3.3.1.5 Institutional Effectiveness: Community/public service within its mission

3.3.1.5 The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on an analysis of the results in each of the following areas: community/public service within its mission, if appropriate.

Judgment of Compliance

In Compliance

Narrative

The University of Alabama (UA) seeks “To advance the intellectual and social condition of the State, the nation and the world through the creation, translation and dissemination of knowledge with an emphasis on quality programs of teaching, research and service.” Continuing education, outreach and service programs directly advance UA’s mission by providing continuing learning opportunities, applying research, and providing technical assistance to the constituencies the University serves. These programs and activities are designed to have a positive influence on the “intellectual and social condition of the State, the nation and the world.” [1]

UA has a long history of service activities and partnerships with businesses, nonprofit organizations, and government across the institution, in academic units, dedicated service units, and student organizations. These efforts connect to the University’s strategic vision to be “a student-centered research university and academic community united in our commitment to enhance the quality of life for all Alabamians.”

Beyond individual programmatic efforts, however, the University has engaged in several institutional actions that demonstrate the strong connection between continuing education/service and the University mission.

For example, in 2007 the University joined the Engagement Scholarship Consortium, an organization of public and private higher education member institutions that collaborate to build strong university/community partnerships. [2] Additionally, UA hosted the 2012 annual conference of this consortium. [3] The conference represented another opportunity for UA to demonstrate how it fulfills its mission to communities in the state and beyond. The University publishes a peer-reviewed journal, the Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship, to support faculty research in the area of community-engaged scholarship. A special issue of this journal was based on the research presentations and other activities of the conference. [4]

In 2008, the University sought and achieved the Carnegie Elective Community Engagement Classification. The process of preparing the application served as a self-study, identifying ways to align engaged scholarship more closely with the University mission. Additionally, the process strengthened student and faculty commitment to community partners and increased awareness of the values and strengths of engaged scholarship. In 2014, the University applied for renewal of the classification. Notice is expected in December 2014. [5]
Since receiving the Carnegie Elective Community Engagement Classification, the University has adopted the Carnegie definition of community engagement holding it to be synonymous with related terminology such as community service, civic engagement, and public service. The Carnegie Foundation defines community engagement as the…collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (either local, regional/state, national, or global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.

The following paragraphs summarize the assessment activities of some of the many outreach activities, divisions, and centers. Divisions and centers sponsored some of the highlighted activities, while academic units, colleges, or schools sponsored others. Assessment activities are summarized on Community-Public Service Worksheets, [6] which include the original outcomes and goals of the activity. Since Academic Year 2011–12, community-public support service divisions and centers have submitted assessment reports and revised or new assessment plans each fall in the University’s online assessment system, WEAVE. Prior to 2011, the University collected assessment information through a locally-developed system, UAOPS. Examples of Detailed Annual Reports (DAR) from WEAVE for 2011–12, 2012–13, and 2013–14 are attached. The 2013–14 DAR contains assessment plans to be addressed in the Fall 2014. DAR reports have been linked to the examples described below where appropriate.

Assessment of Outreach and Public Service Centers and Activities within the Division of Community Affairs

The Division of Community Affairs (DCA) helps the University fulfill its mission to “advance the intellectual and social condition of the people of the State, the Nation and the world” by providing programs that improve the quality of life for individuals and communities. [7] Created in 2004, the DCA is charged with serving as a bridge between the campus community and the external community. [8] In addition, the DCA also plays a coordinating role for the campus in key ways, providing leadership to initiatives that span the campus.

The mission of DCA is “to form partnerships for engagement scholarship across teaching, research and service to generate, transmit, apply and preserve knowledge in collaboration with community partners for the mutual benefit of our partners and the University, and to provide intercultural leadership for the campus and community”. [9] With an emphasis on community engaged scholarship, DCA has developed and supported innovative programs and projects that seek to support the core mission of UA. In leading the application process for the Carnegie designation in 2008, DCA assessed community-engaged scholarship across campus and identified several actions that have been implemented to increase the number of students and faculty participating in community-engaged scholarship.

For example, in the 2011–2012 assessment cycle, a workshop in strategic planning, development, and utility was planned for fall 2012. The purpose of the workshop was to train directors in strategic planning, to view the strategic planning process as a tool or resource. During the one-on-one sessions following each workshop session, directors were asked to complete a brief survey to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the workshop. The workshop took place in the fall of 2012 as planned, and as a result each director was able to provide a one-year strategic plan for his or her division with the goal of increasing participation in community service programs, increasing office efficiency, and writing and implementing assessment plans and project management plans for each office. A significant result from the implementation of these strategic plans shows that this process has improved the ability to communicate program design with potential graduate student hires and faculty interested in collaborating with Community Affairs. The strategic planning process has allowed each office to increase the number of community members, undergraduate students, faculty, and staff involved in activities that Community Affairs sponsored or facilitated.

