

## Appendix A: Linkage to the Criteria for Accreditation

LTU Online has been designed to be consistent with the NCA criteria for accreditation. This appendix discusses specific LTU Online design and delivery features which are informed by the NCA criteria.

### *1. Mission and Integrity*

**Criterion Statement** – The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

**Core Component 1a** – The organization’s mission documents are clear and articulate publicly the organization’s commitments.

LTU Online evidence:

1. LTU Online is sponsored and championed by the President and Provost.
2. LTU Online actively involves all major University stakeholders.
3. LTU Online supports the educational objectives of the academic programs offered online.
4. LTU Online courses are designed using a rigorous methodology and supported by qualified instructional design staff. The goal of LTU Online classes is that they are at least as rigorous and thorough as traditional and hybrid classes.
5. All LTU Online policies, procedures, documentation, and methodologies are available on the public web site, <http://www.ltu.edu/ltuonline>

**Core Component 1b** – In its mission documents, the organization recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.

LTU Online evidence:

1. LTU Online adheres to and support all institutional mission and operational statements related to diversity.
2. LTU Online actively recruits academically qualified and experienced faculty members from historically underrepresented groups.

**Core Component 1c** – Understanding of and support for the mission pervade the organization.

LTU Online evidence:

1. LTU Online’s mission, vision, and objectives are developed with input from University stakeholders and are shared with the Lawrence Tech community.
2. LTU Online staff members frequently meet with stakeholder groups to articulate the mission of LTU Online, establish and manage projects, and identify and address service issues.
3. LTU Online is designed to facilitate online instruction on behalf of individual colleges and academic programs, and is not established as a separate academic unit.

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4. The LTU Online budget is developed with input from all major stakeholders and clearly identifies all proposed funding for other University units.

**Core Component 1d** – The organization’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the organization to fulfill its mission.

### LTU Online evidence:

1. The mission and objectives of LTU Online are clearly articulated by senior academic leaders.
2. LTU Online supports academic units and academic programs in providing an online delivery methodology to serve the diverse needs of Lawrence Tech students.
3. LTU Online actively collaborates with college and academic program administrators and faculty to develop courses consistent with academic programs.
4. A governance structure will guide the work of LTU Online.

**Core Component 1e** – The organization upholds and protects its integrity.

### LTU Online evidence:

1. LTU Online collaborates with all internal stakeholders to ensure that their right and responsibilities are clearly articulated and followed.
2. LTU Online clearly articulates its mission, objectives, policies, procedures, and support services on its public web site <http://www.ltu.edu/ltuonline>
3. LTU Online supports the academic programs offered by Lawrence Tech and maintains collaborative relationships with administrators, academic program directors, and faculty to ensure that LTU Online programs uphold the traditional rigor of a Lawrence Tech education.
4. LTU Online has established policies and procedures to hear and respond to complaints and grievances submitted by faculty members and students. These policies and procedures are consistent with existing policies and procedures for handling complaints associated with traditional academic programs.

## *2. Preparing for the Future*

**Criterion Statement** – The organization’s allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

**Core Component 2a** – The organization realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends.

### LTU Online evidence:

1. LTU Online planning documents were thoroughly vetted by the President and Provost prior to approval.

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2. LTU Online was designed based on best practices identified by regional accrediting agencies, the Sloan Consortium, and other professional groups.
3. LTU Online incorporates state-of-the-art learning technologies into the design of all courses.
4. LTU Online staff continually scans for new learning technologies and evaluates those technologies for use in future courses.

**Core Component 2b** – The organization’s resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online actively collaborates with administrators, academic program directors, and faculty to support the academic objectives of each online program.
2. LTU Online is budgeted to accomplish its objectives.
3. The LTU Online planning process is dynamic and has the ability to modify its short-term objectives and funding streams.
4. LTU Online is staffed by competent and dedicated instructional developers and administrators.

**Core Component 2c** – The organization’s ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online incorporates outcomes assessment into each course and into the program as a whole.
2. Periodic focus group meetings are held with stakeholder groups to identify needed changes.
3. The assessment program for LTU Online courses is integrated with overall University assessment efforts and uses the same outcome assessment instruments used for traditional and hybrid academic programs.

**Core Component 2d** – All levels of planning align with the organization’s mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online plans were shared with the strategic planning committee of the Board of Trustees for their input.
2. LTU Online has been integrated into Lawrence Tech’s budgeting process as a unit of the Office of the Provost.
3. LTU Online maintains collaborative relationships with academic administrators, academic program directors, and faculty to align LTU Online plans with those of academic units.
4. LTU Online meets with other Lawrence Tech administrative and service groups to identify budget initiatives that support LTU Online efforts. These initiatives are proposed by both units to illustrate the shared commitment to achieving LTU Online objectives.

### ***3. Student Learning and Effective Teaching***

**Criterion Statement** – The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

**Core Component 3a** – The organization’s goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.

**LTU Online evidence:**

1. The LTU Online assessment model include course-level, instructor-level, program-level, and organizational-level assessment components that are consistent with those used by colleges and academic programs.
2. Multiple assessment methods are incorporated into each LTU Online course.
3. Assessment methods will link LTU Online student performance and satisfaction with institutional performance.
4. The initial LTU Online course development process includes an end-of-term redesign and refresh component.
5. Faculty and student evaluations will inform revision and update of LTU Online courses.

**Core Component 3b** – The organization values and supports effective teaching.

**LTU Online evidence:**

1. Current full-time and adjunct Lawrence Tech faculty members are afforded an opportunity to collaborate with and teach through LTU Online.
2. A formal position description and recruiting processes have been developed to recruit new online adjunct faculty members.
3. The LTU Online course development methodology ensures that theory, practice, and assessment are thoroughly integrated into all content areas of LTU Online courses.
4. LTU Online staff members participate in professional conferences and other activities that keep the staff abreast of current best practices in online pedagogy and program administration.

**Core Component 3c** – The organization creates effective learning environments.

**LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online courses are designed to provide students with appropriate theoretical foundations, appropriate opportunities to implement and practice new skills, and to assess their mastery of content and application.
2. All Lawrence Tech student services have been inventoried and improved where needed to provide outstanding student services to online students.
3. A wide range of technologies are used to link students with faculty members, LTU Online staff, and University service providers.
4. Each LTU Online course is reviewed during and after its delivery and improved based on feedback from students and faculty members, and based on student learning outcomes.
5. LTU Online maintains collaborative relationships with faculty members to identify shared learning opportunities for traditional and online students.

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**Core Component 3d** – The organization’s learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. Existing learning resources are effectively integrated into all LTU Online courses.
2. Additional digital resources have been made available to the Lawrence Tech Library for use in all Lawrence Tech courses.
3. LTU Online, in collaboration with the Lawrence Tech Library and the Veraldi Instructional Technology Resource Center, continue to develop multimedia and video training resources to ensure that online students receive appropriate training in the use of technology and learning resources tools.
4. Each LTU Online course undergoes an extensive pre-delivery course development process that incorporates a wide range of pedagogical methods and learning technology tools.
5. All instructional objects produced for LTU Online courses are made available for use in traditional and hybrid classes at Lawrence Tech.

### ***4. Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge***

**Criterion Statement** – The organization promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.

**Core Component 4a** – The organization demonstrates, through the actions of its board, administrators, students, faculty, and staff, that it values a life of learning.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online is designed to deliver online courses of very high quality that are consistent in content and expectations with traditional and hybrid classes offered by Lawrence Tech.
2. LTU Online will feature the accomplishments of its students and faculty members on its web site and through other publications.
3. LTU Online faculty and staff are encouraged to submit articles for publication and presentations at professional conferences.

**Core Component 4b** – The organization demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online courses include extensive “theory” and “practice” components that provide opportunities for students to apply new knowledge to realistic situations.
2. Elective courses are being developed that provide a range of educational opportunities for students.
3. Attention is given to establishing a sense of community and involvement for online students.

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4. Online students are encouraged to collaborate with faculty members on research and service opportunities.
5. LTU Online faculty and staff are encourage to prepare and submit academic journal articles and conference presentations in their own domain field and in the domain of online learning.

**Core Component 4c** – The organization assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. The early inclusion of the graduate certificate in nonprofit management online program promotes social responsibility and civic involvement for online students.
2. The LTU Online governance structure will involve internal and external members who advise on issues facing online students and in preparing online students for professional and civic opportunities.

