<u>Day 7</u>: **Did you know that, in addition to faculty efforts to improve student learning through assessment, those activities are related to operations evaluation, planning, and budgeting?**

[HLC Criterion 5.C.2] Assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting linked.

CMU is committed to the success of its students and intentionally looks for opportunities and means of increasing its effectiveness in this area. When assessment or evaluation data suggests a realistic opportunity, CMU is typically quick to include it in planning and budgeting. The following are examples of this responsiveness as well as how processes are integrated.

Admissions and Placement (Follow-up to WGISAS 1.0 - 2.0)
CMU uses student assessment data in a variety of ways, not the least of which is to identify which admissions pathway best matches students' preparation for college-level coursework and reduces their risk for not being successful. This approach aligns with the *2010 Strategic Plan goal/objective* that was in effect at that time: "to . . . raise the University's first-year retention and six-year graduation rates by three percentage points respectively over the planning period."

The continued development of the CMU Office of Student Success (OSS) and the GOALS program at WCCC provide other relevant examples. OSS advises Provisional Baccalaureate (PB) students that fall just below the admission requirements to be accepted into a bachelor's degree program at CMU. Based on an intrusive advising model, the primary role of OSS staff is to assist PB students in developing the skills they need to successfully transition to their desired Baccalaureate program. The OSS has both professional Academic Success Coaches and Peer Academic Coaches who assist students with all aspects of their academic experience, including helping them successfully transition to college life, improve study skills, schedule courses, and identify majors and careers of interest.

The next stage of implementation culminated in the planning, funding, and start-up of the community college's Greater Opportunity for Academic and Life Success program in Fall 2015, modeled after that offered by staff in the Office of Student Success. The GOALS program offers academic support and assistance to students who accepted into an associate degree program but need to be better prepared for admission into a CMU baccalaureate program.   Students referred to the one-year GOALS program are required to take UNIV 102 (College Student Success) and limited in the number of credits they can take their first semester.

Working Group to Improve Student Academic Success - Cycles 3.0 - 4.0
As part of CMU's dedication to continuous planning and improvement of student success outlined in CMU's *Strategic Plan 2020* (Goal 1A, Objective A), the latest iteration of WGISAS made a series of 28 evidence-based recommendations to strengthen processes in its 2017 report.   The document also describes the rationale and initial implementation of

Ellucian's CRM Advise. The on-going commitment to increase student success has also been the justification for recent decisions to fund and implement:

- Ellucian Degree Works as a comprehensive academic advising, transfer articulation, and degree audit tool for students, faculty and advisors.
- Early Alert System that utilizes Ellucian CRM Advise to identify students at greater risk of dropping out of school, support a more integrated approach to advising and develop more personalized communications with all students.
- Digication's e-Portfolio System used for development of student portfolios of their college work and the assessment of student learning, advising, and project management support.

Program Review and Assessment of Student Learning
CMU also has integrated the assessment of student learning into its program review process which is a broader evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting to ensure that academic programs are of high quality and current. CMU reviews each of its programs on a six-year cycle, unless scheduled differently due to accreditation requirements. Academic Department Heads and the Vice President for Academic Affairs present a summary of the internal and external documents to the Board of Trustees, the President, the Vice President for Financial and Administrative Services and the Budget Director for information, and subsequently, for discussion as part of the annual budgeting process.

Because budget requests must align with strategic goals and objectives, the results of the program review will become a factor in budget requests for bolstering program elements needing improvement, assuming the problem's solution has resource implications. With the evolution of the merged processes, assessment results will increasingly be used to make planning and budgeting decisions for program improvement, an emphasis underscored in the metrics for the *Strategic Plan 2020* (Goal 2, Objective 2E). The over-arching purpose of integrating the processes, however, is to offer excellent academic programs.

Planning for Future Graduate Education Programs
Goal 2 (Objective 2C) of *Strategic Plan 2020* calls for the University to "selectively add programs that enhance student opportunities after graduation." For the past decade, greater emphasis has been placed on undergraduate program development, but during Academic Year 2016-17, preliminary planning began for the potential addition of graduate programs. The first program of this phased process is a Master of Science in Physician Assistant (PA) Sciences, with CMU completing a needs assessment in 2016 and the initial steps of the application process with the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant in 2017. Second, due to changes within the discipline, CMU's Athletic Training program plans to move from a bachelor's to a master's degree over the next few years. Other programs under consideration are Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy. As part of the current planning process, funds were budgeted for fees and a PA program director, and the University has developed a capital construction proposal to accommodate the program expansion.
To learn more, log into MAVzone and click on the document link found in the CMU Assurance Argument for HLC channel (top left on the Home tab) for the full text of CMU's Assurance

Argument. Links to supporting evidence are identified by underlined words but are not available through the PDF version.

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