As examples, highlights of recent assessment activities sponsored by the DCA and assessment of two units under the purview of the DCA and specific improvements that resulted from action plans initiated as a result of assessment activities, are summarized below.

The assessment of the following DCA-sponsored activities is summarized on the linked Community—Public Service Worksheets, [6]

- Saving Lives [10]
The DARs for the two units, the Center for Community Based Partnerships and the Crossroads Community Center are included as links below.

- Center for Community-Based Partnerships [12]
- Crossroads Community Center [13]

**Center for Community-Based Partnerships.** In 2008, as a result of the Carnegie Engagement Classification Application process, the Division of Community Affairs established the Council on Community-Based Partnerships (CCBP) to provide leadership and support to faculty, student, and community partner engagement efforts campus-wide. [14] The mission of CCBP is “to connect faculty, staff, students and community partners in research-based projects designed to solve critical problems identified collaboratively by community members and the University.” Its vision is of a “University whose resources and strengths are made available through partnerships in communities throughout the state, nation, and world to help solve society’s critical problems.” [15]

In keeping with the overreaching goal of the DCA to increase participation in community/public outreach activities, one of the outcomes assessed through CCBP is the number of high-school students who participate in the Black Belt 100 Lenses project. [16] The Black Belt 100 Lenses project seeks to depict the culture of the Black Belt region of Alabama through the eyes of its youth. High-school students from the 12 counties of the Alabama Black Belt region document and define what their culture means to them through the use of photography, film interviews, and written or oral narratives.

The goal of the CCBP is to increase the number of students participating in this program and while in the 2011 summer camp program 35 students participated, and in 2012, 63 students participated, showing an increase of 30%, the CCBP has added an additional goal of increasing the number of campers to 125 by expanding the project to include other forms of artistic expression such as digital media and digital storytelling, so as to increase interest and participation in the camp. These project activities will allow the current project team to provide additional services to more high-school students and provide high-school students with other opportunities to amplify their voice regarding issues in their immediate community.

The CCBP also advances the University’s mission through projects that use knowledge to improve the well-being of families and communities. Projects sponsored through the CCBP incorporate an assessment component that includes addressing the impact of the project on the student participants and meeting the needs identified by the community partner. Examples of two CCBP-sponsored projects are summarized below and their assessment plans are referenced in the attached Community/Public Service Worksheets:

- **Scholars for Community Outreach, Partnership, and Engagement (SCOPE).** SCOPE provides a framework for connecting students interested in community-engaged scholarship with resources to advance their scholarship. [17] SCOPE’s goals are to increase the involvement of UA students in community-engaged scholarship activities; to connect students to resources such as faculty mentors, funding sources, and scholarly conferences and publications; to serve as a conduit for matching the research interests of students and faculty with identified community needs; to provide opportunities for training and technical assistance to SCOPE participants in order to enhance their knowledge and skills regarding engaged scholarship; to bolster the production of community-based research by students. [18]

- **The Parent Leadership Academy (PLA).** The PLA is a two-semester program dedicated to educating and developing parent leaders who will make a significant contribution to strengthening their school communities and supporting students’ academic achievement. [19] At monthly meetings led by UA faculty and other educators, participants develop leadership skills, improve their ability to support their child at home and at school, and establish better relations among family, school, and board of education. UA’s PLA provides leadership development and networking experiences for parents committed to increasing student achievement through parent involvement; building strong school communities characterized by trust, integrity and communication; becoming knowledgeable about education, including issues of school finance; and using community resources to benefit all members of the school community. [19]

**Crossroads Community Center.** Crossroads Community Center (CCC) [20] provides campus and community intercultural education by hosting a variety of cultural events and programs that build community and contribute to a campus culture of inclusiveness. The Center advances the University’s mission by serving as a resource for organizations on and off campus concerned with intercultural issues in the community and in preparing their members for a global society.
The Crossroads Community Center’s mission is to facilitate relationship building across cultures through innovative programs and initiatives, to serve as a resource for organizations regarding cross-cultural issues, to provide leadership and coordination for professionals in multicultural affairs roles, and to prepare students for demographic shifts in a global society. Crossroads Community Center coordinates the energies of faculty, staff, and students in the creation, implementation, and evaluation of cultural programs on campus. In this way, Crossroads Community Center implements custom-designed cultural programming that has maximum effectiveness for the University.