**Core Component 4d** – The organization provides support to ensure that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. Existing University policies on academic integrity and intellectual property are applied to all LTU Online courses.
2. Existing University processes for addressing academic integrity violations are used for all LTU Online courses and online students.
3. Information and training on academic integrity are provided to all LTU Online students.
4. The SafeAssignment® product is integrated with Blackboard® to inform students of potential Internet plagiarism and as input to faculty members for grading assignments and providing feedback.
5. LTU Online has collaborated with the Lawrence Tech Library, Edward Donnelly Computer Center, Veraldi Instructional Technology Resource Center, and faculty representatives to develop policies, procedures, and education programs in support of the TEACH Act of 2002.

## ***5. Engagement and Service***

**Criterion Statement** – As called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.

**Core Component 5a** – The organization learns from the constituencies it serves and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. The LTU Online governance process identifies new academic areas for focus and new technologies for use in the online environment.

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2. LTU Online maintains collaborative relationships with academic program directors and faculty to identify new areas for online development.
3. The LTU Online program is integrated with existing University outreach programs to provide opportunities for Lawrence Tech faculty and students to engage with the community and with prospective students.
4. The LTU Online program collaborates with the Lawrence Tech Professional Development Center to identify opportunities to leverage the operations of each unit to serve for-credit, non-credit, and consulting clients.

**Core Component 5b** – The organization has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. The LTU Online organization is designed to collaborate with on-campus and off-campus stakeholders in support of Lawrence Tech’s academic programs.
2. LTU Online students are provided with opportunities to engage in academic and service projects within the community as identified by academic program directors, faculty members, and Lawrence Tech student affairs staff.
3. LTU Online programs and courses are designed to include community and service opportunities.

**Core Component 5c** – The organization demonstrates its responsiveness to those constituencies that depend on it for service.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online collaborates with the undergraduate management programs to identify articulation opportunities between Lawrence Tech and community college programs.
2. LTU Online faculty members are encouraged to participate in community and professional activities, and LTU Online will post the accomplishments and contributions of faculty members on its web site and in publications.
3. LTU Online collaborates with the Office of the Provost to participate in appropriate international education opportunities.

**Core Component 5d** – Internal and external constituencies value the services the organization provides.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online courses include an evaluation and feedback process for both faculty and students.
2. Certain LTU Online learning objects are made available for access by the community as a service.
3. All learning objects created during LTU Online course development processes are available to Lawrence Tech faculty members for re-purposing in existing traditional and hybrid classes.
4. All LTU Online course development processes, contract documents, and other administrative procedures are available to all higher education institutions.

## Appendix B: Linkage to the Four Crosscutting Themes

LTU Online has been designed in recognition of the Commission’s four crosscutting themes (orientation to the future, focus on learning, connectedness (internally and externally), and distinctiveness). This appendix discusses specific features of Lawrence Tech Online associated with each of these themes.

### *1. The Future-Oriented Organization*

**Engages in planning** – In proving that it is future-oriented, an organization will, at a minimum, document its engagement in effective strategic planning initiatives. The new Criterion Two, Preparing for the Future, speaks most directly to the need for an organization to know itself well enough that its multiple planning efforts will result in realistic and achievable plans. The Core Components speak to planning based on effective evaluation so the organization can maintain and strengthen its quality and its educational programs, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill its mission in the years ahead. Such efforts are essential to the future health of the organization.

#### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online is the result of a thoughtful and thorough planning effort requested by the President.
2. LTU Online collaborates with and supports the four colleges and their academic programs, and seeks out interdisciplinary programs and relationships such as the MEM, BSIT, and Architectural Management programs.
3. The LTU Online initiative has been integrated into Lawrence Tech’s strategic planning efforts, and the Board of Trustees has been informed of the initiative.

**Is driven by the mission** – More than ever, organizations that are most successful in maneuvering through an uncertain future are committed to a vision and capable of identifying their core values. Otherwise, the availability of too many options might cause confusion or lack of direction. Competitors’ success might lure an organization to wander away from its mission. Unanticipated financial downturns may threaten even the best strategic plans. The new Criterion One, Mission and Integrity, speaks to the fundamental importance of an organization’s mission documents. A mission that is largely a statement or an advertising tagline and is not rooted in rich soil of vision and values can so readily be changed or broadly interpreted as to be of little use in times of rapid change. A future-oriented organization does not treat its mission so lightly.

#### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. The LTU Online initiative is consistent with Lawrence Tech’s motto of “theory and practice.”
2. LTU Online provides opportunities to working professionals, which has been a central approach of Lawrence Tech since its founding in 1932.
3. LTU Online is not established as a separate academic unit, and therefore collaborates with the four existing colleges to develop online courses consistent with both Lawrence Tech’s mission and the responsibilities of each college.

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4. All LTU Online marketing and promotional materials emphasize the wide range of academic options available at Lawrence Tech, and encourage all students to choose wisely between these choices in consultation with their academic advisor.

**Understands social and economic change** – A future-oriented organization works diligently to understand the social and economic trends that will shape society and culture in the future. Major demographic shifts are inevitably bringing about important changes in our society. Some of the most salient are immigration, the aging of the baby boomers, migration to urban centers, and increasing income disparity. Today, 70 percent of high school graduates enroll in postsecondary education. Many students will extend college over many years and will go to two or more institutions before completing their education. As more and more jobs require degrees or higher education certifications, the demand for access to higher learning will continue to grow. A future-oriented organization may see opportunities in these changes and will plan new programs or sites or collaborative relationships to respond to them. At a minimum, a future-oriented organization will carefully study the potential impact of the changes. The new Criterion Five, Engagement and Service, also calls attention to the need for a future-oriented organization to analyze its capacity to serve the needs and expectations of its constituencies experiencing change.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online recognizes the significant cultural, demographic, and technological changes occurring in today's society.
2. LTU Online uses state-of-the-art learning technologies to support delivery of its online courses.
3. Lawrence Tech recognizes that students require additional flexibility in their learning options, but that this flexibility should not be accompanied by a loss of academic quality.

**Focuses on the futures of constituents** – A future-oriented organization also attends to the futures of its constituents. The new Criterion Four, Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge, with its emphasis on promoting a life of learning, is fundamentally about the future of the organization's constituents. It asks an organization to include in its educational priorities developing the future capacity of students to live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society, for example. A future-oriented organization also cares about the capacity of its faculty, staff, and administrators to be productive contributors to the future of the organization and its students.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online courses focus on collaboration between and among students and faculty.
2. By virtue of its ability to attract students and faculty members from outside the southeast Michigan area, LTU Online will provide a more diverse student and faculty environment that should promote cross-cultural experiences.
3. Lawrence Tech is establishing several academic relationships with institutions in Mexico, China, India, and other countries. The capabilities developed through LTU Online will play a key role in providing opportunities for international students and faculty to engage with U.S. student and faculty colleagues.

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**Integrates new technology** – A future-oriented organization understands that the information revolution spawned by new technologies will continue and will move at an even faster rate. Therefore, it seeks to understand and integrate technologies into its learning environments as well as into its support systems. New Criterion Three, Student Learning and Effective Teaching, draws attention to new learning environments now possible through the use of technology. The word *technology* appears in Core Components of other Criteria as well, for it is transforming much more than just the delivery of quality education.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online leverages the significant technological investments made by Lawrence Tech to deliver high-quality instructional opportunities for Lawrence Tech students.
1. LTU Online staff collaborate with University administrative and service offices to improve service processes using Lawrence Tech's existing technology tools.
2. LTU Online staff collaborate with University academic departments and faculty members to identify potential technology-based teaching and research tools for use in all Lawrence Tech classes.
3. LTU Online staff actively evaluate emerging technologies for use in instruction and service provision, and collaborate with other University units to evaluate these new technologies for possible integration into Lawrence Tech's technology portfolio.

