variety of learning technologies including Panopto, VoiceThread, Respondus LockDown Browser and Monitor, and the Blackboard Mobile app.

Using Watermark technologies, the CTL serves as a hub for faculty research, service and teaching activities (Faculty Success), rubric-based standards assessment projects (Outcomes Assessment Projects), and web-based portfolio creation (Student Learning & Licensure). CTL provides training and technology support for each of the Watermark data solutions.
The CTL actively engages with the wider educational landscape by participating in and presenting at local and national conferences, as well as partnering with other institutions. Through these platforms, CTL shares best practices, research findings, and insights gained from those experiences to serve as a catalyst for educational excellence at GovState.

Science Laboratories
The University provides necessary teaching spaces for science. GovState has 10 teaching labs devoted to various areas of biology (Botany, Zoology, Microbiology, Ecology & Physiology), chemistry (Biochemistry, Analytical, Inorganic and Organic Chemistry), and physics. Each tenured and tenure-track biology and chemistry faculty has an additional research lab dedicated to faculty research and undergrad and grad student research, as well as multiple prep labs and instrumentation labs. Instruments include: Bruker 300 UltraShield 300 NMR (Nuclear Magnetic Resonance); PerkinElmer PinAAcle 500 Atomic Absorption Spectrometer; two Agilent GC 7890B Gas Chromatographs; Agilent MSD 5977A Mass Selector Detector; Agilent Infinity 1260 LC Liquid Chromatograph; PerkinElmer Lambda 35 UV-Vis Ultraviolet-Visible Spectrometer; qPCR; thermocycler; two ultra-low temp freezers. GovState also has on-campus and off-site Biology Field Stations to conduct field studies. Lab managers and graduate assistants provide the necessary support to keep materials in stock and set up labs to increase the time on task for students. Lab managers also assist in providing a safe working environment, ordering and maintaining lab materials and equipment, supervising lab assistants, and scheduling science lab related courses. Of particular relevance is the SIM Lab and the adaptive apartment that support the graduate health programs in physical therapy and nursing.

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

Library

This University Library (UL) offers a range of services and resources, including computers, printers, scanners, copiers and various software programs. The UL has six computers with 100+ desktops in the adjacent computer lab ("The Cube") with wireless internet access throughout campus. The UL offers comprehensive access to curricular and research material through its 136 scholarly databases; 200,000+ print volumes; 240,000+ electronic books; 20,000+ current electronic serial titles; and 1,000+ audiovisual as well as microfilm and government resources. UL uses Alma as its integrated library management system. GovState participates in I-Share, providing students and faculty access to approximately 12 million titles in the holdings of 80 academic and research libraries across the State of Illinois.

GovState is continually upgrading key facilities to improve the quality of in-person and virtual learning and research. The Library and the Computer Connection Central Lab ("The Cube," GovState's main computer lab) share contiguous space, allowing effective and efficient access to 100+ desktop computers, IT assistance, and information literacy covering a wide range of curricular and research needs. The library provides students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources. Library personnel work with students and faculty members to facilitate access to electronic databases and other materials for course research papers and scholarly projects. Librarians regularly offer workshops and meet with students and instructors to ensure the effective use of information and promote information literacy.

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

Performing Arts

The [Center for Performing Arts](#) (CPA); is housed in the College of Arts and Sciences, Division of Arts and Letters. The CPA is the cultural hub for the University, supporting the technical and artistic needs for the Theatre Arts and Performance Studies programs in Dance and Dramatic Arts. The CPA further develops cultural programming with the Center for Student Engagement, acting as a performance and development space for artistry, meetings, documentaries, and multidisciplinary arts experiences. With continental seating for 1,165 attendees, the CPA is the host site for hallmark University events such as convocation, college meetings, guest lecturers, and a vast array of service and collegial programs. In addition to the CPA, Sherman Hall functions as a theater studio space to support courses and co-curricular programming in theater and performance studies.

Clinical Practice Sites

The nationally [CAEP accredited Educator Preparation Program (EPP)](#) places students for microteaching, observation, internships, and student teaching in approved external public and private schools. The University formalizes these partnerships with a Memo of Understanding (MOU). Some clinical placements occur in the [GovState Family Development Center](#). Clinical sites are managed by program faculty and a coordinator for external educator placements.

The University houses an onsite [Counseling Lab](#) where clinical mental health (CMHC) and marriage, couple and family (MCFC) counseling students see clients from the community, at no charge, under the observation and supervision from our faculty, during their practicum experience. Internship sites are managed by program faculty and a coordinator for external placements. The University formalizes these partnerships with a Memo of Understanding (MOU).

Visual Arts

Art learning spaces provide studio space and equipment for drawing/painting; printmaking; ceramics; sculpture/glass; and photography. The institution houses a significant outdoor sculpture park, [Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park](#) with 33 sculptures in a permanent collection, with a new Bernard Williams work, "Avian Station." In the future, two new sculptures will be added to the permanent collection: Jason Pickleman's. "Hand Heart" and Neil Goodman's "Sound of the Woods." Additional works are displayed on a long-term loan and visiting artist program loan. The [Visual Arts Gallery](#) presents five exhibits per year showcasing professional artists, an annual juried exhibit for Illinois community college students, annual BFA and MFA exhibits, and an annual regional high school exhibit. In addition, three additional gallery spaces exhibit student works, professional artists, and special exhibits throughout the year.

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

Sources

- 1.a.4_018_arc
- 1.B.3 Hybrid Flex Classrooms
- 3.D.1-2_037_FirstGeneration
- 3.d.1-2_038_TRIOgrant
- 3.D.1-2_039_FoodPantry
- 3.d.1-2_040_SJI
- 3.D.1-2_041_DisabilityServices
- 3.D.1-2_042_TestingCenter
- 3.d.1-2_043_CWC
- 3.d.1-2_044_DOS
- 3.D.1-2_045_Housing
- 3.d.1-2_046_ChildCare
- 3.D.1-2_047_Veterans
- 3.D.1-2_048_LivingWell
- 3.D.2 -5_ 78 Student-Athlete Handbook
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- 3.D.2 -5_ 80 First Generation Center
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- 3.D.2 -5_ 82 English Language Learning Center in the School of Extended Learning
- 3.D.2-1_049_ARC
- 3.D.2-1_050_WritingCenter
- 3.D.2-1_051_Pathways
- 3.D.2-3_052_VeteransMagazine
- 3.D.2-4_053_CareerServices
- 3.d.2-5_075_NAIA
- 3.D.3 -5_ 83 The Undergraduate Academic Advising Center (UAAC)
- 3.D.3 -5_ 84 The Undergraduate Academic Advising Center (UAAC)
- 3.D.3 -5_ 85 Graduate Advisors
- 3.D.4 – 1__86 Technology
- 3.D.4 – 90 University Library (UL)
- 3.D.4 – 91 I-Share University Library
- 3.D.4-13_092_CPA
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- 3.d.4-14_094_FDC
- 3.d.4-15_095_CounselingLab
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3. TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

The institution provides quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

Summary

The University has improved its processes for academic program review and processes of new course and program review through collaborations between the Office of the Provost, the Faculty Senate's Academic Program Review Committee and the University Curriculum Committee. In keeping with the goals outlined in Strategy 2025, academic programs are reviewed on scheduled cycles to ensure that they reflect high quality, consistency across delivery methods and relevancy to students and the community's professional needs. The outcomes of both the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan and the Hanover Economic Impact Study have informed new directions for proposed degrees in business intelligence, community health, doctoral level psychology, and additional degrees in data science. In addition, the University graduated its first doctoral candidates in educational leadership in the period of this review. GovState supports student success with highflex classrooms, laptops for learning programs, the hiring and retention of qualified faculty and staff, and the ongoing review and expansion of student learning support services for undergraduates and graduates. The new College of Graduate Studies, launched in 2023, hosts writing support and collaboratively manages academic advising with the degree granting colleges. GovState's published policies provide clarity and guidance on academic program development and delivery supported by expectations for success stated in the mission, core values, and governance documents.

Sources

There are no sources.

TEACHING AND LEARNING: EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING: EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

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

4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

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

Argument

Response

GovState is compliant with Core Component 4. The University has effective and appropriate policies for counting, transferring, and awarding credit. Departments and programs engage in on-going assessment of student learning outcomes and the accreditation processes for the individual degrees demonstrate the success of these efforts. In addition, through the work of Student Affairs, the University has active and well-developed programs to support persistence, retention, and completion rates.

Introduction

GovState follows rigorous curricular review processes across the teaching and learning environment to assure that academic programs remain current and focused on high quality content delivered at appropriate levels of learning for the students, consistent with the University's mission and core values. GovState faculty develop, lead and report on student learning outcomes and through the shared governance process, campus stakeholders have voice in identification of expectations for educational

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING: EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

improvements. In addition, talent and financial resources are reviewed on an on-going basis by the academic and student affairs units to assure that persistence, retention and learning support needs, including appropriate technology, professional development, and library resources are available and contemporary for meeting student and faculty needs.

Narrative
The narrative below overviews how GovState takes responsibility and practices accountability for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services and how it understands the impact of its quality assurance efforts on student learning and post-graduation outcomes.

4.A.1.

Using a rubric collaboratively developed by the faculty on the Academic Program Review Committee (APRC) and the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, the APRC, a faculty senate committee, evaluates programs based on a three and five-year cycle. All programs at Governors State University participate in this practice of quality assurance. The schedule of programs to be reviewed is created annually by IR and sent to the APRC on January 15 of the calendar year to launch the review cycle. Once reviews are completed, the APRC returns the reviews to IR and the staff prepare the annual curricular evaluation documentation for the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE). As part of the program review process, the Board of Trustees at Governors State University must review and approve a summary report of the recommendations offered by the Academic Program Review Committee (APRC) to the Office of the Provost regarding the standings of each program under review. Following the review of APRC, the committee offers three recommendations: 1) the program is in Good Standing: good standing is determined by the report's narrative 2) the program is flagged for Priority Review, and 3) the program is suspended – Enrollment Suspension.

The revised template require each program to provide their student learning outcomes, the assessment data used to capture performance in meeting those outcomes, and the program's alignment to the University's vision and mission. Additional information on the process is provided in 4.A.4 below.

4.A.2.

Institutional Policy 36 provides guidance on credit for prior learning. The University applies this policy to review any credit it transcripts for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning. In addition, the University applies Policy 30 and Policy 31 for transcripting transfer credits. Determination is made through combinations of administrative review by the Registrar and leadership in the College of Arts and Sciences where the primary need for review of credit for prior learning occurs. Additionally, information on credits applied to a GovState degree is published on webpages in admissions, for transfer students, and for credit for prior learning. The University publishes links to a virtual transfer center framework on the main webpage, with three distinct transfer guidance pages to provide

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING: EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

comprehensive information on credit application to the transcript, the transfer process and resources for transfer students. The Transfer Guides, created by the Office of Academic Affairs and the Registrar, outline how curriculum may transfer. The list of transfer campus partners with active links to their websites is located on the [Transfer Guides page](). The webpage "Transfer Credit Exam Options" outlines AP, CLEP and other testing options as part of the transfer or admissions cycles.

4.A.3.