The Spoken Secrets Poetry Jam is a student-led initiative of the CCC that offers an atmosphere for students, faculty, and staff to showcase their talents through poetry, music, dance, and art. The multicultural gathering brings students of different backgrounds together to share their talents and listen to one another. Held once a year in the Ferguson Theater, this program gives students, faculty, and staff a chance to develop their confidence in declaring their culture, values, and personal experiences.

In the 2011–2012 assessment cycle, a summary of pre-/post-participation data collected on the Spoken Secrets Poetry Jam was used to benchmark responses to questions adapted from the Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy (CRTSE) and the Culturally Responsive Teaching Outcome Expectancy (CRTOE) scales. Through this assessment, Crossroads Community Center gauges participant opinion of the value of this program to see if the programming is effective in achieving its goal. The results are used to review the impact of the program in support of the CCC mission and to revise and set programming for the next year’s event.

When asked to respond to questions about confidence to express thoughts and experiences, the average pre-test score was 4.52/5.0. The post-test response average was 4.78/5.0. Other survey statements addressing cultural competency showed similar increases from the pre-participation survey to the post-participation survey. The pre-participation average to questions regarding cultural competency was 4.5, and the post-participation average was 4.7.

Responses to open-ended questions on the post-survey to the question, “What was most valuable about Spoken Secrets?” included: “Being able to speak/sing my voice;” “Because you can be yourself;” “Performing on stage in a safe environment;” “Being in the presence of everyone in a very positive environment;” “Seeing All these Great Performers;” and “The amount of diversity.” Through this student-led CCC initiative, students honor heritage, develop their Global Skills Set for today’s society, and shape a positive environment on the UA campus.

Assessment of Outreach and Public Service Activities within Academic Affairs and Student Affairs

Academic colleges and schools, administrative units, and student organizations within Academic Affairs and Student Affairs are also active participants in outreach and service activities that serve the State, community, and region. Examples of the many community and public service outreach programs sponsored by some of these units are listed below. The assessment of these activities is summarized on the linked Community—Public Service Worksheets.

College of Education
- Crossing Points
- Elementary Family Nights
- Helping Education/Linking Parents Mentoring Program

Honors College
- Drive Program
- 57 Miles-Perry County Outreach Initiative
- Capstone Leadership Academy

School of Library and Information Studies
• Book Bonanza for the Black Belt [28]

College of Engineering
• Rockets and Racecars [29]

Culverhouse College of Commerce and Business Administration
• Center for Business and Economic Research
  ◦ Workforce Development-State of the Workforce Reports [30]
• Alabama Productivity Center
  ◦ Continuous Improvement Student Internship Program [31]

College of Communication and Information Sciences
• Journalism
  ◦ Multicultural Journalism Workshop [32]
• Advertising and Public Relations
  ◦ Tuscaloosa Gives Back Coat Campaign [33]
• UA Student Chapter of Society of Professional Journalists
  ◦ SPJ Students Help Oakdale Eagle Students [34]

Capstone College of Nursing and School of Social Work
• Health Action Partnership, Walker County [35]

College of Arts and Sciences
• Art and Art History
  ◦ Paul R. Jones Art Collection of American Art, [36]

School of Law
• Long Term Care Volunteer Ombudsman [37]
• Legal Counsel for the Elderly [38]

College of Community Health Sciences
• Annual Rural Health Conference [39]
• Alabama Region 4 EMS Administration and Technical Assistance [40]

College of Continuing Studies
• OSHER Life-long Learning Institute [41]
• University Place School-Farm to Food to Table Project [42]

College of Human Environmental Sciences
• Child Development Resource Center
  ◦ Parenting Assistance Line [43]

University Recreation
• Breast Cancer STRETCH Class [44]

Center for Ethics and Social Responsibility
• College First [45]
Assessment of Outreach and Public Service Centers

As examples, highlights of recent assessment activities within four outreach and public service centers and specific improvements that resulted from action plans initiated as a result of assessment activities, are summarized below. Examples of Detailed Annual Reports (DAR) from WEAVE for 2011–12, 2012–13, and 2013–14 have been linked to the examples described below where appropriate.