## ***2. The Learning-Focused Organization***

**Assesses student learning** – With its new third Criterion, the Commission continues its efforts to engage the membership in effective and useful assessment of student learning. A learning-focused organization must know what it intends its students to learn and whether that learning has actually been achieved. The first Core Component embeds assessment in the Commission's accreditation standards. The Criterion also clearly signals the Commission's understanding that learners succeed in no small measure because of the quality of those who create their curricula and who teach and mentor them.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. Assessment is one of three key components built into each LTU Online learning module: theory, practice, and assessment. All LTU Online courses are designed with assessment included.
2. LTU Online is directly engaged with the University Assessment Committee, with a member of the LTU Online staff serving as a member of that committee.
3. LTU Online courses use the same outcome assessment instruments used in Lawrence Tech's traditional and hybrid classes.
4. LTU Online instructors receive specialized training in the teaching of online classes, including emphasis on assessing student learning.
5. The continued ability to teach LTU Online courses is based in part on the ability of instructors to achieve positive student learning outcomes.

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**Supports learning** – All learning-focused organizations strive to create learning environments supportive of the multiple learning styles of their students, frequently turning to new technologies to assist in these efforts. Criterion Three draws particular attention not only to the need to attend to learning environments, but also the need to attend to services and facilities that support student learning. The learning- focused organization also supports the learning of other key constituents. As the Core Components of Criterion Four make clear, the capacity of faculty, staff, and administrators to continue learning is of great concern to a learning-focused organization.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online integrates existing outcome assessment practices into the design of online courses.
2. LTU Online is specifically budgeted to support the inclusion of high-quality learning technologies and resources into the development of online courses, and to the delivery of each scheduled course.
3. LTU Online staff collaborate with University student and technology service providers to ensure that all University services are available equitably to on-ground and online students alike.

**Supports scholarship** – Criteria Three and Four draw attention to the fact that scholarship, in the multiple forms defined by Ernest L. Boyer (*Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*, 1990), is the lifeblood of higher learning. Students need to understand the role and purpose of scholarship as a means of organizing and transmitting knowledge. Scholarship may involve pure or applied research engaged in by all types of students and faculties at all types of organizations. Faculties concerned about effective teaching ought to be supported in their understanding of the scholarship of teaching. Organizations that value discovery and creation of knowledge by faculty and students create environments to support research. They also integrate recognition of the accomplishments of students and faculties into the organizational culture.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online faculty and staff are encouraged to collaborate on research projects and scholarly publications to advance learning associated with their involvement with LTU Online.
2. Students are encouraged to submit their academic output for posting on the LTU Online web site for other students to emulate.
3. LTU Online faculty participate in a community of practice in collaboration with other such groups on campus to improve their understanding of learning technologies.

**Creates the capacity for lifelong learning** – A learning-focused organization is concerned with connections between the curricula it provides and the lives its students will pursue after they complete their courses, certificates, or degrees. For example, Criterion Four addresses the currency and relevance of the curriculum. The fit between learning and living is of central interest to any learning-focused organization. The organization may provide a rich variety of learning options, including internships, mentored research, honors programs, and service-learning, to enhance students' learning and to demonstrate the connection between the life of the mind and the life of work.

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### LTU Online evidence:

1. The nature of the programs and the asynchronous online classes provided by LTU Online encourages lifetime learners to enroll in and participate in LTU Online classes.
2. Service learning opportunities are provided via the collaboration between the Nonprofit Management program and LTU Online.
3. LTU Online actively collaborates with Lawrence Tech's Professional Development Center to identify and address lifelong learning issues for noncredit seeking students.

**Strengthens organizational learning** – A learning-focused organization strengthens its own capacity to learn. An organization that lacks or fails to use multiple evaluation programs to get information essential to maintaining and strengthening quality is at risk. Criterion Two signals this vital need, particularly in its call for ongoing evaluation and assessment processes that provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness and inform strategies for continuous improvement. Organizational learning also requires carefully listening to multiple constituencies. Criteria One and Five draw attention to this critically important aspect of effective organizational learning. In this regard, being learning-focused is foundational to being effectively future-oriented.

### LTU Online evidence:

1. LTU Online has sought out and is building relationships with a wide range of University communities and stakeholders to broaden its involvement with the Lawrence Tech community.
2. LTU Online collaboratively develops its budget requests with University technology and service providers to ensure that student learning needs are addressed by the budgeting process.

### *3. The Connected Organization*

**Serves the common good** – The connected organization sees its role as serving society. Throughout these new Criteria, the Commission signals the importance of linkages between member organizations and the broader society. Criteria call on member organizations to state—in mission, vision, and values documents—the ways they mean to serve their constituents. Criterion One is clear that even the most distinctive organization still must understand that it serves the greater society.

### LTU Online evidence:

1. LTU Online's collaboration with the Nonprofit Management program addresses these concerns.
2. LTU Online faculty and staff are actively encouraged to participate in community-focused events and to engage with community and nonprofit agencies.

**Serves constituents** – The test of every good statement of intent is actual performance. While Criteria Three and Four focus primarily on internal constituencies, Criterion Five requires an accredited organization to address the multiple connections between it and the broader society. *Engagement* is not a synonym for *service*; *engagement* suggests a two-way relationship through

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which the organization is open to learning from those it wishes to serve. Strong mutual understanding is necessary for the many services that an accredited organization may choose to provide to be effective.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online seeks out online adjunct faculty with significant industry experience to bring that experience into the online classroom environment.
2. LTU Online will develop an industry advisory board to bring the perspectives of industry leaders and hiring executives to the design and delivery of LTU Online classes.

**Creates a culture of service** – A connected organization creates and supports a culture of service. A variety of programs and volunteer and community service activities may be available for engaging students, faculty, staff, and administrators. Increasingly, organizations have sought to integrate community service into the learning opportunities they provide, expecting students and faculty to define the learning that occurred through participation in mentored activities in the community. In the very way it interacts with local, regional, state, and national organizations and issues, the organization models service for its constituencies.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online provides students with the opportunities to engage in academic practice within their workplace environments, and encourage students to collaborate with their working peers, supervisors, and executives.
2. LTU Online students are made aware of the community and service opportunities available to on-campus students, and are encouraged to seek out service opportunities in their home communities.
3. The assessment component of LTU Online courses will focus attention on constituent service needs and will respond to those needs as courses are revised.

**Collaborates** – A connected organization deals effectively with seemingly competing imperatives: protecting the integrity of the organization while engaging in partnerships and collaborations that challenge some concepts of autonomy. An accredited organization must be responsible for everything that uses its name, but it also must build dependable bridges to other institutions and organizations that provide education. A connected organization understands its role in helping students create seamless learning pathways through and among these institutions and organizations. This is as true for pathways between high schools and colleges as for pathways between colleges and graduate programs. It is true for pathways from nationally accredited organizations as well as from organizations accredited by other regional associations. Increasingly, connected organizations work to diminish unnecessary educational barriers to people from other countries.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. The LTU Online initiative has been informed by best practices identified by accrediting commissions, professional organizations, and existing collaborative groups.
2. LTU Online is actively collaborating with Michigan community colleges to develop a statewide articulation agreement for Lawrence Tech's Bachelor of Science in Information Technology completion program.

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3. Lawrence Tech participates in the Michigan Community College Virtual Learning Collaborative.

**Engages in healthy internal communication** – Other kinds of connections are also vital to the well-being of an accredited organization. The connected organization shows that it understands that the health of connections within its community is key to its success. Effective governance and administrative structures, for example, connect multiple internal constituents in shared efforts to fulfill the organization’s mission. Criterion One calls for an institution to evaluate the health and effectiveness of these connections. Criterion Two identifies a major challenge to healthy internal connections, the alignment of all levels of planning with the organization’s mission.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online was introduced to the Lawrence Tech community using multiple communication formats including face-to-face meetings, e-mail communication, meetings with college faculty councils, and development of a comprehensive web site.
2. A governance structure is being established for LTU Online that includes all major stakeholder groups, faculty members, industry representatives, students, and LTU Online staff.
3. LTU Online staff meet regularly with administrative, academic program directors, and faculty to discuss future opportunities and to evaluate impact of LTU Online on existing academic programs.

## ***4. The Distinctive Organization***

**Has an unambiguous mission** – In these new Criteria, the Commission expands its understanding of organizational mission to also include statements of vision, values, and goals. The Commission maintains its long history of evaluating an organization against its own distinctive identity and goals. A distinctive organization, therefore, knows what it is about. It can provide the public with documents that state its mission clearly. The knowledge of the mission pervades everything the organization does. Moreover, the organization understands the essential connection between operating with integrity and keeping faith with the mission. The new Criterion One most clearly lays out the absolute importance of this foundation.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online has been established with a singular mission: to develop and delivery asynchronous online courses in collaboration with academic programs and faculty members.
2. The mission of LTU Online is clearly articulated as a support unit to avoid conflict and competition with existing colleges, academic departments, and technology service providers.
3. The LTU Online budget is clearly established to support its mission, and clear distinctions are made between online courses delivered through LTU Online and traditional and hybrid courses offered by the colleges. A separate campus code has been established to denote LTU Online classes.