GovState does not host a dual credit program at this time. GovState does accept [transfer credits]() from other accredited institutions of higher learning and community colleges as well as through placement testing and military credits. High school students can earn credit for prior learning via Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB). [Public Act 099-0358]() requires Illinois universities to award credit for scores of three and above. A faculty review committee works to determine the course equivalencies for AP and IB credit. Tables for course-credit granting equivalencies are noted in the University Catalog.

For courses for which AP, IB, or the IAI standards do not apply, the GovState has four policies that speak to the quality of courses it accepts in transfer. Policy 30 and 33 speak to the transfer of credit for graduate students, whereas [Policy 31]() and [34]() speak to the transfer of credit for undergraduate students, which are also noted in the [University Catalog](). Individual programs, with Provost approval, may exceed these policy standards. Petitions to the appropriate college dean are required for students who petition to transfer credit from a non-accredited institution.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) defines credit hour and expected contact time and course work time for each degree level. Governors State University uses a 15-week semester calendar, and the Carnegie definition for the award of credit hours. The institution has a clear and documented process by which it approves transfer credit for courses and standardized exams. For example, there are four distinct options by which a student may seek to receive credit for prior learning, all of which are dependent on compliance with specific institutional policies for undergraduate students, graduate students, as well as those pertaining to Credit through Evaluation of Prior Learning. [Policy 36]() address options for students seeking alternative options for course credit for prior learning experiences. The policy covers several options including professionally-normed examinations (e.g., College Level Examination [CLEP]), completion of training and certification programs, portfolio demonstration on the knowledge of skills that approximate the outcome of courses, and credit from non-credit training programs where an MOU exists. The policy notes the circumstances the credit can be awarded at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Further, GovState's participation in the [Illinois Articulation Initiative agreement (IAI)]() for course transfers allows acceptance of IAI general education and major courses in lieu of comparable lower-division general education and major requirements for any student wishing to transfer to GovState from an IAI participating college or university. The IAI allows for statewide transfer of general education

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING: EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

courses among 100 public and private institutions and community colleges in Illinois. Participation in the IAI results in institutions adopting the IAI standards for general education which is a 37-41 credit hour sequence of courses.

GovState participates in over 100 MOUs with local colleges and universities. A complete list of current MOUs is included in the sources file for this component. The University follows a standard template for MOUs it initiates and customizes each agreement with its partner. Part of a MOU process is curricular mapping to assure that courses and credits transfer to programs offered at GovState.

4.A.4.

GovState has an established continuous improvement process for academic programs that demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement. In conjunction with the Office of the Provost and the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, the University ensures academic integrity and quality by engaging academic units in a process of quality improvement. Academic programs use both qualitative and quantitative data to fashion their self-studies for the APRC as described in 4.A.1 above. The University's internal rigorous process for regularly conducting program reviews, it also follows state policy issued by the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) and the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Furthermore, "IBHE is authorized to review, periodically, all existing programs of instruction, research and public service at the State universities and colleges and to advise the appropriate board of control if the contribution of each program is not educationally and economically justified" (110 ILCS 205/7).

GovSt internal Policy 2 outlines the processes the University employs to maintain its authority over course prerequisites and rigor. The process is initiated through faculty members in academic programs to create, modify, or delete courses and academic programs, then goes through multiple levels of review at the division and college levels, followed by the University Curriculum Committee (UCC).

At all levels, multiple items connected to the course are critically reviewed. Examples included course outcomes as they pertain to course-level rigor. There should be alignment with the course rigor and course numbering. The University uses a 0000-9999 course numbering system for which the levels of rigor are dictated by the first digit and defined in the University Catalog. Also course prerequisites for a course must be defined and noted in the review process. The syllabus is also examined to meet standards included in the University course syllabus template. Additional details can be requested on a syllabus and a syllabus can be sent back for revisions at any level of review prior to approval.

Course level student learning outcomes are established at the departmental level through the curriculum committee for each college and program. All programs follow agreed upon guidelines and expectations for achievement of learning outcomes related to the disciplines and fields of study. The specific learning outcomes for the General Education program are prescribed in Policy 72. The program and course review is conducted by the General Education Council to ensure there are learning outcomes that align with institutional GE outcomes as stated in Policy 51.

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING: EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

Two examples of assessment activities were launched in two colleges in the Fall of 2022 in response to the need to develop guidelines for programs that do not have a national accrediting agency. The College of Arts and Sciences launched a process of continuous improvement and continuity development and documenting for student learning outcomes. These SLOs have been entered into the Watermark assessment system, Outcomes Assessment Projects. 40 percent of the programs have utilized the system to create projects from which data have been collected, analyzed, and reviewed by programs.

In Fall of 2022, and in the College of Education and Human Development, SLOs were developed by the BA and MA programs in psychology. These SLOs were entered into the Watermark assessment system, Student Learning and Licensure. Both programs have utilized the system to set up assignments in specified courses. Data has been collected, analyzed and reviewed by both programs and can be found on the HLC Accreditation page.

GovState maintains many resources to support teaching and learning on-campus and online. First, the University Library has an extensive collection of on-site and online books and special collections, and databases to meet the research and scholarship needs of students. The University extends its collection through participation in the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI) as well as being a Government Depository Library for federal state documents. The library also maintains a staff of five librarian faculty all students, faculty, and staff can access to receive specialized and professional services for their teaching and learning needs.

The University works to support all faculty and students with access to technology. Since 2014, all freshman starting at GovState have been offered a free laptop to access online learning resources and complete their assignments. Faculty have their technology updated through a five-year computer refresh cycle managed by the Department of Institutional Technology. Additionally, the University maintains a computer lab, loner laptop program, and computer classrooms in multiple locations across campus to foster online student learning. As described in 5.C.5, in the fall of 2023, as part of the Information Technology Strategic plan and the increased focus on cybersecurity, IT revised its overall technology support planning for cost savings and improved quality in equipment selection to support faculty and staff productivity. See sources file for the updated plan.

The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) manages many resources to help foster student learning, including our learning management system, Blackboard and Watermark programs to help address student licensure items. For faculty, this includes a lounge to connect with one another on campus, tutorials on multiple forms of teaching and learning, use of technology classes, like the new HyFlex instruction classrooms, working with diverse student populations, universal design and more. CTL has two certified Quality Matters (QM) peer reviewers to provide feedback on online and hybrid course design. Online courses are able to go through a course review process to receive QM certification. Lastly, the CTL working with the Professional Development committee, also works to facilitate faculty professional development experiences, including a faculty professional development day that occurs before each fall semester.

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING: EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

The Academic Resource Center, under the direction of the Dean of Students and its Executive Director, provides numerous resources to students through its multiple offices housed in the center. Resources include tutoring services, writing center services, access services for students with disabilities, new student program services, course-embedded peer mentoring, student support services including support through our early-alert system GSU Star, and academic recovery programs.

Lastly, each degree-granting college, the Honors College, and University Library maintain various lab, lounge, and conference room working spaces which are managed by staff in those colleges and divisions. Appropriate students and staff within those units have access to those spaces and materials.

Section II of the University Board of Trustees Regulations provides guidance for faculty hiring at GovState. Any faculty posted position must have approval from all appropriate levels of administration and ultimately, the President of GovState. For all faculty hiring, credentials are reviewed to ensure that faculty meet HLC standards for faculty qualifications and at least one degree level above that which they will be teaching. For tenure-track faculty, a terminal degree in an area relevant to the content taught is a minimal expectation, along with the expectation to have a record of achievement appropriate to the degree program they will teach in and the rank at hire they will be considered for.

The GovState-UPI agreement details the evaluation processes for tenure/tenure-track faculty, Unit B faculty, and academic support professionals (ASP). Tenure-track faculty go through an annual review process that includes a division/department personnel committee, division/department chair, college dean, University Personnel Committee (Years 4-6), and Provost before retention decisions are made by the University President. Tenured faculty go through review quadrennially or when going up for promotion. Unit B and ASP members go through an annual review process. Each Division/Department have clearly established criteria for retention, tenure, and promotion in the areas of primary duties (teaching), research, and service. The University only has one course offering designed as "dual credit" with a high school or community college and maintains faculty standards for the dual credit faculty that are in-line with HLC requirements.

4.A.5.

Information on specialized accreditations by program, agency and most recent accreditation activity is published on the University homepage under the "HLC Accreditations" ribbon and on the webpages of the respective colleges. The University maintains appropriate and current specialized accreditations for its academic programs and uses the information in the accreditation process, both internal and external, to make changes in program delivery, staffing, and the student experience. Though not an accrediting agency for a program, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the nation's leading professional organization working on behalf of young children, has awarded operating accreditation to the Family Development Center (FDC). The FDC also maintains a Gold Circle of Quality status by the State of Illinois's Quality In Early Childhood Education rating system. The table of accreditations is found in the sources file for this component.

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING: EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

4.A.6.

All programs that are eligible at both the undergraduate and graduate level seek specialty accreditation. In that process, they provide an analysis of the data they collect on the success of its graduates. In addition, the programs must demonstrate evidence of employer satisfaction and employment placement rates, as well as data on student enrollment in advanced degree programs. In academic year 2023-24, the University launched the First Destination Survey, the National Council of Career Educators instrument used for tracking student employment. The report may be reviewed in the Resource Document for this component. Individual academic programs also track pass rates for licensure (data from education and physical therapy) and use the data to study performance metrics and address barriers to student success.

The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness (IRE) is responsible for reporting data to the Illinois Board of Higher Education on employment. They use these data for state benchmarking on factors such as retention and completion, and for the interactive dashboards on transfer and employment.

Sources

- 4.A.1 - 001 APRC 3-5 Year Schedule
- 4.a.1._002_ APRC Summary Report for BOT
- 4.a.1._003 APRC - Assessment of Student Learning
- 4.a.2. 004 Policy 30
- 4.a.2_006_VTC
- 4.a.3.1_008_TG
- 4.a.3.1_009_Public Act 099-0358
- 4.a.3.2_010_Policy31
- 4.a.3.2_011_Policy34
- 4.a.3.2_013_Policy36
- 4.a.3.2_014_IAI
- 4.a.3.4_015_AcademicMOUs
- 4.A.4-2_016_Policy2
- 4.a.4-2_017_UCC
- 4.A.4-2_018_Policy72
- 4.A.4-2_019_Policy51
- 4.A.4-5_020_CAS
- 4.A.4-6_021_HLC
- 4.a.4-8_022_ITstrategicPlan
- 4.A.4-9_023_CTL
- 4.a.5-1_025_GoldCircleofQuality
- 4.A.6. _27 Program Pass Rates - COHHS - DPT
- 4.A.6. _27 ProgramPassRates - COEHD
- 4.A.6-1_026_Handshake

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING: EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

4.B - Core Component 4.B

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

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

Argument

4.B.1.

Comprehensive Outcomes Assessment Plan
Assessment at GovState has evolved into a mature structure of continuous improvement, which is supported by a University-wide comprehensive outcomes assessment plan and effective processes resulting in systematic approaches for collecting and analyzing data of student learning outcomes at the programmatic and co-curricular levels. The assessment results are drawn from both accredited, and non-accredited programs at GovState. Primarily, the [Committee on Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (CASLO)](#) a faculty led committee is responsible for driving assessment changes and improvements at the University. CASLO has seen its challenges, but with the assistance, a faculty led committee, of the Executive Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, the committee has taken major steps towards ensuring assessment across all units is consistent and robust.