**Bryant Museum.** The mission of the Paul W. Bryant Museum is to collect, preserve and exhibit items, and to disseminate information relating to the sports history of The University of Alabama. Its goals are to educate and inspire a universal audience about the significant contributions and accomplishments of UA’s collegiate athletes. Fostering a sense of history, tradition, and excellence, the Bryant Museum allows visitors to place past events in clear perspective, and serves as a leading resource to other sports museums.

One of the assessment goals of the Bryant Museum is to align the museum’s use of on-line technology to the needs and use patterns of visitors. In order to achieve this goal, a study of the technology use and capabilities of our visitors (in the museum and on-line) will help guide and improve the museum’s response to improvement of technological usage.

In order to gather data for this outcome, a survey was conducted on A Day 2011. Survey questions were designed to collect demographic data as well as quantify the use of technology. After consultation with UA faculty the survey instrument was modified to clarify some data collected and make it more user friendly for 2012.

Demographic results showed that family groups are a major component of the clientele. Smart phone use increased and fan comfort with Facebook, Twitter and other social media increased as well from the 2011 survey to the 2012 survey. QR codes were less well known but liked by those aware of how they worked. Users found that a major hindrance is the UA requirement for “registering” to use on-campus wireless, and reported that it was a major inconvenience for visitors. An additional, larger problem hindering access to technology for visitors is extremely high user volume on game days, which slows the user’s data access.

Improvements to technology since the survey results were analyzed are: (1) we have created a mobile version of our web site and have talked with the Office of Technology about getting included in their app for smart phones; (2) we have adjusted our focus to include twitter and Facebook in addition to e-mail for announcements and alerts. Currently the Bryant Museum has more than 15,000 Facebook followers and more than 5,000 Twitter followers.
Center for Sustainable Service and Volunteerism. The Center for Sustainable Service and Volunteerism, previously called the Community Service Center, mission is to educate students for service, leadership, civic responsibility, civic engagement and volunteerism by increasing awareness of community needs, resources and opportunities for problem solving. For example, the Center assesses student awareness of its program by collecting data on participation in service programs. One such program is the Center for Sustainable Service and Volunteerism-sponsored activity called “Sleep Out on the Quad” which is designed to increase awareness of homelessness while encouraging students to take action. Data showed that participation in the event had declined from 450 participants in 2011–2012, to 340 participants in 2012–2013. An action plan was implemented to create an in-depth publicity plan to increase awareness and participation in the event and find key community partners within the University to collaborate with in order to attract different demographics of students.

Continuing Studies. The College of Continuing Studies delivers the University experience to individuals pursuing educational goals and career growth, and to organizations building excellence in the workplace. To maintain and improve the quality of programs, professional certificate programs are aligned with industry standard bodies of knowledge. For example, the project management certificate is aligned with the Project Management Body of Knowledge developed by the Project Management Institute. Additionally, professional certificate programs ensure quality through their faculty. All faculty members are training professionals certified in specific training specialties or are current or retired University faculty.

The College of Continuing Studies assesses the quality of its professional development programs in an ongoing assessment with a goal of maintaining and improving the quality from year to year. Findings show that in 2011–2012 overall Program Quality ratings from participant evaluations were 4.9 on a 5 point scale, which exceeds the target score of 4.2 on a scale ranging from 1 - 5, with 5 being excellent. Going forward, the College of Continuing Studies plans to review professional certificate programs to expand the relationship of the content to professional bodies of knowledge associated with professional credentials. A faculty recruitment program is being implemented to ensure faculty quality is maintained as programs grow.

UA Museums. UA Museums’ mission is to broaden the knowledge of natural sciences and cultural heritage through collections and quality programs of research, instruction, and service. The University Museums operate and preserve Moundville Archaeological Park, Gorgas House, Alabama Museum of Natural History, Discovering Alabama, and Moundville Park. The goals of UA Museums is to enhance knowledge, understanding, and stewardship of Alabama’s cultural and natural resources in support of science education objectives; to provide cost-effective cultural resource management services to public agencies and the private sector; and maintain and make accessible natural history, archaeological, and cultural collections for research, exhibit, and interpretation.

UA Museums’ assessment activities center around usage volume as an indicator of how well the museum is promoted and exhibits are presented. One goal of UA museums established during the 2011–2012 assessment cycle, was to increase usage of the Gorgas House Museum. A plan of action was implemented that would increase interpretive activities through restructured tours, new exhibits, and doubling facility use by renting it for special programming.