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4. The LTU Online mission is clearly communicated to all campus stakeholder groups, and is reinforced with group and individual meetings held with LTU Online staff.

**Appreciates diversity** – The distinctive organization understands the complexity of the diverse society in which it is located, and it can identify how it responsibly responds to that society while honoring its unique mission. Whether diversity marks the classroom or the curriculum, whether learning about diversity is shaped by the students and faculty who fill the classrooms or by students' off-campus experiences, the distinctive organization serves the common good by honoring the worth of all individuals. While Criterion One identifies the importance of organizational recognition of diversity, Criterion Four identifies the direct relationship between what students learn and the diverse society in which they will live and work.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online actively seeks out underrepresented faculty members with appropriate academic qualifications and online teaching experience.
2. Involving students and faculty from outside Lawrence Tech's traditional service area contributes to the diversity of the LTU Online learning community.
3. LTU Online students are provided with the opportunity to contribute information about their home and workplace environments for the benefit of other students and faculty members.

**Is accountable** – Evaluation of actual performance is essential for an organization's case that it is, indeed, distinctive. Therefore, a distinctive organization finds ways to document how it achieves the goals embedded in its mission that are understandable and credible to internal and external constituents. Criterion One proposes that accountability and integrity are closely interwoven. Criterion Three holds that an accredited organization's goals for student learning are clearly stated and amenable to effective assessment. Criterion Five calls on organizations to document that constituencies value their services. The expectation is that a distinctive organization is willing to be accountable for fulfilling its unique mission.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online sets clear and unambiguous objectives for its operation.
2. LTU Online reports directly to the Provost who serves as the executive sponsor for the initiative. The provost meets on a bi-weekly basis with the executive director of LTU Online to review progress against plans.
3. LTU Online clearly communicates its objectives with campus stakeholders to continually reinforce its mission and progress being made against objectives.

**Is self-reflective** – A distinctive organization is determinedly self-reflective. That is, the organization regularly takes time to engage its constituencies in credible self-evaluation processes. While this may be accomplished through ongoing planning processes at multiple levels, evaluation processes built into shared governance, or periodic open community meetings, a distinctive organization studies itself much more frequently than only before a comprehensive visit. Criterion One links adherence to mission and protection of integrity to conscious self-reflection. Criterion Two ties the capacity to meet the future to ongoing evaluation and

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assessment processes. Criterion Five proposes that quality of service is directly related to an organization's ability to learn, analyze, and evaluate capacity.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. The LTU Online staff meets weekly to review progress and identify issues.
2. LTU Online is purposefully organized to benefit from iterative development of methods and practices. Methods and practices are informed by best practices and through interpretation of campus experiences and relationships.

**Is committed to improvement** – Any organization desirous of maintaining its own distinctiveness must be committed to improvement. Criterion Two explicitly links sound evaluation to continuous improvement. In establishing the importance of effective assessment and of valuing and supporting effective teaching, Criterion Three connects both to improvement of educational programs. Improvement is also embedded in many of the Examples of Evidence for these and other Criteria.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online is designed to iteratively develop its methods and processes, and therefore to continually improve its processes.
2. Problems and challenges identified during the operation of LTU Online are clearly documented along with improvement plans. Resolution of problems and challenges are highly valued by the LTU Online staff.
3. All campus stakeholders are actively encouraged to discuss problems and challenges directly with LTU Online staff or through the Office of the Provost.

## Appendix C: Linkage to Best Practices

LTU Online has been designed around best practices for design and delivery of online programs. This appendix discusses LTU Online design and delivery features informed by the accreditation criteria and best practices contained in “Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs”<sup>23</sup> and the Sloan-C consortium.<sup>24</sup>

### *Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs*

These *Best Practices* have been developed by the eight regional accrediting commissions in response to the emergence of technologically mediated instruction offered at a distance as an important component of higher education. Expressing in detail what currently constitutes best practice in distance education, specifically electronically offered degree and certificate programs, they seek to address concerns that regional accreditation standards are not relevant to the new distributed learning environments, especially when those environments are experienced by off-campus students.

The *Best Practices*, however, are not new evaluative criteria. Rather they explicate how the well-established essentials of institutional quality found in regional accreditation standards are applicable to the emergent forms of learning; much of the detail of their content will find application in any learning environment. Taken together those essentials reflect the values which the regional commissions foster among their affiliated colleges and universities:

- that education is best experienced within a community of learning where competent professionals are actively and cooperatively involved with creating, providing, and improving the instructional program;
- that learning is dynamic and interactive, regardless of the setting in which it occurs;
- that instructional programs leading to degrees having integrity are organized around substantive and coherent curricula which define expected learning outcomes;
- that institutions accept the obligation to address student needs related to, and to provide the resources necessary for, their academic success;
- that institutions are responsible for the education provided in their name;

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<sup>23</sup> Commission on Higher Education, Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools; Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, New England Association of Schools and Colleges; Commission on Technical and Career Institutions, New England Association of Schools and Colleges; Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, North Central Association of Colleges and Schools; Commission on Colleges, The Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges; Commission on Colleges, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges; Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities, Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

<sup>24</sup> See <http://www.sloan-c.org/effective/> for the list of effective practices.

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- that institutions undertake the assessment and improvement of their quality, giving particular emphasis to student learning;
- that institutions voluntarily subject themselves to peer review.

These *Best Practices* are meant to assist institutions in planning distance education activities regarding the electronically offered degree and certificate program, and to provide a self-assessment framework for those already involved. For the regional accrediting associations they constitute a common understanding of those elements which reflect quality of technologically mediated instruction offered at a distance. As such they are intended to inform and facilitate the evaluation policies and processes of each region.

Developed to reflect current best practice in electronically offered programming, these *Best Practices* were initially drafted by the Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications ([www.wiche.edu/telecom/](http://www.wiche.edu/telecom/)), an organization recognized for its substantial expertise in this field (this document supplements “Guidelines for Distance Education”). Given the rapid pace of change in distance education, these *Best Practices* are necessarily a work in progress. They will be subject to periodic review by the regionals, individually and collectively, who welcome comments and suggestions for their improvement.

These *Best Practices* are divided into five separate components, each of which addresses a particular area of institutional activity relevant to electronically offered degree and certificate programs. They are:

1. Institutional Context and Commitment
2. Curriculum and Instruction
3. Faculty Support
4. Student Support
5. Evaluation and Assessment

Each component begins with a general statement followed by individual numbered paragraphs addressing specific matters describing those elements essential to quality distance education programming. These in turn are followed by protocols in the form of questions designed to assist in determining the existence of those elements when reviewing either internally or externally distance education activities.

### **1. Institutional Context and Commitment**

Electronically offered programs both support and extend the roles of educational institutions. Increasingly they are integral to academic organization, with growing implications for institutional infrastructure.

1a. In its content, purposes, organization, and enrollment history if applicable, the program is consistent with the institution’s role and mission.

- What is the evidence that the program is consistent with the role and mission of the institution including its goals with regard to student access?

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- Is the institution fulfilling its stated role as it offers the program to students at a distance, or is the role being changed?

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online is designed to be consistent with the institution's mission of serving working adult learners.
2. LTU Online is designed to leverage Lawrence Tech's motto of "theory and practice."
3. LTU Online does not alter the mission of Lawrence Tech, but rather extends the reach of Lawrence Tech to new student populations.

1b. It is recognized that a healthy institution's purposes change over time. The institution is aware of accreditation requirements and complies with them. Each accrediting commission has established definitions of what activities constitute a substantive change that will trigger prior review and approval processes. The appropriate accreditation commission should be notified and consulted whether an electronically offered program represents a major change. The offering of distributed programs can affect the institution's educational goals, intended student population, curriculum, modes or venue of instruction, and can thus have an impact on both the institution and its accreditation status.

- Does the program represent a change to the institution's stated mission and objectives?
- Does the program take the college or university beyond its "institutional boundaries," e.g., students to be served, geographic service area, locus of instruction, curriculum to be offered, or comparable formally stated definitions of institutional purpose?
- Is the change truly significant?