Between 2022 and 2023, the academic colleges have added a professional position in assessment or have designated personnel to organize and publish assessment results. The Committee on Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (CASLO) functions as the University-wide assessment leadership team under the supervision of the Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness and the Office of the Provost. During academic years 2019-22, assessment activities were affected by the COVID 19 pandemic and the transition of delivery methods to online only. The University, in the period of this review, added software programs to support assessment activities and documentation for reporting, including but not limited to WEAVE and Watermark suite products. The narrative that follows describes the assessment processes, assessment structures, and institutional infrastructures that support successful student learning.

The University-wide comprehensive outcomes assessment plan serves as the framework by which assessment is monitored, implemented and results collected to improve students' learning at all levels of the University's curriculum. The University-wide plan is set to a three-year cycle, of review and

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING: EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

a refresh of the units individual assessment plan. With this cycle academic programs, co-curricular programs and centers are required to annual collect student assessment data which targets program level outcomes and tracks students' achievement. This process is in place for the academic units while the co-curricular programs and centers are migrating into the University's plan beginning Spring 2024.

During the early stages of assessment at GovState, all programs engaged in the development of curriculum mapping at the program level. Specifically, curriculum mapping highlighted an overview of where outcomes are delivered to fortify learning. Outcomes are indicated by three-levels: introduction (I), reinforced (R), and mastery (M). These three levels are indicators that align learning with program level outcomes. The general education program also mapped University level outcomes across college programs and units. Bloom's taxonomy and American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) value rubrics were both used by individual programs to target levels of learning outcomes and to draft assessment plans at the degree level.

The overall structure of the University's Comprehensive Outcomes Assessment plan outlines six best practices that assist with elevating quality improvement. This also includes a three-year institutional cycle. This cycle is designed for reviewing progress reports and annual assessment reports at the program and unit levels. Therefore, the cycle allows units and programs to demonstrate the implementation of assessment results used to improve students' learning. The comprehensive outcomes assessment plan clearly delineates the roles and duties of faculty as related to evaluating students' learning. A wide selection of assessment tools is provided within the plan as well as both direct and indirect assessment measures used to validate each outcome.

4.B.2.

Assessment at the program level
The components of assessment plans at this level, include a mission statement, goals, student learning outcomes, assessment methods are drawn from both direct and indirect measures, including a cycle for continuous improvement where assessment results are infused into the curriculum and results are monitored and analyzed for improvement of student learning.

University Level Assessment
GovState has a history of using national surveys to measure institutional effectiveness, examining national trends, while using comparative data for gauging institutional productivity. Similarly, student life and career services also gathers data offering insights and trend data which the University uses for planning and effectiveness.

Expanding the University's capacity to use national survey data, the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness has developed a newly proposed suite of surveys that will provide a wide scope of data points and national comparison to assist with decision making at multiple levels within the University. These surveys can be found in the sources file for this component. The final decision is pending approval from the Cabinet. The University has administered several national surveys such

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING: EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

as NSSE & FSSE. While limited currently, GovState is preparing to expand its array of national caparison data and survey tools. Internally OIRE has assisted programs with the [development of targeted homegrown surveys,](#) such as IT survey, education surveys and others. See sources file for list of surveys. OIRE is in the early stages of presenting to senior administration, a University-wide survey policy, cycle, as well as a list of consortium surveys. These surveys will be beneficial in developing strategies to increase student learning while also gauging progress towards mission critical goals.

Pursuant to state law, GovState completes multiple surveys and reports which are used for planning. The following survey assist the University with salary & benefits data while tracking trends: the Report of Public University Administrator and Faculty Salary and Benefits report is required by Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) Salary Report [(Public Act 96-266](#)). Similarly, GovState also completes the IBHE Employment Plans report. This survey gathers information on the ethnicity of employees. A similar survey is the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Report. This survey requires the University to gather employment status data by various demographic groups. Collectively, these surveys and reports are vital to institutional effectiveness and planning – Illinois General Assembly – Illinois Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5/2-105) of the University.

The College and University Professional for Human Resources (CUPA-HR) survey is another prudent survey that allows the University to examine salary and workforce data which is critical to decision making at different levels within the University. This CUPA-HR survey allows the University to analyze data and reports while looking at larger institutional outcomes. In a like manner, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) Survey allows the University to look at faculty compensation data and setting salary targets. Annually, the University completes the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and its collection of surveys which are also connected to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Often the University submits survey data to both agencies while gathering data for analysis and the capture of trends that help the University with planning and effectiveness.

4.B.3.

As part of the comprehensive assessment plan, [CASLO](#) has developed the University's Comprehensive Outcomes Assessment plan which is saturated with best practices of assessment, as well as both direct and indirect assessment tools. The comprehensive outcomes assessment plan sets the cadence for assessment at the University and at the academic and co-curricular levels. The structure for units' outcomes assessment plan is appropriate for each specific degree and its level. Similarly, the same approach is taken for the co-curricular units as they measure goals that support student learning.

Through the assessment process, faculty set learning outcomes and goals while gathering evidence of students' learning. They are also responsible for interpreting the results which inform cycles of continuous improvement. Faculty are at the core of the curriculum, and therefore they are in the

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING: EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

position to develop goals and assessment learning outcomes that are appropriate at the program level. At the co-curricular level, staff are responsible for developing program level outcomes, whereas the unit heads are responsible for outlining major goals that are appropriate to support student learning.

In its centralized role, CASLO is the nucleus for the University's assessment practices and each college has an assessment coordinator and or a department chair who is responsible for assessment activities at the program level. The assessment coordinators and department chairs are responsible for guiding and decisively assisting programs with their assessments. Assessment plans are therefore built by individual programs and assessment reports outlining results are forwarded to CASLO to ensure consistency and to provide a feedback loop regarding assessment results following each term. The assessment structure entails programs developing assessment plans that are based on a three-year cycle. After each semester, programs are to submit their assessment results. At this time CASLO will use an assessment rubric and provide feedback to programs based on the completeness of their assessment activities and their results.

Co-curricular Assessment

Assessment at the co-curricular level has been carried out by student life and units from admissions and enrollment management as well as units under the Dean of Students. The structure of assessment plans for this area of the University will be similar to the academic plans consisting of a mission statement: goals for the unit, which are in support of student learning, and assessment methods using tools of best practice, will be implemented. The Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan and assessment have synergized to support the enrollment plan and the college' strategic plans. The co-curricular units' assessment plans are also submitted to CASLO which allows the committee to provide a feedback loop for continuous improvement across the University's units. University centers are also being migrated into the University-wide assessment process. This is a new phase of development for the University. As outlined previously, both co-curricular units and centers will also follow a similar three-year assessment cycle.

General Education Assessment

The general education program has begun displaying its survey results and data that demonstrate students' learning of the University level outcomes: The GE assessment plan and cycles. Collectively, the Qualtrics survey tool is used to demonstrate students' learning matched with university level outcomes which is further demonstrated through Tableau and the GE dashboard. OIRE has collaborated with the GE program to collect assessment data while also assisting with the validation of the GE learning goals: assessment tools used by faculty to measure student's success, and the accomplishment of larger institutional goals. During the Summer of 2023, the first phase of the GE survey development was administered using Qualtrics. The data generated from it was used to populate the current GE dashboard. A total of 158 faculty participated. As part of the process several meetings were held with the GE committee to review the survey, the results and the output of the GE dashboard. Survey results are displayed in the GE dashboard where both qualitative and quantitative information is captured. The survey is given at the end of the term asking faculty to comment on various tools used for assessment, strategies used for improving, learning as well as methods used to measure the success of students toward meeting GE outcomes and course level goals.

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING: EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

The University has clearly stated goals for student learning as detailed in Policy 51. Specifically, the University has established learning outcomes centered around four areas: foundational knowledge, practical skills, social responsibility, and integrative learning. Additionally, students are required to complete a writing intensive course per Policy 48 each year, at the freshman, junior seminar, and senior capstone levels per Policy 72. The four General Education Learning Outcomes are prominently displayed on the University website.

Assessment of learning is measured by student mastery of GE learning outcomes at the University and program level. At the University level, the General Education Student Learning Outcomes (GE-SLOs) were developed by the General Education Task Force, a joint committee of the Faculty Senate and the administration. Courses identified as general education were developed and aligned to GE-SLOs, creating a matrix of all general education courses with their specific assignments or course activities. Once the GE-SLOs were adopted through approval of Policy 51, the GE Task Force was dissolved and through a resolution of the Faculty Senate, and the General Education Council was formed under direction of a GE Director.

The GE Council established a process for approval of courses designated as general education. It implemented a plan for assessment of student achievement toward meeting SLOs, which includes faculty members teaching courses within the freshman and sophomore cohorts. Faculty evaluate student progress toward mastery of the GE-SLOs. Learning outcomes are evaluated on a three-year rotating basis with a three-level approach. In the first year, the Foundational Knowledge and Social Responsibility outcomes are assessed. Level 1 focuses on courses required for all lower-division students: First-year Seminar (FYS 1001), Writing Studies I & II (ENGL 1000 and 1010, respectively), Mastering College (COUN 1008), and Public Discourse (COMM 1000). At the second level, a sample of general education courses is selected, and instructors are surveyed. The Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) is used as the Level 3 assessment tool. In the second year, the process is repeated with the focus on the Practical Skills and Integrative Learning outcomes. The third year of the cycle is used to reflect on the effectiveness of the prior assessment, make data-informed modifications of the assessment process, as well as curricular revisions as indicated, and gather additional data for any of the SLOs that need further evaluation. Ultimately, the data collected and analyzed are used in three ways: 1) to assist GE course faculty in refining or redesigning assignments/activities to best capture student mastery of identified outcomes; 2) to provide a basis for discussion among the GE Council as it continuously look to improve and/or refine specific learning outcomes; and 3) to provide program faculty with a snap shot on the level of student mastery of the GE-SLOs as they transition from GE to program-level courses.

At the program level, the assessment of GE outcomes is the responsibility of program faculty through student performance in the junior seminar and the senior capstone. The junior seminar is intended to support junior-level students' transition from a broad intellectual experience in general education to a more focused study of a particular field. The junior seminar is designed to reinforce the GE-SLOs

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING: EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

in the areas of Foundational Knowledge, Practical Skills, and Social Responsibility. These outcomes are evaluated through key course assessments. A senior capstone course must provide a genuinely comprehensive experience as identified through the Integrative Learning outcome. The results of this culminating experience are evaluated to measure mastery of those indicators.

The First Year Seminar (FYS1001) is dedicated to introducing students to interdisciplinary thinking and analysis, demonstrating the important role of the humanities in addressing contemporary social problems, and helping students sharpen critical thinking skills. Each of the approved course-level Student Learning Outcomes matches the Foundational Knowledge criteria of the University's General Education Requirements. Annual faculty-led assessments of FYS evaluate how effectively submitted student work meets these criteria. Starting in Fall 2023, FYS is guided by the First Year Seminar Handbook.

First Year Seminar instructors assign a broadly similar "reflection essay" during the semester. After the submission of final grades, the Director of First Year Seminar and Director of General Education collect a random sample of essays from each section to be evaluated. With student names removed, three or four faculty members read each essay and evaluate how effectively it meets a particular Foundational Knowledge criterion.