Implementation plans included a goal of using the facility to display at least one new exhibit related to either the Civil War sesquicentennial and/or Gorgas family history. The use of the house for exhibits was a new undertaking that was predicted to help increase visitation and expand interpretive potential. An additional implementation goal was to increase facility use to a minimum of 10 rentals or special programming events, representing a 200% increase over previous year activity. The results reviewed from the 2012–2013 assessment report show that these two implementation efforts were accomplished, and visitor use of the facility increased because of these implementation plans. New assessment plans are proposed to improve services by implementing a visitor satisfaction survey to help focus on areas of service needing improvement.

Center for Economic Development. The UA Center for Economic Development (UACED) serves as a gateway to the University by providing economic development resources. UACED has been in existence since 1987 and provides community-based strategic planning in support of local economic development efforts, primarily in the economically distressed parts of the state. The mission of the UACED is to enhance the economic well-being of Alabama communities by providing technical assistance and linkages to resources.
UACED staff provide guidance to communities in leveraging other University resources and partners with the specific focus on community development and capacity building at all levels. Assessments are conducted each year that track service usage and the geographic distribution throughout the state of the communities served. User surveys are distributed and collected that represent user satisfaction and are used to improve programming content from year to year. [601]

**Alabama International Trade Center.** The Alabama International Trade Center (AITC) was established in 1979, to operate as a federal-state partnership program between The University of Alabama and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), promoting SBA’s export financing programs in Alabama. [61]

AITC assesses the quality of counseling and training through use of evaluation surveys completed by small business clients. Counseling surveys are sent to active clients during June, July, and August each year. The clients are asked to complete a series of questions to rate the quality of the services provided and counseling experience. These surveys are compiled and reviewed by the management team in order to collect participant opinion and suggestions for improvements to subsequent training programs. [621]

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**Supporting Documents**

1. Mission and Vision (PDF)
3. National Outreach Scholarship Conference 2012 Program Cover (PDF)
4. JCES, Vol. 6, No. 1 (PDF)
5. Carnegie Classifications (PDF)
6. Community-Public Service Worksheet (PDF)
7. Division of Community Affairs (PDF)
8. News Release June 15, 2004 (PDF)
9. Community Affairs Mission, Vision, Values (PDF)
10. Saving Lives (PDF)
11. United Way (PDF)
12. Community Based Partnerships Combined with Connected Documents 2011–2014 (PDF)
13. Crossroads Community Center Combined with Connected Documents 2011–2014 (PDF)
14. Center for Community Based Partnerships-About (PDF)
15. CCBP Mission and Vision (PDF)
16. Black Belt 100 Lenses (PDF)
17. SCOPE (PDF)
18. SCOPE Worksheet (PDF)
19. Parent Leadership Academy (PDF)
20. Crossroads Community Center (PDF)
21. Outreach Webpage (PDF)
22. Crossing Points (PDF)
23. Elementary Family Nights (PDF)
24. Helping Education-Linking Parents Mentoring Program (PDF)
25. Drive Program (PDF)
26. 57 Miles - A Perry County Partnership (PDF)
27. Capstone Leadership Academy (PDF)
28. Book Bonanza for the Black Belt (PDF)
29. Rockets and Racecars (PDF)
30. Workforce Development Reports (PDF)
31. Continuous Improvement Student Internship Program (PDF)
32. Multicultural Journalism Workshop (PDF)
33. Tuscaloosa Gives Back Coat Campaign (PDF)
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35. Health Action Partnership, Walker County (PDF)
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37. Long Term Care Volunteer Ombudsman (PDF)
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42. University Place School - Farm to Food to Table Project (PDF)
43. Parenting Assistance Line (PDF)
44. Breast Cancer STRETCH Class (PDF)
45. CollegeFirst (PDF)
46. SaveFirst (PDF)
47. Al’s Pals Mentoring Program (PDF)
48. Beat Auburn-Beat Hunger (PDF)
49. Discovering Alabama (PDF)
50. Moundville Archeological Park and Museum (PDF)
51. Books for the Black Belt (PDF)
52. Bryant Museum Mission Website (PDF)
53. Bryant Museum (PDF)
54. Center for Sustainable Service and Volunteerism (PDF)
55. Community Service Center (PDF)
56. College of Continuing Studies Home Page (PDF)
57. Continuing Studies 2011–2014 (PDF)
58. UA Museums (PDF)
59. Center for Economic Development Website (PDF)
60. AL Center for Economic Development (PDF)
61. Alabama International Trade Center Website (PDF)
62. AL International Trade Center (PDF)