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online does not change Lawrence Tech's mission and objectives, but rather increases the reach of Lawrence Tech in terms of geographic service area and the numbers of students who can be served.
2. LTU Online extends the existing curriculum of Lawrence Tech by providing additional learning resources and flexibility to prospective students.
3. LTU Online is not established as a separate academic unit, and therefore does not independently develop new curricular programs. LTU Online will collaborate with colleges and academic departments to propose new academic programs which are compatible with the mission of LTU Online.

1c. The institution's budgets and policy statements reflect its commitment to the students for whom its electronically offered programs are designed.

- How is the student assured that the program will be sustained long enough for the cohort to complete it?
- How are electronically offered programs included in the institution's overall budget structure?
- What are the institution's policies concerning the establishment, organization, funding, and management of electronically offered programs? Do they reflect ongoing commitment to such programs? (See also item 1e below.)

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### LTU Online evidence:

1. Lawrence Tech has committed long-term budget resources to the LTU Online initiative and has established it as a separate budgetary entity.
2. All LTU Online courses are funded through the LTU Online budget.
3. As academic degree programs are offered by LTU Online, a cohort scheduling model is employed and the schedules for completion of the programs by the cohorts will be posted. In the event that the LTU Online initiative is ended, online courses will continue to be scheduled to allow cohort students to complete the programs according to the posted schedule.

1d. The institution assures adequacy of technical and physical plant facilities including appropriate staffing and technical assistance, to support its electronically offered programs.

- Do technical and physical plant facilities accommodate the curricular commitments reviewed below, e.g., instructor and student interaction (2e), and appropriateness to the curriculum (2a)?
- Whether facilities are provided directly by the institution or through contractual arrangements, what are the provisions for reliability, privacy, safety and security?
- Does the institution's budget plan provide for appropriate updating of the technologies employed?
- Is the staffing structure appropriate (and fully qualified) to support the programs now operational and envisioned in the near term?

### LTU Online evidence:

1. Lawrence Tech is capable of supporting the anticipated additional enrollment by virtue of its current and planned investments in technologies and services.
2. Lawrence Tech is revising its plans for technology disaster recovery and business continuity.
3. The LTU Online budget is forward-looking and includes planned upgrades for learning technologies. The LTU Online staff collaborates with other University technology and service units to ensure that planned upgrades are incorporated into future budgets.
4. The LTU Online organization has been staffed with an appropriate number of professionals and support staff to ensure the development and delivery of planned online courses.

1e. The internal organizational structure which enables the development, coordination, support, and oversight of electronically offered programs will vary from institution to institution. Ordinarily, however, this will include the capability to:

- Facilitate the associated instructional and technical support relationships.
- Provide (or draw upon) the required information technologies and related support services.
- Develop and implement a marketing plan that takes into account the target student population, the technologies available, and the factors required to meet institutional goals.
- Provide training and support to participating instructors and students.
- Assure compliance with copyright law.

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- Contract for products and outsourced services.
- Assess and assign priorities to potential future projects.
- Assure that electronically offered programs and courses meet institution-wide standards, both to provide consistent quality and to provide a coherent framework for students who may enroll in both electronically offered and traditional on-campus courses.
- Maintain appropriate academic oversight.
- Maintain consistency with the institution's academic planning and oversight functions, to assure congruence with the institution's mission and allocation of required resources.
- Assure the integrity of student work and faculty instruction.

Organizational structure varies greatly, but it is fundamental to the success of an institution's programs. The points above can be evaluated by variations of the following procedure and inquiries:

- Is there a clear, well-understood process by which an electronically offered program evolves from conception to administrative authorization to implementation? How is the need for the program determined? How is it assigned a priority among the other potential programs? Has the development of the program incorporated appropriate internal consultation and integration with existing planning efforts?
- Track the history of a representative project from idea through implementation, noting the links among the participants including those responsible for curriculum, those responsible for deciding to offer the program electronically, those responsible for program/course design, those responsible for the technologies applied, those responsible for faculty and student support, those responsible for marketing, those responsible for legal issues, those responsible for budgeting, those responsible for administrative and student services, and those responsible for program evaluation. Does this review reveal a coherent set of relationships?
- In the institution's organizational documentation, is there a clear and integral relationship between those responsible for electronically offered programs and the mainstream academic structure?
- How is the organizational structure reflected in the institution's overall budget?
- How are the integrity, reliability, and security of outsourced services assured?
- Are training and technical support programs considered adequate by those for whom they are intended?
- What are the policies and procedures concerning compliance with copyright law?
- How does program evaluation relate to this organizational and decision-making structure?

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. Potential online degree programs are identified and developed in consultation with academic program directors, faculty members, and administrators. Programs may be identified within academic departments or may be recommended for consideration by LTU Online to faculty members. The potential for delivering the program pedagogically using online techniques is the first consideration for developing an online degree or certificate program. Once this hurdle has been cleared, extensive discussions occur with the academic program director regarding the content of the program. The proposed

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degree or certificate program is presented to the Provost for approval and inclusion in the LTU Online work plan. At this point interested faculty are recruited to develop courses according to the schedule negotiated with the academic program director. Marketing plans are developed to recruit students for the online program in advance of the first course offerings. Online adjunct faculty are recruited to serve as instructors for the individual courses, with LTU Online staff mentoring the faculty members through the instructional process. Individual courses are evaluated and improvements made as needed. The overall success of the online program is assessed based on academic achievement and enrollment levels.

2. LTU Online programs are developed separately from traditional academic programs. Individual colleges and academic programs cannot undertake development of an LTU Online program; LTU Online programs must be developed collaboratively by LTU Online and a college. In most cases, LTU Online programs are built from existing traditional or hybrid program offerings. In some cases, LTU Online may recommend a promising online degree or certificate program to academic program directors. In these cases, proposal and approval of new programs and/or courses proceed through the existing approval processes. Only when approval is received for the new programs and/or courses is work undertaken to develop the online program.
3. The LTU Online initiative is budgeted as a separate organizational unit under the Office of the Provost. The budget is managed collaboratively by the Provost and the Executive Director of LTU Online.
4. At this point, all services supporting LTU Online are provided or coordinated by Lawrence Tech service organizations, and no unique service is provided in support of LTU Online.
5. Training and support programs are coordinated with existing campus technology and service providers, specifically the Veraldi Instructional Technology Resource Center, the Edward Donnelly Computer Center, and the Lawrence Tech Help Desk. Specialized support services provided directly by LTU Online are coordinated with the support services provided by these campus service units. Additional training is provided through the Educational Teleconsortium of Michigan.
6. Adherence to copyright law is a function of University policy, and efforts are underway to collaborate with the Lawrence Tech Library to develop a comprehensive program to ensure compliance with the "Technology, Education and Copyright Harmonization Act" (TEACH Act) of 2002.
7. As LTU Online programs are directly associated with academic programs offered by the colleges, Lawrence Tech's existing academic program review processes apply. Where LTU Online wishes to advocate for development of a new online program and/or course, the LTU Online staff collaborates with one or more sponsoring faculty members to develop and propose the program or course. The executive director of the LTU Online program is a full-time faculty member, and two members of the LTU Online staff are adjunct faculty members.

1f. In its articulation and transfer policies the institution judges courses and programs on their learning outcomes, and the resources brought to bear for their achievement, not on modes of delivery.

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- What are the institution's policies concerning articulation and transfer? What are decisions regarding transfer of academic credit based upon?
- Is the institution internally consistent in its handling of articulation and transfer issues, or do different divisions have different policies and procedures?

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. All LTU Online courses operate within the framework of the existing academic structure of Lawrence Tech, and therefore is internally consistent with all existing policies and procedures.
2. Students applying for admission to an online degree or certificate program, or registering for a specific online course, must meet all existing admission and prerequisites for that program or course.
3. All articulation and transfer agreements applicable to an LTU Online program are established by the college responsible for the academic program. LTU Online does not develop its own articulation or transfer agreements with other institutions.

1g. The institution strives to assure a consistent and coherent technical framework for students and faculty. When a change in technologies is necessary, it is introduced in a way that minimizes the impact on students and faculty.

- When a student or instructor proceeds from one course or program to another, is it necessary to learn another software program or set of technical procedures?
- When new software or systems are adopted, what programs/processes are used to acquaint instructors and students with them?