To help meet the assessed Student Learning Outcomes, all First Year Seminar instructors are given the opportunity to embed Writing Fellows in their sections. Trained in the faculty-led Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) program, the Writing Fellows are advanced undergraduate students who provide one-on-one writing mentorship throughout the semester. The fellows offer individualized guidance on all facets of the writing process, constructive feedback on works-in-progress, and encouragement to foster a growth mindset among students. FYS instructors have also had the option to incorporate peer mentors into their sections. These mentors were previously trained in the Title III grant-funded Center for the Junior Year. Following the conclusion of the grant, the mentors have moved to the newly created First Generation Center. Peer mentors serve a multifaceted role, connecting struggling students to supports on campus, sharing study and time management strategies, and encouraging students to become strong self-advocates.

Sources

- 4.A.4-2_018_Policy72
- 4.A.4-2_019_Policy51
- 4.b.1-1_028_COAP
- 4.B.2-2_029_CS
- 4.B.2-3.030_SoS
- 4.b.2-4_031_OIREsurveys2020-2024

- 4.B.2-4_032_PA96-266
- 4.b.3-4_033_SEM
- 4.b.3-5_034_GEdashboard
- 4.B.3-6_036_Policy48
- 4.B.3-6_038_GELO
- 4.b.3-8_040_FYSH

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING: EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

4.C – Core Component 4.C

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

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

Argument

4.C.1.

The goals for student retention, persistence and completion are established in both the University Strategic plan, specifically goals 2 and 4, and in the Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan. The strategic directions and the SEM plan were developed collaboratively by over 100 members of the University campus and stakeholders to assure that all perspectives and approaches to student success and achievement were heard. The strategic plan and the SEM plan were reviewed and accepted by the Board of Trustees as core actions to be implemented by the campus. Goal 2 of the University's current Strategic Plan- Strategy 2025 is called *Student Success* as it specifically identifies strategic objectives to address student retention, persistence, and degree completion. Goal 4 of the University's Strategic Plan is called *Enrollment Optimization*, as it is focused on improving enrollment for our Hispanic student population and other goals as discussed in our SEM plan.

Institutional commitment to student achievement is reflected in such structures as the Retention Committee and the R2G Committee (return to graduation) housed in Student Affairs and composed of staff, faculty and University leaders (as described in 4.B.3 below). In addition. GovState's internal policies 8, 26, 32, 34, 51 and 76 govern retention, persistence and completion.

In academic year 2020-21, the University contracted with Ruffalo Noel Levitz (RNL) to develop a Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan. The purpose of the SEM Plan is to provide comprehensive analysis, evaluation and direction for strategic enrollment management of the University which includes examination of recruitment, admissions, persistence and retention efforts.

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING: EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

The Division of Student Affairs manages the SEM Plan in collaboration with a campus wide leadership team composed of faculty, academic administrators, student affairs staff, and IR under the direction of the Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management. The SEM Plan is included in the Document Library for this component. The SEM plan has its own institutional budget allocation and is used as the strategic plan for the University's recruitment, enrollment, persistence, retention and graduation efforts. The full plan is included in the Evidence Room for this component.

The campus wide execution of the plan created the foundation for the initial development of six committees (undergraduate admissions, graduate admissions, retention, academic program development, finance, and marketing) to develop situational analyses and 15 strategy groups to create financially viable solutions to address the situational analysis and grow enrollment over the next five years. Those strategies were presented to Cabinet members, and the 10 strategies that were approved for development are noted in the SEM plan and include objectives, rationale, short- and longer-term goals for the strategy. Several of the six committees continue to meet to evaluate the progress of the approved strategies, to see how University departments can be supported in achieving strategy goals and objectives.

In Spring 2023, the SEM leadership team hosted a check-in event with the teams working on each of the goals. This in-house, day long summit with the University's RNL Consultant provided an opportunity for each area to showcase the status of their efforts and to receive feedback for next steps. Initial results of the implementation of the SEM Plan can be seen in the area reports in the evidence files. The report template captures information on the strategy, strategy owners, a brief description of the strategy, substantive actions taken and anticipated, next steps, metrics and anticipated outcomes.

As described here, the University's two strategic documents - Strategy 2025 and the SEM Plan - not only provide the conceptual framework for addressing recruitment, retention, and persistence but also specific directions and metrics to support current and extended efforts to continue to manage degree completion efforts.

4.C.2.

The University routinely uses data to make informed decisions regarding students' retention, their persistence and completion rates. The Division of Student Affairs collaborates with the Offices of the Provost and Institutional Research and Effectiveness in tracking student performance through the use of the SLATE software. Faculty also use Starfish, a highly respected software program at three designated points in each semester to track student performance, twice at the beginning of the term and once at midterm. The results of the Starfish reports are used to direct or recommend students to appropriate learning support services at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. In addition, the professional advising staff along with the retention coaches provide high touch engagement with students to assure they are aware of services and how to access them to improve learning.

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING: EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

Data is collected by IR for the institution on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs. The reports include the migration report and the annual Profile of Academic Majors (PAM). The PAM report is a key document used by the institution for its budget development along with the weekly retention and enrollment reports known as the "semester retention dashboard" sent to all campus leadership by IR. The University uses Colleague to provide year-over-year trend analysis and to track changes in student migration between programs. The persistence report tracks registration, financial holds and billing status, graduation by level, weekly retention up to census date and SAP.

Analysis of the data occurs in the academic units, with the retention specialists in Student Affairs, with the academic advisors in Academic Affairs, and with IR for internal and external reporting purposes. The Vice President for Student Affairs and Strategic Enrollment reviews the data daily with the admissions staff and with the University President. In addition, the IR Budget Analyst provides data from the retention report to the University budget manager for the Illinois State Legislature (ISL) report annually. Data from the report is also used for marketing and recruitment campaigns, establishing the program and college budgets, staffing and hiring decisions based on program enrollment, development and funding of student support services, and library collection management. Student migration data is also used in consideration of tuition, credit hours and cost of delivery methods in academic planning. The University triangulates its reporting with the National Student Clearinghouse and with IPEDS to create thorough descriptions of student completion behaviors. The University also participates in the Student Achievement project SAM which is described here:

The Student Achievement Measure (SAM) is a national project which provides an improved way to report undergraduate student progress and completion. SAM tracks student movement across postsecondary institutions to provide a more complete picture of undergraduate student progress and completion within the higher education system. SAM is an alternative to the federal graduation rate, which is limited to tracking the completion of first-time, full-time students at one institution.

GovState has used data for program planning and development, such the Honors College transformation from a program to a new academic unit, largely possible because of the success of the program participants. For instance, GovState's Honors College graduates include students who have been accepted for graduate work in master's and doctoral programs at Governors State University and across the region and beyond. They include students who earned those advanced degrees and work in the fields of clinical neuropsychology, cybersecurity, licensed professional counseling, school counseling, physical therapy, speech pathology, academic advising, accounting, law, marketing management, and governmental service such as the Peace Corps.

4.C.3.

The University uses retention and persistence data, including migration data, to make improvements as warranted by the data. The office of Institutional Research tracks information on the number of program completers by academic college and field, which is also reported annually to the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE). The University maintains a webpage specifically on retention, persistence

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING: EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

and completion. The data is also a foundational topic within the President's annual budget testimony to the state legislature and is reported for iPeds (see 4.C.4 below). Internally, the University also uses these data sets for program planning and budget development purposes. For instance, the University reports to the highest completion rates as part of its annual IBHE budget development meeting each fall. In Fall 2023, the programs with the highest completion rates were undergraduate interdisciplinary studies, psychology, business administration, public health and criminal justice. The highest performing graduate programs by completers were computer science, social work, communication disorders, education administration and counseling. Additional information on completion rates by gender and race may be viewed in the sources file for this component. Below are a series of representative samples of how the data is used to make improvements to student success.

Ongoing work and evaluation that is connected to the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan (SEM) is described in 4.C.1 above. Groups including the undergraduate (USAP) and graduate student admission planning (GSAP) groups and retention to graduation continue to meet to evaluate process on the SEM plan. Over the course of the academic year, representatives connected to the 10 approved enrollment strategies meet with USAP and GSAP members (faculty, staff, and administrative members) to discuss data, success on initiatives process and timelines and highlight where the committees can work to be supportive to the strategy teams accomplishing their enrollment objectives. The committees also meet with groups, beyond the SEM strategies that have goals relative to the USAP and GSAP missions. For example, in 2022-2023, an initiative was launched to elevate the GovState Honors Program to Honors College, which formally occurred in Fall 2023. In the last 10 years, the percentage of undergraduates in honors education at GovState has grown by 3x from 1.4 percent to 5.8 percent. It was believed that elevating the program to college would further help with attracting more students to GovState and aid in the retention and graduation of more GovState students.

Multiple GovState offices work with specialized student populations, also work to gather data aimed to improve retention and graduation programs. The Retention to Graduation (R2G) committee is a 25-person committee including students, staff, faculty, and administrators, that is charged to review retention, persistence, and graduation data and make recommendations that point to successes on improving retention and graduation across campus. The Dual Degree Program (DDP) was developed in 2014 to encourage retention and completion of students through encouraging full-time enrollment at the community college to earn an associate's degree, and then upper division study at GovState.

GovState remains committed to making improvements to the student learning experiences in online courses and encourages persistence and retention by becoming a Quality Matters™ (QM) subscriber institution. QM is an internationally recognized program for best practices in online course design and delivery in higher education. In emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the continually growing demands for quality online courses, GovState subscribed to QM starting in March 2020. The mission of QM is to "promote and improve the quality of online education and student learning". Since March of 2020 several official QM workshops have been offered through or facilitated by staff from

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GSU's Center for Teaching & Learning which have been attended by faculty across all colleges and several programs. Faculty participants can use the pedagogy learned from QM to continually improve their online, hybrid, and potentially in-person courses increasing student engagement, and therefore retention in courses.

In April 2022, the University joined the Gardner Institute's project on curricular analytics that is focused on understanding barriers to timely graduation. GovState's focus in the project was on licensure rates in professional programs for accounting, social work, early childhood education and nursing. The project work has been conducted by University faculty members in the program and presentations on how to reduce barriers to timely graduation in these fields has been shared with the departments and programs to address through curricular revisions. Information on the Gardner project is found in the sources file for this component.

4.C.4.

The University uses the IPEDS definitions in determination of persistence and completion rates, supplemented by the guidance of IBHE. The University currently uses National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) data in reviewing students who did not enroll, persist, or graduate through Student Tracker. This allows the University to analyze the data and create outreach processes to support holistic reclamation efforts. In addition, the University is developing a process to send student data to the National Student Clearinghouse Postsecondary Data Partnership (PDP) to analyze student completion and potential for recovery of some college no degree or swirling students. The University continues to provide data to the US Department of Education through IPEDS and the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE). This data assists in measuring persistence and retention for the University in a way that is standardized and can be compared easily with our peer institutions and is located in the sources file.

Particularly suitable to GovState is our pursuit of the Excelencia in Education award which is a data-driven process of recognition for those campuses that have aggressive, high-quality and results driven recruitment to completion processes for Hispanic students. As an MSI, GovState uses its data for continuous improvement efforts in meeting the needs of students and stakeholders in our service region. The University also uses the retention to completion data in suggesting, selecting and determining partnerships with community colleges, MOUs that will increase the University's ability to diversity degree offerings, and in strategic planning and long and short-term goal setting.