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. Lawrence Tech's technology infrastructure is designed and managed by the Edward Donnelly Computer Center in collaboration with the Veraldi Instructional Technology Resource Center, the Lawrence Tech Library, LTU Online, and representatives of the colleges.
2. Any changes to the Lawrence Tech infrastructure or learning technology environment is managed by the Edward Donnelly Computer Center and the Veraldi Instructional Technology Resource Center, with these two offices responsible for informing and training students and faculty in the use of new or changed technologies.
3. LTU Online courses use existing infrastructure and learning technology services except in those cases where specialized software or systems are needed for a specific course. In this event, LTU Online develops training materials for the instructor and students and provides access to those materials prior to the course start date. LTU Online shares this documentation with all Lawrence Tech academic and service units to ensure widespread dissemination of the materials.

1h. The institution provides students with reasonable technical support for each educational technology hardware, software, and delivery system required in a program.

- Is a help desk function realistically available to students during hours when it is likely to be needed?

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- Is help available for all hardware, software, and delivery systems specified by the institution as required for the program?
- Does the help desk involve person-to-person contact for the student? By what means, e.g., email, phone, fax?
- Is there a well-designed FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) service, online and/or by phone menu or on-demand fax?

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. Current infrastructure and network help desk services are provided by the Lawrence Tech Help Desk, and support for learning technologies is provided by the Veraldi Instructional Technology Resource Center.
2. Help Desk and technical support staff are available via phone, via e-mail, or on a walk-in basis for on-campus students.
3. Frequently Asked Questions are available for all students on the web sites maintained by the Lawrence Tech Help Desk and the Veraldi Instructional Technology Resource Center.
4. LTU Online will develop its own set of Frequently Asked Questions in collaboration with the Edward Donnelly Computer Center and the Veraldi Instructional Technology Resource Center to address issues specific to online learners.
5. LTU Online and the Edward Donnelly Computer Center have already proposed the addition of staff members to provide help desk and technical support in the evenings and on weekends. On-call arrangements are being developed so that Help Desk and technical support staff are available via e-mail or instant messaging to provide assistance to online learners.

1i. The selection of technologies is based on appropriateness for the students and the curriculum. It is recognized that availability, cost, and other issues are often involved, but program documentation should include specific consideration of the match between technology and program.

- How were the technologies chosen for this institution's programs?
- Are the technologies judged to be appropriate (or inappropriate) to the program(s) in which they are used?
- Are the intended students likely to find their technology costs reasonable?
- What provisions have been made to assure a robust and secure technical infrastructure, providing maximum reliability for students and faculty?
- Given the rapid pace of change in modern information technology, what policies or procedures are in place to keep the infrastructure reasonably up-to-date?

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. The infrastructure, networking, and learning technologies used by LTU Online are the same technologies provided to on-campus learners. Lawrence Tech is able to leverage its existing significant investments in infrastructure and learning technologies to support LTU Online students.
2. Specific technologies used in individual courses are selected in collaboration with faculty members, and are evaluated based on their functionality, appropriateness to the

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curriculum, ability to interface with existing infrastructure and learning technologies, and cost to the student.

3. Wherever possible, open source technology solutions are selected to minimize cost to enrolled students.
4. The Edward Donnelly Computer Center and the Veraldi Instructional Technology Resource Center develop forward-looking budgets that include necessary technology refresh investments.

1j. The institution seeks to understand the legal and regulatory requirements of the jurisdictions in which it operates, e.g., requirements for service to those with disabilities, copyright law, state and national requirements for institutions offering educational programs, international restrictions such as export of sensitive information or technologies, etc.

- Does institutional documentation indicate an awareness of these requirements and that it has made an appropriate response to them?

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online and LTU Library staff are collaborating on a policy and informational program to ensure compliance with the TEACH Act of 2002.
2. LTU provides disability services to its existing students, and the same services are available to online learners. Furthermore, LTU Online staff will collaborate with the Dean of Students and Academic Achievement Center to develop disability support programs designed for online learners with disabilities.
3. Lawrence Tech's existing intellectual property policy applies to all materials developed for and deployed in LTU Online courses.
4. At this point no technology export issues apply to LTU Online programs.

## **2. Curriculum and Instruction**

Methods change, but standards of quality endure. The important issues are not technical but curriculum-driven and pedagogical. Decisions about such matters are made by qualified professionals and focus on learning outcomes for an increasingly diverse student population.

2a. As with all curriculum development and review, the institution assures that each program of study results in collegiate level learning outcomes appropriate to the rigor and breadth of the degree or certificate awarded by the institution, that the electronically offered degree or certificate program is coherent and complete, and that such programs leading to undergraduate degrees include general education requirements.

- What process resulted in the decision to offer the program?
- By what process was the program developed? Were academically qualified persons responsible for curricular decisions?
- How were "learning outcomes appropriate to the rigor and breadth of the degree or certificate awarded" established? Does the program design involve the demonstration of such skills as analysis, comprehension, communication, and effective research?
- Is the program "coherent and complete?"

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- Are related instructional materials appropriate and readily accessible to students?

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. The process used to determine the portfolio of LTU Online programs begins with a dialog between academic program directors and LTU Online staff as described above. Central to the decision to offer an online program is the determination that the program can be academically and pedagogically sound.
2. All LTU Online programs are developed with academically qualified faculty members selected from full-time faculty or qualified adjunct faculty.
3. Academic assessment criteria for LTU Online programs are the same as for traditional or hybrid programs. Furthermore, all LTU Online programs are designed on a modular basis with components of theory, practice, and assessment built into each module.
4. All LTU Online programs are “coherent and complete” by definition as they mirror existing academic programs and differ only in their online delivery.
5. All instructional materials used in LTU Online courses are integrated into the Blackboard™ course environment, linked from Lawrence Tech web sites including the Lawrence Tech Library, purchased by students as prescribed in the course syllabus, or made available to students via external links.

2b. Academically qualified persons participate fully in the decisions concerning program curricula and program oversight. It is recognized that traditional faculty roles may be unbundled and/or supplemented as electronically offered programs are developed and presented, but the substance of the program, including its presentation, management, and assessment are the responsibility of people with appropriate academic qualifications.

- What were the academic qualifications of those responsible for curricular decisions, assessment, and program oversight?
- What are the academic qualifications of those presenting and managing the program?
- If the principal instructor is assisted by tutors or student mentors, what are their qualifications?
- Are these qualifications considered appropriate to the responsibilities of these persons?

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. All academic programs offered through LTU Online are approved through the existing academic program proposal and review processes established by Lawrence Tech, and are sponsored by an academic department. LTU Online does not propose its own academic programs.
2. All LTU Online programs are coordinated between the responsible academic department and LTU Online to ensure that the academic department retains control over the academic content of the course.
3. All new adjunct faculty hired to teach LT Online courses are vetted by both LTU Online and the academic department. New online faculty will hold the minimum of a master’s degree in an appropriate field, and preferably a doctoral degree.
4. The four LTU Online staff have been selected for their faculty experience and their experience in online education. The executive director of LTU Online is a current Lawrence Tech faculty member. Two LTU Online staff members presently serve as

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adjunct faculty members. One LTU Online staff member has served as associate dean for online programs at another institution, and serves as president elect of the Educational Teleconsortium of Michigan (ETOM). See Appendix J for the vitae of the LTU Online staff.

2c. In designing an electronically offered degree or certificate program, the institution provides a coherent plan for the student to access all courses necessary to complete the program, or clearly notifies students of requirements not included in the electronic offering. Hybrid programs or courses, mixing electronic and on-campus elements, are designed to assure that all students have access to appropriate services. (See also 2d below, concerning program elements from consortia or contract services.)

- How are students notified of program requirements?
- If the institution relies on other providers to offer program-related courses, what is the process by which students learn of these courses?
- Is the total program realistically available to students for whom it is intended? For example, is the chosen technology likely to be accessible by the target student population? Can target students meet the parameters of program scheduling?