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING: EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

Sources

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- 4.b.3-4_033_SEM
- 4.c.1-1_042_Strategy2025
- 4.C.1-2_044_Policy8
- 4.C.1-2_046_Policy26
- 4.C.1-2_047_Policy32
- 4.C.1-2_050_Policy76
- 4.c.1-2_054_pam

- 4.c.1-2_055_SAM
- 4.c.1-2_056_IPEDS
- 4.c.1-2_057_QuickFacts
- 4.c.1-4_058_QM
- 4.C.3 CTL
- 4.c.3-5_059_GardnerInstitute
- 4.C.4-1_060_IBHE
- 4.c.4-2_061_excelencia

4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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

Summary

GovState demonstrates its commitment to its educational programs, learning environments, and support services in multiple ways. First, the educational programs are created, designed, reviewed and implemented through a comprehensive multivocal process that involves faculty, shared governance, budget review, the Board of Trustees and the Illinois Board of Higher Education for ultimate approval. Learning environments form a significant part of the budget of the University to finance appropriate equipment and lab space, ensure reliable web support and security, purchase of learning support and professional development tools for The Center for Teaching and Learning, and the recruitment of students, faculty and staff to offer the living and learning experiences appropriate for the campus population. During the Covid pandemic and post-pandemic years, GovState was challenged to continue with its assessment efforts. However, since 2022, renewed activities by the General Education Committee, the campus wide assessment committee (CASLO), the Academic Masterplan Committee, and others have extended the franchise of building a culture of assessment of student learning outcomes campuswide to match the work that the Colleges and learning support programs are presenting. GovState has added participation in the College Student Inventory (CSI), the First Destination Career Survey, and ongoing alumni surveys help to shape understanding of the educational and career needs of current students and graduates.

Sources

There are no sources.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, RESOURCES AND PLANNING

5. INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, RESOURCES AND PLANNING

The institution's resources, structures, processes and planning are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

5.A - Core Component 5.A

Through its administrative structures and collaborative processes, the institution's leadership demonstrates that it is effective and enables the institution to fulfill its mission.
1. Shared governance at the institution engages its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students—through planning, policies and procedures.
2. The institution's administration uses data to reach informed decisions in the best interests of the institution and its constituents.
3. The institution's administration ensures that faculty and, when appropriate, staff and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy and processes through effective collaborative structures.

Argument

Response
GovState is compliant with Core Component 5 in its commitment to shared governance, used of data to create informed decisions, and implementation of structured and scaffolded collaborative structures for fulfillment of the University's mission.

Introduction
GovState exercises responsible stewardship of financial resources and best practices in talent management to ensure that the University's administrative structures are effective. Through shared governance and collaborative processes, the University ensures that the campus community is able to engage with and contribute to future directions and planning processes in support of the mission. Data-driven decision making is widely deployed in support of all aspects of University operations.

Narrative
Outlined below are discussions of how the campus participates in shared governance, how decision making is prismatic in nature encompassing student needs, finance, market demands, and the mission of the University, all organized around transparent and systematic commitment to the learner.

5. INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, RESOURCES AND PLANNING

5.A.1.

As delineated in 2.C, GovState is governed by an eight-member. The Board of Trustee's role in contributing to planning, polices and procedures include the following::

- Approving and maintaining the mission
- Approving the strategic plans
- Approving the annual budget before submission to IBHE
- Approving capital expenditure requests before submission to the IBHE
- Approving tenure for faculty
- Approving increases to tuition and fees
- Approval of certain contracts in excess of $250,000
- Approval of a request for initiation of a new degree program or a new unit of instruction, research, or public service, including the establishment of a college, school, department, division, center, or institute
- Setting policy in all areas, including but not limited to the following areas (set forth in Policy):
    1. Consideration of proposals of the President, faculty, staff, and students presented in accordance with established Board procedures.
    2. Adoption of policies and regulations to insure the effective administration and management of the University and to encourage the highest quality of instruction, scholarship, and appropriate service by the faculty.
    3. Review and approval of educational goals and purposes, including statements of the University's mission and scope.
    4. Evaluation of the President and her or his execution of Board policies and regulations by its employees.
    5. Development of a Code of Ethics for Board members.
    6. Consideration, approval or disapproval of other matters requiring action by the Board.

The Board is active in campus life with trustees in attendance at campus events and celebrations beyond their mandate as a governing body, as detailed in their bylaws and regulations. GovState trustees possess a range of professional backgrounds. They all have a strong commitment to higher education.

The Board meets quarterly and hears reports from campus constituents, entertains public comments as part of the Open Meetings Act, and requests formal presentations from campus stakeholders when needed to better understand the activities of the University. In the Spring 2023, the board meeting structure changed its deliberative process from small groups of trustees meeting as supporting topical individual committees (e.g., Finance and Human Resources) to all trustees meeting as a Committee of the Whole. After a deliberative meeting, the full board meeting is held and formal actions are taken.

5. INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, RESOURCES AND PLANNING

An optional part of each meeting of the Board is the executive session, which allows the Board to meet without taking any votes on more confidential or sensitive issues. Board meetings also include reports from the presidents of the Faculty Senate, Civil Service Senate, Student Senate, and the University administration, including a regular report from the President.

The Faculty Senate, in addition to serving the governance needs of its members, also has a significant role in university academic policy in collaboration with the Office of the Provost. The Faculty Senate is the elected and representative body of the faculty. The Faculty Senate considers, makes recommendations, and passes resolutions concerning matters of University interest, including policies and processes regarding curriculum, academic programs, research, and faculty status, and other responsibilities and obligations necessary for shared governance as outlined in their bylaws. The Bylaws of the Faculty Senate document the operations of the body, outline membership requirements and expectations, and provide charters for five standing committees. The Academic Program Review Committee, Institutional Wellness Committee, the Institutional Policies Committee, the University Curriculum Committee, and the Policy Monitoring Committee. In addition, the bylaws describe the General Education Council and the Graduate Studies Council and outline the Planning and Budgetary Advisory Committee (PBAC). The Senate, in addition to the membership body, has an internal executive committee that meets twice a month to set the agenda for the upcoming meetings and consults with leadership and other campus stakeholders on matters that are of interest to the faculty as a whole.

Academic policy is governed by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs through the review of academic policies by Faculty Senate Institutional Policies Committee. The process for academic policy creation and revision allows for submission by all members of the campus community (i.e. Dean of Students, Student Senate Task Force), with an opportunity for public comment by any member of the campus community via the internal portal, prior to approval by Faculty Senate. Once approved by Senate, the policy is moved forward to the Provost to make recommendations for approval to the University President. The procedures for development and approval of administrative policies are equally inclusive. That committee is co-chaired by the Vice President for Administration and Finance and the Faculty Senate President (or designee). All units across campus are represented on this committee.

The Planning and Budget Advisory Council (PBAC) provides guidance on the University's budgetary decisions, including the setting of tuition and fees and resource allocation. The Council is advisory to the President. Decisions regarding unit allocations are integrated into the strategic planning process budget requests are reviewed along with university-wide budget priorities as developed by PBAC and approved by the President. PBAC, co-chaired by the Provost and the Vice President for Administration and Finance and composed of administrators, faculty, staff, and students, recommends a process for submitting and reviewing unit budget requests for new or expanded academic programs and for major new spending commitments. In addition, PBAC reviews the current fiscal year budget, tuition and fee levels, and strategic enhancements projects.

5. INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, RESOURCES AND PLANNING

As a campus community emphasizing shared governance, the University Professionals of Illinois (UPI), which is a union representing faculty and academic support personnel, are governed by their collective bargaining agreement. It outlines the role of UPI membership in the promotion, tenure and sabbatical leave processes; establishes the membership of committees that recognize faculty achievement such as the Faculty Excellence Award Committee; and provides the structure for the triennial negotiations as well as opportunities to participate in the development of faculty and administrative professional staff workloads and compensation policies. The Union president meets regularly with the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, consults with the University President and other Vice Presidents, and collaborates with Provost's designee who serves as the contract administrator for the administration. The Union leadership has regular executive committee meetings and purposed leadership appointments, such as for the grievance policy and recruitment efforts.

The Civil Service Senate represents the interests of all employees who are not faculty, high-level administrators, or students. It advises and recommends policies and procedures concerning Civil Service affairs, evaluations, salary, merit, Civil Service education and development, Civil Service governance, grievances and campus physical resources. The Civil Service Senate works to promote scholarship and morale and protects the rights and benefits of the civil service constituency. The Civil Service Senate helps promote quality instruction and scholarship by helping to create a positive University experience for students and supporting civil service employees' continuing education through scholarship. The Senate strives to create efficiency and increased productivity by promoting innovation and a positive work environment through morale building events. The end result is enhanced collaboration and unity through special events and concerted efforts with students, faculty, community, and staff.

The Student Senate advocates for policies that benefit students. Members are active on standing GovState committees, offering their voice on students' behalf to the administration, faculty, and the Board of Trustees. Through this work, the Student Senate strives to improve the quality of the academic and co-curricular experience at GovState and provides developmental opportunities for its members. GovState Policy 11 outlines the membership of the Student Senate. Student Senate leaders are mentored by the Dean of Students.

5.A.2.

Outcomes of data-driven decision making include the development of the Latinx Center and the First Generation Center, an increase in library holdings of books and materials published within the last 5-10 years, changes in staffing to accommodate increased campus learning and living needs, the division of academic affairs and student affairs from one unit to two with their respective vice presidents, and negotiation of the current UPI agreement as well as increases in campus IT infrastructure security and cyber training enhancement (A roster of additional efforts at data-driven decision-making appears in the Evidence Room for this component).

5. INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, RESOURCES AND PLANNING

- Retention and persistence (as described in 4.C above)
- Admissions and enrollment (as described in 4.C above)
- Planning processes from the strategic plan to the Strategic Enrollment Plan (described in 4.C.2)
- Legislative testimony for the annual budget requests from the state
- New program development, new courses and certificates
- Measurement of the university's visibility and viability through media tracking and social media hits to inform marketing campaigns
- New directions and innovations for the University such as participation in Excelencia in Education and the Baldridge Award
- IT development, cybersecurity, and internet infrastructure needs
- Economic impact study
- Facilities masterplan and student needs
- New residence hall planning
- Social impact of the Center for the Performing Arts and the Social Justice Initiative [has this been measured?]
- Library resource user statistics in collection management and development
- HR salary data, IBHE and CUPA data to determine compensation policies
- Program economics and potential new curricular programs and/or program revisions based on enrollment data as informed by college-level leadership trends analysis and through the larger Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan

A specific example of how Human Resources tracks data on recruitment, retention and job performance is provided here.

At GovState, the Department of Human Resources (GovState-HR) utilizes multiple approaches, processes, and procedures to ensure the department's goals align with the University's Strategic Plan and the other departments within the organization. In the past two years, GovState-HR has analyzed turnover rates, worked with other similar institutions to look at best practices, and developed programs to ensure low turnover during one of the highest turnover times in decades. While GovState has seen its lowest turnover in 15 years (9.5 percent), it freed the unit up to look further at advancing employee development. In 2022, GovState rolled out its first stage of professional development programming through S.E.E.D.S (Securing Excellence through Employee Development and Support). The first year saw a participation number of around 50. Then through advertisement and development of specific Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion courses, the participation rate increased to about 200 employees (28 percent).

GovState-HR also analyzed the need for a new applicant tracking system (ATS) that is more intuitive for the applicant and the institution. An ATS was brought to the university at 75 percent cost savings while transforming the applicant experience to align with the "We are GOVSTATE" branding. Since the roll-out in December 2023, HR utilized data on how many touch-points applicants have to sort through while applying, making the ease of application more appealing to candidates who do not have time to

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re-enter everything they input to a resume already. The changes have produced positive feedback. Furthermore, evaluation is critical to development and succession planning. In October, the University brought a digital performance management system to address employee development, Board of Trustee requirements for review, and to prevent State of Illinois Audit Findings. While a short implementation took place, the University has seen its highest percent completion rate of 90 percent in the past decade. The ease of the digital platform allows for the additional 10 percent to be completed when employees become available (FMLA, Leave of Absence, etc). Finally, a holistic analysis was conducted on position vacancies at GovState. Historically, the university has averaged 201 days to fill positions (Civil Service, Faculty, and Principle Administrative Appointments). Since the evaluation occurred, HR closed out the calendar year 2023 with an average of 54 days to fill a vacancy in line and below other private and public organizations.

5.A.3.

As noted in 5.A.1 above, the Faculty Senate is the representative body of the faculty members and is charged with collaboration in setting academic requirements and policies and processes that affect the climate of teaching and learning. Staff and faculty participate in numerous student affairs related committees where the admissions or counseling staff are engaged with faculty members on specific student support and student life issues. In addition, faculty, staff and students participate in governance of student athletic programs and aid in recommending policies in support of student athletes' academic success. The small number of task-focused committees and faculty members' investment in student success produces effectiveness in the collaborative structures.

The culture of shared governance is codified in the [Bylaws of the Faculty Senate](#), in the [Board Bylaws and Board Policy.](#) GovState uses its policies to document academic requirements. The University's Administrative Policies Committee and [Institutional Policies Committee](#) serve as review boards for policies and processes. Membership on these committees is composed of faculty and staff as evidenced by the [University Wide committee roster.](#)

Students vote on tuition and fee increases. There is a student body member on the Board of Trustees, who votes on all matters regarding mission, strategic plan, student affairs, and other student matters. There is student seat on the Faculty Senate. The senate meetings, like the Board of Trustees, meetings are open to the campus community. The student representatives to the faculty senate and to the Board of Trustees have the opportunity to report alongside institutional officers and administrators at the regularly scheduled meetings. The University committee structures include seats for students, and the University strives to fill those seats to assure that student voices are heard.

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Sources

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- 5.a.1_011_oma
- 5.a.1_012_botpresentations
- 5.a.1_013_facsenate
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- 5.a.1_015_policies
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- 5.a.1_018_cssenate
- 5.a.1_019_studsenate
- 5.a.2_020_latinx
- 5.a.2_021_firstgen
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- 5.a.2_024_deicourses
- 5.a.2_025_hrats
- 5.a.3_026_fsbylaws
- 5.a.3_027_botpolicy
- 5.a.3_029_ipc
- 5.a.3_030_fsroster

5.B - Core Component 5.B

The institution's resource base supports its educational offerings and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

1. The institution has qualified and trained operational staff and infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The goals incorporated into the mission and any related statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources and opportunities.
3. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring its finances.
4. The institution's fiscal allocations ensure that its educational purposes are achieved.

Argument

5.B.1.

GovState employs approximately 1,000 staff and faculty in the service of the student body and the community. The HR webpage states the following about the University's hiring philosophy:

We know our greatest asset is our people: faculty, civil service support staff, professional staff and administrators. Their knowledge and dedication assures excellence in student services, academic programs, and in management to sustain the organization and prepare for its future.

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As evidenced by the organizational chart, GovState has a comprehensive infrastructure in operations and public safety managed by the Vice President for Administration and Finance to undergird successful educational experiences for students and promote high quality learning experiences.

As a representative sampling of expected qualifications and ongoing training, the employees in Facilities Development and Management (FDM) participate in required safety training via an online training module. The required training modules are determined by the job function and tasks.

Building Service Worker required safety training: Hazard Communication, Personal Protective Equipment, Respiratory Protection (when applicable), Bloodborne Pathogen, Ergonomics, Asbestos awareness, and Temperature/ Extreme Heat

Maintenance Laborer required safety training: Fire Extinguisher training, Hazard Communication, Personal Protective Equipment, Lockout/Tagout Awareness, Bloodborne Pathogen, Ergonomics, Ladder Safety, Fall Protection, Hand and Power Tool Safety, Hearing Conservation, Machine Guarding, and Temperature/Extreme Heat

Engineer required safety training: Fire Extinguisher training, Hazard Communication, Personal Protective Equipment, Lockout/Tagout Awareness, Bloodborne Pathogen, Ergonomics, Ladder Safety, Fall Protection, Hand and Power Tool Safety, Hearing Conservation, Machine Guarding, Temperature/ Extreme Heat, Confined Space Entry, and Arc Flash.

Electrician required safety training: Fire Extinguisher training, Hazard Communication, Personal Protective Equipment, Lockout/Tagout Awareness, Bloodborne Pathogen, Ergonomics, Ladder Safety, Fall Protection, Hand and Power Tool Safety, Hearing Conservation, Machine Guarding, Temperature/ Extreme Heat, Confined Space Entry, and Arc Flash.

In addition to the University required trainings, below are some of the trainings that are offered to Student Affairs staff. These trainings must be completed at least once during their time of employment.

Staff members who work with campus emergency response:

FEMA Independent Study Programs (ISP Courses)

- IS-100.C: Introduction to the Incident Command System, ICS 100
- IS-200.C: Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response, ICS-200
- IS-700.B: An Introduction to the National Incident Management System
- Active Shooter Training & Response
- Emergency Response Procedures

5. INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, RESOURCES AND PLANNING

Staff members who have oversight of University Conduct process and Dean of Students functions:

[SUNY Student Conduct Institute Modules (All Online) Access](#)

- Due Process: Theory, History & Practical Application
- FERPA Fundamentals: What Does FERPA Protect & Releasing Records Without Consent
- Mock Hearing
- Introductory Remarks, Charges and Claims, and Opening Statements
- Investigation by Panel and Witness Appearance
- Closing Statements and Deliberations
- Title IX trauma informed response
- Behavioral Intervention (BIT)
- Campus Threat Assessment
- Student Advocacy Trainings (diversity and inclusion trainings)

Staff members that work in University Housing and Auxiliary receive training in: Bloodborne pathogen, Crises response, Mental health response, Conflict mediation, Fire extinguisher training, Title IX trauma informed response, University Emergency Procedures, Soft skills training (informed listening and referrals), and Food preparations (Dining Program). TRIO staff members complete all *Priority Trainings.*

5.B.2.

The GovState mission statement expresses the following commitment to offer an exceptional and accessible education that prepares students with the knowledge, skills and confidence to succeed in a global society. The University applies various revenue streams to support its efforts to realistically align the mission to its organization, resources, and opportunities. As described in 5.C below, GovState's budget process prioritizes academic efforts in support of faculty hires, facilities and technology. GovState's 2025 state appropriation requests lead with the request for competitive market salaries to attract and retain top talent through allowing the University to hire "Best in Class" faculty. The UPI collective bargaining agreement supports hiring incentives for faculty, including application for credit for prior years of service for tenure and application for tenure purposes at hire (Article 20.6 (b) in UPI contract). The University has further requested targeted funds in the state appropriation request for the strategic enrollment plan, the [First Generation Center](#) and the [Latinx Center.](#) Capital requests for facilities focus on renovation to existing classrooms and additions to learning spaces, especially in the studio arts programs.

As noted in 5.B.1, the [University organizational charts](#) reflect the comprehensive structure of the University that is budgeted for and aligned to its mission to provide exceptional learning opportunities. The University uses its grants and development resources to create additional opportunities for learning and student success. For instance, the University in 2023 was awarded a National Science Foundation (NSF) grant for Advancing Smart Logistics, which creates opportunities for students to

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learn how to use drones in the technology development of supply chain transportation logistics. The academic MOUs in which the University participates provide other ways for students to expand their learning opportunities through partnerships such as those for law school through a 3+3 program with Southern Illinois University School of Law and with Northern Illinois University College of Law. The TRIO, TransferBoost, and LEAP Summer Bridge programs offer mission-centered avenues for recruitment, retention and persistence. The LEAP Summer Bridge program is funded through combination of Pell and MAP funds as well as nearly $400,000 in institutional operating capital support. Lastly, through GovState development efforts, the University was gifted $2 million in support of the new Honors College in December 2023. The realistic nature of the goals of both the strategic enrollment plan and the Strategic Plan were discussed in 4.C above.

5.B.3.

Budget process

As indicated in the document FY2024 Original Budget Summary, 61 percent of the operating budget directly funds the Provost and Academic Units of the University. As outlined in the document GovState's Budgeting Process 2023, decisions regarding unit allocations are integrated into the strategic planning process in which unit budget requests are reviewed along with University- wide budget priorities as developed by the Planning and Budget Advisory Council (PBAC) and approved by the University President as explained in 5.C.1 and 5.C.3 below.

The University presents its operating and capital budget appropriation requests to the Executive Director of the IBHE. The IBHE staff develops questions regarding the University's requests, the University responds, and the IBHE staff develops a set of preliminary recommendations and sends it to the University President for comment. After the University's comments are received, the IBHE staff makes a final recommendation to the IBHE Board for its approval and forwarding to the Governor of Illinois. After the University budget has been approved by the Illinois Legislature and signed by the Governor, the University then has the spending authority upon which to operate. The results of this process can be seen in our operating budgets for FY2022, 2023, 2024. As evidenced by GovState's Audited Financial Statements, GovState has managed its resources carefully to ensure that the pursuit of its core mission is adequately supported by the financial, technological, infrastructural and human resources it deploys. In the signed fiscal year 2024 Illinois Budget, GovState appropriations were awarded at $26,058,100, a 7 percent increase over fiscal year 2023. The State-approved budget also included increased funding for the Monetary Award Program (MAP), which serves low-income students, and permanently funded the AIM High Grant Program to recruit high-achieving students and keep them in Illinois. More than 90 percent of GovState's students are Illinois residents. The majority of the undergraduates receive Federal Pell Grants and Illinois State MAP grants each year. Of the freshmen receiving MAP grants, more than 85 percent are of a minority race/ethnicity. In total, 296 students were awarded AIM High funds for the academic year 2019-2020 Fall Semester.