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. All students enrolled in LTU Online programs and courses follow the regular application and admission processes of Lawrence Tech, and are therefore enrolled as regular students. Most students are expected to enroll in a mix of online and on-ground classes during their Lawrence Tech experience.
2. At this point all LTU Online course content is developed by and provided by Lawrence Tech, and there is no reliance on external online learning resources for students.
3. When authorized to offer online degree programs, Lawrence Tech will develop and clearly post course availability guarantees for students intending to enroll only in online courses. Student intention is gathered at the time of admission. Students will be guaranteed that all online courses needed to complete their degree will be available and offered for a reasonable period of time following their admission to Lawrence Tech.
4. All LTU Online courses are provided according to the existing academic schedules of Lawrence Tech, and are not offered using a compressed half-semester schedule. This enables students to plan their curriculum with a mix of online and on-ground classes if they prefer.
5. All technologies used by LTU Online are the same technologies used to support traditional and hybrid classes for all University students. Lawrence Tech intends to continue to provide and extend these technologies in the future.

2d. Although important elements of a program may be supplied by consortial partners or outsourced to other organizations, including contractors who may not be accredited, the responsibility for performance remains with the institution awarding the degree or certificate. It is the institution in which the student is enrolled, not its suppliers or partners, that has a contract with the student. Therefore, the criteria for selecting consortial partners and contractors, and the means to monitor and evaluate their work, are important aspects of the program plan. In considering consortial agreements, attention is given to issues such as assuring that enhancing

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service to students is a primary consideration and that incentives do not compromise the integrity of the institution or of the educational program.

Consideration is also given to the effect of administrative arrangements and cost-sharing on an institution's decision-making regarding curriculum. Current examples of consortial and contractual relationships include:

- Faculty qualifications and support.
- Course material:
  - Courses or course elements acquired or licensed from other institutions.
  - Courses or course elements provided by partner institutions in a consortium.
  - Curricular elements from recognized industry sources, e.g., Microsoft or Novell certification programs.
  - Commercially produced course materials ranging from textbooks to packaged courses or course elements.
- Course management and delivery:
  - WebCT, Blackboard, College, etc.
- Library-related services:
  - Remote access to library services, resources, and policies.
  - Provision of library resources and services, e.g., online reference services, document delivery, print resources, etc.
- Bookstore services.
- Services providing information to students concerning the institution and its programs and courses.
- Technical services:
  - Server capacity.
  - Technical support services, including help desk services for students and faculty.
- Administrative services:
  - Registration, student records, etc.
- Services related to orientation, advising, counseling, or tutoring.
- Online payment arrangements.
- Student privacy considerations.

Evaluation of contract services and consortial arrangements requires a review of pertinent formal agreements. Note, for example:

- Are performance expectations defined in contracts and agreements? Are conditions for contract termination defined?
- Are there adequate quality control and curriculum oversight provisions in agreements concerning courseware?
- Are there appropriate system reliability and emergency backup guarantees in agreements concerning technology services?
- What are the provisions for protection of confidentiality and privacy in services involving personal information?

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- What are the assurances concerning qualifications and training of persons involved in contact with students? These services may range from help desk to tutoring or counseling.
- Consortial agreements introduce additional elements to be evaluated:
  - How are curriculum-related decisions made by the consortium, noting the requirement that
  - “Academically qualified persons participate fully in the decisions regarding program curricula and program oversight?”
  - Is the institution fully engaged in the consortial process, recognizing the decision-making responsibilities of shared ownership?
  - What are the financial arrangements among the parties to the consortial agreement? What are the implications of these arrangements for institutional participation and management?
  - What entity awards the certificates and degrees resulting from the consortial program?
  - What articulation and transfer arrangements are applicable to courses offered via the consortium?
  - Did these arrangements involve specific curricular decisions by the academic structures of the participating institutions? Were they prescribed in a state or system decision?
  - To what extent are the administrative and student services arrangements of the consortium focused on the practical requirements of the student?

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online is not outsourcing any aspect of student instruction for LTU Online courses.
2. LTU Online may make use of open courseware objects provided through open courseware consortia and programs such as the MERLOT initiative and the MIT Open Courseware initiative.
3. LTU Online may make use of certain Blackboard™ course cartridges developed and provided by commercial textbook publishers as an accompanying feature to certain textbooks. Course textbooks are reviewed on an annual basis and decisions made regarding the continuing use of Blackboard™ cartridges during the annual review process.
4. Lawrence Tech uses the Blackboard™ course management system and a number of associated utilities provided by and/or supported by Blackboard™. Long-term decisions regarding Lawrence Tech’s use of Blackboard™ are made using existing information technology decision processes.
5. LTU Online has chosen to use the online faculty training course developed by the Educational Teleconsortium of Michigan <http://www.etom.org> for orienting faculty to teaching in the online environment. Lawrence Tech is capable of providing this service, but we believe that it is important to collaborate with other organizations in this important area. Mr. Bill Drummond, lead producer of LTU Online, serves as president elect of ETOM.
6. The Lawrence Tech Library makes use of a range of digital library resources and services that are integrated into its online catalog. Long-term decisions regarding the use of contracted digital services are made through established University processes, with long

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lead times provided to faculty and students if a decision is made to replace any digital library service.

7. LTU Online courses will make use of the online textbook sales service provided by the Lawrence Tech Bookstore <http://www.whywaitforbooks.com>. Students may also purchase textbooks from other online booksellers or by visiting the Southfield campus bookstore, which is operated by Barnes and Noble.
8. The LTU web site <http://www.ltu.edu> provides comprehensive information to students about admissions, registration, student services, and technology. LTU Online makes use of the same information resources but also provides information specific to students enrolled exclusively in online classes. LTU Online staff collaborate with campus technology and service providers to maintain web information that is useful and accurate for both on-ground and online students.
9. The Edward Donnelly Computer Center and Veraldi Instructional Technology Resource Center provide student and faculty infrastructure and support services. Lawrence Tech's infrastructure is capable of supporting a significant increase in the number of online students without affecting the performance of its infrastructure, and LTU Online staff regularly collaborate with technology administrators to ensure that forward-looking budget requests accommodate planned enrollment levels in online classes.
10. The Lawrence Tech Help Desk provides technical support services to all students. The Help Desk is in the process of implementing ITIL standards as well as new trouble ticket management software to improve service levels.
11. All student services provided to LTU Online students is provided by existing campus service units, including the offices of Registrar, Financial Aid, Student Accounting, Academic Achievement, and Dean of Students. LTU Online staff members have met with all campus student service providers to identify any issues affecting provision of student services to online students. Lawrence Tech has made great strides in improving student services with the construction of the A. Alfred Taubman Student Services Center, and the comprehensive business process improvement and cross-training initiatives associated with the movement of all student services into this new building. The "one stop" approach used in the Taubman Center is being extended into the web-based services provided by Lawrence Tech student services offices. See Appendix G for an inventory of student services issues and plans being addressed by student services offices in collaboration with LTU Online staff.
12. All Lawrence Tech students can presently handle all financial business with Lawrence Tech (financial aid, payments, payment plans, refunds, etc.) via online, telephone, or fax services. These services are available to online students as well.
13. Student privacy issues are addressed by existing University policies and procedures. LTU Online students use the same service infrastructure provided to on-ground students, and LTU Online staff will not maintain any student data in subsidiary systems outside Lawrence Tech's Banner™ system. LTU Online staff have access to student data in the Banner™ system only by virtue of students being enrolled in courses which they are assigned to teach, or are assigned as academic advisors.

2e. The importance of appropriate interaction (synchronous or asynchronous) between instructor and students and among students is reflected in the design of the program and its courses, and in the technical facilities and services provided.

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- What provisions for instructor-student and student-student interaction are included in the program/course design and the course syllabus? How is appropriate interaction assured?
- Is instructor response to student assignments timely? Does it appear to be appropriately responsive?
- What technologies are used for program interaction (e.g., email, telephone office hours, phone conferences, voicemail, fax, chat rooms, web-based discussions, computer conferences and threaded discussions, etc.)?
- How successful is the program's interactive component, as indicated by student and instructor surveys, comments, or other measures?

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. All LTU Online courses are designed with extensive interaction components from both student-instructor and student-student perspectives. Technologies used to support interaction include Blackboard™ discussion forums, e-mail, real-time chat, telephone conference calling, VOIP conference calling, and blogs.
2. LTU Online courses make use of group-based learning activities to promote student-student interaction.
3. LTU Online sets written expectations for the frequency of communication from instructor to student, and for response times to student inquiries or postings. LTU Online staff monitors each course to ensure that responses are provided in a timely manner.
4. Student evaluations include a rating of instructor response time as well as student-student and instructor-student interaction.

### **3. Faculty Support**

As indicated above, faculty roles are becoming increasingly diverse and reorganized. For example, the same person may not perform both the tasks of course development and direct instruction to students. Regardless of who performs which of these tasks, important issues are involved.