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Budget monitoring

Once the annual operating budget is released at the start of the fiscal year, the University employees are expected to align the allocation of resources to invest in priorities and initiatives that support the University's mission and allocate these resources to meet strategic goals. These plans were approved through the PBAC process and are monitored through regular reports sent to the units through the Office of Budget and Financial Planning. University employees with budgetary authority are expected to monitor revenues and expenses regularly for their units by regular reviews of budget versus actual reports to proactively assess budget performance and ensure that budgeted revenues are realized and that spending is within budgetary authority. Decisions regarding technology implementation are part of the shared governance process. The Technology Advisory Committee (TAC) is a committee under Planning and Budgeting Advisory Committee (PBAC). One of TAC's primary objectives is to provide recommendations and advice pertaining to technology usage, guidelines, approach and direction. As explained in 5.C.5, TAC is a cross-functional committee with members from the Provost's Office, Faculty, Deans, Department Chair, Student Affairs, Civil Service, Administration, non-Academic representatives, Information Technology and Student Senate. In addition, these two committees assist through shared governance in the budget review process:

- Student Support Services Advisory Board co-chaired by the Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management and the Dean of Students. This Advisory Committee includes University administration, staff and student representation. The Committee reviews the needs of the student support organizations e.g., Academic Resource Center, Center for Student Engagement and Intercultural Programs, Career Services, Counseling and Wellness Center, International Services, Athletics and Recreation Center, and Welcome Center. The work of this committee aligns with GovState's commitment to offering an exceptional and accessible education that promotes students' quality of life.
- Facilities Advisory Committee (FAC) chaired by the Associate Vice President for Facilities Development Management. This Advisory Committee coordinates the compliance and safety priorities, deferred maintenance, capital renewal, and overall facility-related project management. The work of this committee informs the University's facilities Master Plan and is used to determine legislative priorities for capital projects in alignment with the institutional strategic plan, specifically goal six.

The Higher Learning Commission requires a Composite Financial Indicator Score of 1.1 and above for public institutions. GSU's Composite Financial Indicator Score has been above the 1.1 requirement from year to year since the State budget impasse.

In September 2021, the University successfully refinanced to a lower all-in true interest cost of its callable debts (Series 2007 Revenue Bonds, Series 2012 Revenue Bonds, and Series 2008 Certificates of Participation), which resulted in lower future debt service payments and an increase in debt capacity. The total net present value savings (in principal and interest) from the refinancing

5. INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, RESOURCES AND PLANNING

was $4.48 million over the life of the debt. On August 12, 2021, S&P Global Ratings assigned an investment grade rating of "BBB-" to the newly issued university debts (Series 2021 Revenue Bonds and Series 2021 Certificates of Participation), with a stable outlook. On May 6, 2022, S&P Global Ratings upgraded its rating to "BBB" on the University's Series 2021 Revenue Bonds and Series 2021 Certificates of Participation, and has affirmed this rating on December 9, 2022. The outlook remains stable.

5.B.4.

The University's annual budget is designed to support its educational purposes and to assure that the goals of providing a high quality and accessible education are achieved on a continuous and uninterrupted basis. Between 2010 and 2023, GovState has seen its annual appropriation decline by 14%, which has impacted the University's ability to improve upon its ability to educate historically underrepresented populations and challenged the ability to maintain high quality educational offerings and services. Due to the nature of funding in Illinois, capital requests for building renovations and expansions have been hampered by the operating practices of the Capital Development Board, which has allocated but not released funds for construction projects despite repeated testimony and direct requests of the need to do so across the state for all public universities. GovState maintains a deferred maintenance budget to support just-in-time needs and has submitted a 12 percent budget increase request for FY 2025.

As outlined in the document GovState Budgeting Process 2023, decisions regarding unit allocations are integrated into the strategic planning process. The unit budget requests are reviewed along with University-wide budget priorities as developed by the Planning and Budget Advisory Council (PBAC) and approved by the University President. The University aligns the allocation of resources to invest in priorities and initiatives that support the University's mission and allocate these resources to meet strategic goals. As evidenced by GovState's Audited Financial Statements, GovState has managed its financial resources carefully to ensure that the pursuit of its core mission is adequately supported.

A substantial portion of the revenues of the University is derived from annual appropriations made by the General Assembly pursuant to law. For both fiscal years 2020 and 2021, the State has provided GovState $23,193,600 of State appropriations, a 5 percent increase over fiscal year 2019. For both fiscal years 2022 and 2023, the State has provided GovState $24,353,300 of State appropriations, a 5 percent increase over fiscal years 2020 and 2021. For fiscal year 2024, the State has provided GovState $26,058,100 of State appropriations, a 7 percent increase over fiscal year 2023 and one of the largest appropriation increases received by GovState in the last decade. Stabilized state funding has materially improved the University's operating performance and significantly increased liquidity.

The University's financial position shows stronger financial resources from year to year as the University generates positive operating results, amortized debt and grew unrestricted net assets. Net tuition and fees, the second largest revenue source for the University, has been fairly stable from

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year to year.   Grants and contracts revenue has significantly increased the past three fiscal years (2020, 2021, 2022) due to various new federal relief grants received by the University, increased funding for the Illinois State MAP and AIM HIGH grants, and the University's increasing grant writing activities. Auxiliary enterprises revenues, which include revenues from housing, food service and Center for Performing Arts, were fairly stable from year to year, but dropped significantly in fiscal year 2021 due to occupancy restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The operations of these auxiliary enterprises started to normalize during fiscal year 2022. Payments made on behalf of the University (includes fringe benefits under special funding situation) represent the University's retirement and medical insurance (health, life, and dental) benefits funded by the State of Illinois; amounts are provided by the State and have varied widely over the years depending on actuarial estimates. Capital appropriations and grants provided by the State represents capital projects funded by the Illinois Capital Development Board (CDB), and has been increasing since fiscal year 2019 due to the various State-funded ongoing projects for the university (roofing, piping, roadway and sidewalk improvements). State Office of the Auditor General publishes the audited financial statements for all state universities on their website.

A 200-page GovState Facilities Master Plan was released in 2022 and reflects a strategic and collaborative response to achieving the University's mission with new buildings, facilities, and infrastructure. Aspects of the physical plant help GovState deliver its mission to internal and external communities. To meet educational goals in a format that fits students' needs, GovState has concentrated funding in support of online and hybrid courses. Currently, GovState offers more than 200 online and 62 hybrid courses utilizing classrooms equipped with advanced technological solutions. Computer labs for instructional use and computing stations for individual use are available for student use in the University Library, the adjacent Computer Connection Central ("The Cube"), the Hall of Governors, and in individual college labs.

The University continues to pursue state supporting funding for new buildings on the GovState campus to support the needs of our students and community. The Center for Instruction and Innovation will address the lack of large classroom spaces that can hold more than 60 students and facilitate active learning environments, forum lectures, breakout spaces, and open collaboration areas. This center would provide fully equipped, state-of-the-art instructional space including technology equipped multimedia classrooms preparing students for their futures. GovState is the only Illinois public university without a student union. Accordingly, our current facilities must incorporate space for student-centered activities normally held in a student union. A new classroom building will free up more usable space in other buildings to support those activities.

GovState has proposed funding for a Library & Learning Commons blending the concept of a modern 21st century library and a vibrant academic support center. In this innovative academic hub, services would include the University Library, Academic Resource Center, Disability Services, Undergraduate Advising Center, TRIO Support Services, and the Writing Center. Interior renovations to the library over the years have produced seminar rooms, classroom facilities, and a public bank of computer stations, as well as an enhanced entryway.

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The new Student Success Center would consolidate the academic and social support student services and life spaces currently placed throughout the campus. After meeting with several Student Support Focus Groups, there is an overwhelming desire for a consolidated Student Success Center on campus offering a comprehensive one-stop-shop for instructional and academic support services on campus. This would create a new "front door" for the campus that is dynamic, welcoming, engaging, easily recognizable; it will assist students in navigating available academic resources and support services. Additionally, the space will be designed as a high-impact, dynamic center that will aid students in fulfilling their academic potential by providing intentional and developmentally appropriate guidance and direction.

The Center for Health Equity Building will support GovState's capacity to conduct instructional, clinical, and collaborative activities central to addressing the physical, mental, and social health of communities in the Southland. As a substantial contributor to the health and human services workforce in the region, we seek to provide state-of-the-art models of care and practice and instill the values of equity and inclusivity. This innovative interdisciplinary space will unite multiple disciplines under one roof, including: Occupational Therapy; Physical Therapy; Speech-Language Pathology; Social Work; Psychology and Counseling; Nursing; and Health Administration and Health Informatics. It will present new opportunities for teaching and practicing, and for engaging the community in health- and wellness-promoting activities. GovState envision approximately 45,800 square feet providing laboratories, meeting rooms, offices, and clinical spaces, which will allow our students and faculty to provide services and conduct research designed to enhance health equity in the region. GovState continues to focus on recruitment, retention and completion of transfer, first generation and historically underrepresented students. Information on the fiscal allocations and appropriations may be found in the Evidence in support of this component.

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5. INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, RESOURCES AND PLANNING

5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities, including, as applicable, its comprehensive research enterprise, associated institutes and affiliated centers.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity, including fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue and enrollment.
5. Institutional planning anticipates evolving external factors, such as technology advancements, demographic shifts, globalization, the economy and state support.
6. The institution implements its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.

Argument

Response
GovState is compliant with Core Component 5.C in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

Introduction
GovState integrates its planning and fiscal strategic planning into the mission, the educational enterprise of the University, an understanding of its current and projected future capacity as a regional public university, and systematically links continuous improvement cycles to student learning and the institutional infrastructure.

Narrative
As described in the sections below, GovState demonstrates integrity in planning and is responsible for evaluating its operations, justifying its performance, and making needed improvements in accordance with federal obligations, obligations within the state of Illinois, and its mission to serve its students, staff, and community.

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5.C.1.

The primary investment of resources at GovState is in teaching and learning and the personnel who support the academic enterprise. Collectively, 90 percent of the operating budget is allocated towards talent management, recruitment and retention. The funding is supportive of the mission statement in its targeting of education and student learning support services.

Operating budgets are considered with the following guidelines:
- Costs that directly support the University's academic mission;
- Costs to maintain the health and safety of students, faculty and staff;
- Costs of mandated (by regulations or statutes) / compliance activities.

The budget-to-actuals reporting is divided between revenue and expenses and this report is used to develop the proposed budgets for the upcoming academic year. The institutional expenses follow a standard reporting format for higher education and provide a means for the campus to compare the projected budget from the prior year as approved by the Board, the current year's operating budget and the projected proposed updated budget. Expenses reported cover personnel, benefits, travel, permanent improvements and other operating costs. Examining the Budget to Actual by Major Category validates the University's major expenditures in personnel and benefits, followed by contractual amounts, and equipment. The unit's operating budgets are classified as the 10 Fund and the report allows each vice president and/or fund manager to see the distribution of funds by personnel designation, personal services and non-personnel services. Additional revenue is reported and tracked in the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research annual report and through the internal 17 fund which is funded by indirect costs from grants. The University's IDC policies are available on the OSPR website. In this way, the university is able to allocate its resources to align with its mission and priorities.

5.C.2.

The University allocates 85 percent of its operating budget to support the academic enterprise. Personnel costs account for employment of 158 tenure-track faculty, 84 lecturers, and 29 academic support specialists who are part of the collective bargaining unit. Representative examples of how the institution links its processes for assessment of student learning to evaluations of operations, planning and budgeting are found in the Academic Affairs Unit. The unit encompasses all academic programs, the School of Extended Learning, and the University Library. Assessment of student learning has informed decision making in the increase in smart classrooms and the addition of new technologies, in the HighFlex classrooms; the revision of lab spaces for the graduate counseling program; the transfer of a graduate programs in the College of Education and Human Development to the College of Health and Human Services; and in planning for new hires, new programs and additional facilities as

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evidenced by the Facilities Master Plan. In planning program expansion, the cost of programs is key as evidenced by the economic analyses performed by Ruffalo Noel Levitz (RNL) as part of the Strategic Enrollment Plan and in increasing enrollment through MOUs for dual degree programs, with two in-state law schools and others at the regional, national, and international levels.

The University follows a cycle of continuous improvement through the PBAC process that enables annual review of projected and actual expenditures in support of student success. The annual program reviews combined with the accreditation reports provide benchmarking data in determining appropriate allocations in support of the teaching mission of the university and align to its mission and strategic goals. Key to assuring students' learning needs are connected to overall budget planning is reflected in the annual setting of budget priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. Working with the University President and the Cabinet, the budget collects the priorities and discusses areas of emphasis, growth opportunities, enrollment and revenue growth strategies, student needs including financial support and basic needs, and the suitability of facilities for the support of teaching and learning. In this process short-term and long- term implications and results are compared, and decisions are made regarding how to prioritize and monetize plans for hiring, new program development, technology infrastructure support, and physical plant needs. An example of the state priorities is shown below. These are documented through the required annual submission of the Report to the Illinois Governor's Office of Management and Budget (GOMB) which forms the basis for the University's annual appropriations request to the State of Illinois.

1. Recruit highly qualified faculty and staff for current and relevant academic program development and delivery through:
2. Recruit, retain, and graduate a diverse population of graduate and undergraduate students by:
3. Advance implementation of the strategic enrollment plan through:
4. Extending the Academic Master Plan by:
5. Secure the release of Rebuild Illinois monies for capital renewal and investment:

As shown in the narrative above, GovState places emphasis on supporting its teaching mission through fiscal planning based on evidence derived from student learning outcomes and success information. The annual budget review and development processes create a cycle of continuous improvement informed decision making.

5.C.3.

As described in 5.B.3, and elsewhere across this report, the budget process is driven by the public and transparent discussions held in the spring of the academic year during the PBAC process. The budget process considers external constituent groups in that it is an iterative process between the University, the IBHE, and, ultimately, the Governor and General Assembly. The participation of the Board of

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Trustees in strategic planning represents the inclusion of diverse external views, in that the trustees are independent residents of Illinois. They also consider the public's views via public comment under the Open Meetings Act as reflected on the BoT meetings agendas. The externally commissioned Hanover Economic Report and IBHE economic data sets provide additional external planning information.

5.C.4.

As a state university, revenue is generated by State of Illinois appropriations for higher education, tuition and fees, endowment, gifts, and investment income and losses.

The budget office uses the following reports to measure fluctuations in revenue and enrollment and plan allocations accordingly.

- The CFI score
- The 2023 Budgeting
- 2023 Expenditure Monitoring Process
- Fiscal Year 2024 Original Budget Summary
- Fiscal Year 2025 Capital Budget Requests to IBHE
- The GSU Fiscal Year 2020 Audit Report
- The GSU 2021 Financial Audit reports 2020 and 2022
- The GSU Waiver Procedures
- GSU Master Plan summary
- PBAC tuition and fee planning for 2023-24 academic year
- Resolution 2024-07 Approval of Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2024
- Resolution 2024-09 Approval of Capital Requests to IBHE for Fiscal Year 2025
- S and P rating 2021 and 2022
- Board of Trustees Presentation Version of IT Strategic Plan
- Investment Review and Market Outlook 2023
- Internal GSU Budget Office Investment Report 2023

Narrative on Audited Financial Statements

Governors State University is subject to annual financial audit as conducted by the Illinois Office of the Auditor General. As noted in the University's audited financial statements from year to year, the auditors have expressed an unmodified opinion (clean opinion) on the University's financial statements, which is the best possible outcome. The University's financial statements from year to year are presented fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with the accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

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Narrative on Long-Term Debt

The draft HLC narratives that we previously provided to you already included a narrative on debt refinancing – please replace the original with the below revised narrative:

The University has existing revenue bonds and certificates of participation (long-term debts) used to finance deferred maintenance projects, capital improvement projects, and the construction of on campus student housing. In September 2021, the University has successfully refinanced to a lower all-in true interest cost all of its callable debts (Series 2007 Revenue Bonds, Series 2012 Revenue Bonds, and Series 2008 Certificates of Participation), which resulted in lower future debt service payments and increase in debt capacity. The total net present value savings (in principal and interest) from the refinancing was $4.48 million over the life of the debt. On August 12, 2021, S&P Global Ratings has assigned an investment grade rating of "BBB-" to the newly issued university debts (Series 2021 Revenue Bonds and Series 2021 Certificates of Participation), with a stable outlook. On May 6, 2022, S&P Global Ratings have upgraded its rating to "BBB" on the University's Series 2021 Revenue Bonds and Series 2021 Certificates of Participation and has affirmed this rating on December 9, 2022; outlook remains stable. As noted in the University's audited financial statements, long-term debt balances and the related interest expense have been decreasing from year to year as the University makes principal payments. The University remains compliant with the annual debt service requirements as set forth in the related debt covenants.

Narrative on Investments

In November 2022, the University has changed its investment strategies and partnered with an investment firm to improve investment earnings. The University's investment portfolio has been outperforming benchmark since inception, and has already generated investment earnings of about $1 million through September 30, 2023 (earnings for just 10 months from the December 1, 2022, inception).

5.C. 5.

As a University, the individual work of numerous offices to regularly evaluate their operations and administration and make meaningful change based on data now has a formal umbrella in the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness (OIRE). In addition, OIRE provides the logistical support to dig deeper into the data. This helps GovState to understand and improve across all units in the University.

An evolving external factor related to institutional planning is reflected in support for campus security. GovState invests in training for its uniformed officers that is state-mandated, federally mandated, and university mandated. In addition, the university invests in coordinated and fast emergency response protocols using CAD systems to enable campus police to review and dispatch emergency responses immediately as an incident is logged. This also includes the use of a license plate recognition system with plate recognition cameras.

5. INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, RESOURCES AND PLANNING

The Information Technology Services (ITS) department has a multiple prong approach for technology planning at Governors State University. First ITS has the responsibility to ensure all centrally managed ITS supported technologies remain up to date with the latest version of that technology. This includes everything from personal computers to enterprise-wide Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems. Secondly ITS manages technology lifecycle for those centrally managed ITS technologies; whereupon as those products approach end-of-life, ITS performs analysis of replacement technology and submits proposals for project funding from GovState. Lastly the CIO, who leads ITS, is the co-chairperson for the Technology Advisory Committee (TAC). This committee is a cross functional committee comprising of faculty, staff, and students where the committee's mission is to evaluate and recommend future technology to the executive sponsors for funding. And in addition, GovState's ITS department subscribes to various alerting mechanisms and monitors public announcements. These are reviewed and analyzed quickly whereupon if applicable a deep dive analysis is performed to determine GovState's vulnerabilities and remediate those as quickly as possible. By practice ITS applies vendor supplied patches monthly ensuring they are up to date with any vulnerability remediation from the vendors. Lastly, ITS use every security mechanism available to protect data in transit, such as encryption. All technology, hardware and software have a life cycle. In the future, GovState needs to ensure it remain on vendor supported technology. Additionally, GovState strategies such as Strategy 2025 and the Enrollment Strategy outlines future technology needed to support GovState long-term. Technology to support those strategies will also be needed in the future.

In preparation for demographic shifts, GovState continues to explore additional MOUs that will increase the number of transfer students, additional partnerships with international universities, and is consideration for an accelerated undergraduate degree completion program. Recent efforts are debt relief for students, balance clearing efforts and reviews of transfer student and credit for prior learning, which all encourage both degree completion and re-entry for stop outs. In addition, the University's exploration of banded tuition will aid students who are interested in the program to enroll in higher number of undergraduate credits at specific price point.

The School of Extended Learning is the campus leader in workforce development programs for the community. In partnership with local businesses, through grants and state-funded programs such as the apprenticeship program, GovState is able to provide employer or grant-funded training in such areas as medical billing and coding, careers in supply chain and energy fields and to contribute to statewide work readiness training as a partner in the Illinois Innovation Network.

5.C.6.

As outlined across Core Component 5, GovState is actively engaged in improvements to operations and to student learning outcomes. Some of these efforts are recapitulated below:

- Both the Strategic Plan and the Strategic Enrollment Plan focus on optimizing the learning experiences for first generation students and for Latinx students. The University has internally funded the launch of both the First Generation Center and the Latinx Center to provide leaders access to support services, advising, and programming to increase their self-efficacy and

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improve persistence. The current year-to-year persistence rate for first-year students is near 80 percent.

- The Strategic Plan established the need for Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan as part of enrollment optimization. The SEM Plan has become a foundation document for recruitment, retention, hiring and program growth.
- In line with both the Strategic Plan and the Diversity Plan, GovState continues to attract and develop new strategies to retain a diverse faculty.
- The Athletics Master plan has been effectuated by the additional sports, such as soccer, which is expanding GovState and drawing an international demographic.
- The Facilities Masterplan continues to provide the campus new building construction and renovation of existing buildings.
- The Hanover Research Economic Impact Report has validated the currency of the existing University degree programs as relevant to workforce development while forecasting additional areas for growth in the analysis of job openings to University curriculum.

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5. INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, RESOURCES AND PLANNING

5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

The institution's resources, structures, processes and planning are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Summary

The evidence provided demonstrates GovState's established practices in budget development and financial stewardship, support its ability to fulfill the mission, improve upon educational and student service offerings, and create a sustainable infrastructure for the campus. The University uses masterplans for enrollment management, advising, facilities, athletics, information technology, cybersecurity, and academics to inform future and current financial needs. In addition, GovState uses its financial data extensively and exhaustively to create opportunities for students to effectively manage cost of attendance and reduce debt. The Office of Grants and Sponsored Programs staff aids the campus in seeking alternate revenue sources through faculty and staff generated grant writing. The success of the University in attracting state and federal grants has led to expansion of the career opportunities to meet state needs for early childhood educators drawn from the incumbent workforce, improvements in childhood literacy in math and English through participation the Illinois Tutoring Network, advancement of job and career preparedness through state workforce grants and participation in the apprenticeship program with local employers, stroke prevention education, supply chain logistics, and summer bridge programming to promote greater realization of providing an accessible education to students from the GovState region of service. Funding for facilities, technology, academic programing, hiring and student support includes engagement with the GovState Foundation, the state legislature, and the university's finance and administration unit to create flexible, culturally responsive, and integrated financial planning in support of the successful operation of GovState.

Sources

There are no sources.

Governors State University
Mission & Strategic Plan

MISSION

Governors State University is committed to offering an exceptional and accessible education that prepares students with the knowledge, skills and confidence to succeed in a global society.

VISION

GSU will create an intellectually stimulating public square, serve as an economic catalyst for the region, and lead as a model of academic excellence, innovation, diversity and responsible citizenship.

CORE VALUES

Invest in Student Success through a commitment to mentoring and a deliberate university focus on student achievement of academic, professional and personal goals.

Provide Opportunity and Access to a first-class public education to residents of our surrounding communities and all those traditionally underserved by higher education.

Serve as an Economic Catalyst for the citizens of the State of Illinois and our larger Midwest region, so that our communities grow and flourish.

Prepare Stewards of our Future to thrive in the global economy, to contribute to ongoing innovative research and to serve as stewards of the environment.

Demonstrate Inclusiveness and Diversity to encourage acceptance of wide-ranging perspectives among students, staff, faculty and members of the broader community.

Promote Quality of Life, which encompasses civic, personal, professional and cultural growth

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