3a. In the development of an electronically offered program, the institution and its participating faculty have considered issues of workload, compensation, ownership of intellectual property resulting from the program, and the implications of program participation for the faculty member's professional evaluation processes. This mutual understanding is based on policies and agreements adopted by the parties.

- Have decisions regarding these matters been made in accordance with institutional or system processes customarily used to address comparable issues?

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. Existing University policies are applied to LTU Online faculty, and decisions on faculty issues are made in consultation with the Provost.
2. Lawrence Tech has developed a new policy on teaching load which specifically includes full-time faculty teaching assignments for LTU Online courses.
3. Lawrence Tech has issued a new intellectual property policy (see Appendix H) which specifically addresses the development of instructional materials by faculty and students.

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4. LTU Online course development and teaching contract specifically reference Lawrence Tech's intellectual property policy.

3b. The institution provides an ongoing program of appropriate technical, design, and production support for participating faculty members.

- What support services are available to those responsible for preparing courses or programs to be offered electronically? What support services are available to those faculty members responsible for working directly with students?
- Do participating faculty members consider these services to be appropriate and adequate?
- Does the staff include qualified instructional designers? If so, do they have an appropriate role in program and course development?

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online staff actively collaborate with faculty members chosen to develop LTU Online courses.
2. The executive director of LTU Online holds a Ph.D. in Instructional Technology and is an experienced instructional designer. An LTU Online producer is a Ph.D. candidate in Instructional Technology. The LTU Online lead producer has served as associate dean for online learning at a Michigan community college, is an experienced instructional designer, and has developed online learning programs for the U.S. Army.
3. The LTU Online course development contract clearly articulates the support role of LTU Online staff and the course development methodology used to develop all LTU Online courses.
4. All faculty members selected to teach LTU Online courses are required to participate in the online instructor training program sponsored by the Educational Teleconsortium of Michigan (ETOM).

3c. The institution provides to those responsible for program development the orientation and training to help them become proficient in the uses of the program's technologies, including potential changes in course design and management.

- What orientation and training programs are available? Are there opportunities for ongoing professional development?
- Is adequate attention paid to pedagogical changes made possible and desirable when information technologies are employed?
- Given the staff available to support electronically offered programs, are the potential changes in course design and management realistically feasible?
- Do those involved consider these orientation and training programs to be appropriate and adequate?

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. Course developers work with LTU Online staff to develop courses using a formal development methodology over a two month period.
2. Faculty members receive training in the tools used to support LTU Online courses from LTU Online staff or from the Veraldi Instructional Technology Resource Center.

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3. All LTU Online courses are reviewed and refreshed following the first semester in which the course is taught. Compensation for faculty members developing the course is tied to participation in this review and refresh process.
4. Regularly scheduled review and refresh of courses is driven by the nature of the course, feedback from students and instructors, and on the changing economic and technology environments.

3d. The institution provides to those responsible for working directly with students the orientation and training to help them become proficient in the uses of the technologies for these purposes, including strategies for effective interaction.

- What orientation and training programs are available? Are there opportunities for ongoing professional development? Do those involved consider these orientation and training programs to be appropriate and adequate?

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. All LTU Online instructors are required to participate in the online teaching course sponsored by the Educational Teleconsortium of Michigan (ETOM).
2. Each LTU Online instructor is paired with an LTU Online staff member who serves as a teaching assistant in the online course as it is being delivered. The LTU Online staff member acts as a mentor and consultant during the delivery of the course.
3. Online materials are being developed to orient faculty members to online teaching practices, teaching expectations, best practices for engaging students in online environments, online advising, use of digital library resources, academic integrity, and a number of other topics. These materials are reviewed with the faculty member prior to delivery of the course.

## **4. Student Support**

Colleges and universities have learned that the twenty-first century student is different, both demographically and geographically, from students of previous generations. These differences affect everything from admissions policy to library services. Reaching these students, and serving them appropriately, are major challenges to today's institutions.

4a. The institution has a commitment – administrative, financial, and technical – to continuation of the program for a period sufficient to enable all admitted students to complete a degree or certificate in a publicized timeframe.

- Do course and program schedules reflect an appropriate commitment to the program's students?
- Do budget, faculty, and facilities assignments support that commitment?

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. When authorized to offer online degree programs, Lawrence Tech will develop and clearly post course availability guarantees for students intending to enroll only in online courses. Student intention is gathered at the time of admission. Students are guaranteed

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that online courses needed to complete their degree or certificate will be offered for a reasonable period of time following their admission to Lawrence Tech.

2. At this point, all LTU Online courses will be scheduled each semester. When enrollment patterns are established, courses will be scheduled on a recurring basis and will be publicized far in advance of their scheduled offering semesters.
3. The LTU Online budget is funded to support the development and delivery of all courses in the development schedule.

4b. Prior to admitting a student to the program, the institution:

- Ascertains by a review of pertinent records and/or personal review that the student is qualified by prior education or equivalent experience to be admitted to that program, including in the case of international students, English language skills.
- Informs the prospective student concerning required access to technologies used in the program.
- Informs the prospective student concerning technical competence required of students in the program.
- Informs the prospective student concerning estimated or average program costs (including costs of information access) and associated payment and refund policies.
- Informs the prospective student concerning curriculum design and the time frame in which courses are offered, and assists the student in understanding the nature of the learning objectives.
- Informs the prospective student of library and other learning services available to support learning and the skills necessary to access them.
- Informs the prospective student concerning the full array of other support services available from the institution.
- Informs the prospective student about arrangements for interaction with the faculty and fellow students.
- Assists the prospective student in understanding independent learning expectations as well as the nature and potential challenges of learning in the program's technology based environment.
- Informs the prospective student about the estimated time for program completion.

To evaluate this important component of admission and retention, it is appropriate to pursue the following:

- How do potential students learn about the electronically offered program? Is the information provided sufficient, fair, and accurate?
- How are students informed about technology requirements and required technical competence?
- How are students informed about costs and administrative arrangements?
- What information and/or advice do students receive about the nature of learning and the personal discipline required in an anytime/anywhere environment?
- What criteria are used to determine the student's eligibility for admission to the program?
- What steps are taken to retain students in the program?
- What is the history of student retention in this program?

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### LTU Online evidence:

1. All students enrolling in online degree programs, certificate programs, or individual classes are subject to Lawrence Tech's existing admission requirements.
2. All information provided to students about online programs is posted on the LTU Online web site at <http://www.ltu.edu/ltuonline/>
3. All course scheduling information is posted in Lawrence Tech's Banner™ system and is available to all students.
4. Initial marketing of LTU Online courses has been started in collaboration with Lawrence Tech's Admissions, Registrar, and Marketing units.
5. Further marketing of LTU Online degree programs is planned and will commence following authorization to deliver online degrees.
6. Academic advising for online students is provided by existing Lawrence Tech faculty members. LTU Online has developed training materials to assist faculty members in advising online students.
7. All online students benefit from existing University retention and support efforts. LTU Online has developed additional support services for online students, including e-mail and phone support, instant messenger chat services, periodic follow-up messages and surveys, and additional components added to Lawrence Tech's existing course evaluation process.

4c. The institution recognizes that appropriate services must be available for students of electronically offered programs, using the working assumption that these students will not be physically present on campus. With variations for specific situations and programs, these services, which are possibly coordinated, may include:

- Accurate and timely information about the institution, its programs, courses, costs, and related policies and requirements.
- Pre-registration advising.
- Application for admission.
- Placement testing.
- Enrollment/registration in programs and courses.
- Financial aid, including information about policies and limitations, information about available scholarships, processing of applications, and administration of financial aid and scholarship awards.
- Secure payment arrangements.
- Academic advising.
- Timely intervention regarding student progress.
- Tutoring.
- Career counseling and placement.
- Academic progress information, such as degree completion audits.
- Library resources appropriate to the program, including, reference and research assistance; remote access to data bases, online journals and full-text resources; document delivery services; library user and information literacy instruction, reserve materials; and institutional agreements with local libraries.
- Training in information literacy including research techniques.

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- Bookstore services: ordering, secure payment, and prompt delivery of books, course packs, course-related supplies and materials, and institutional memorabilia.
- Ongoing technical support, preferably offered during evenings and weekends as well as normal institutional working hours.
- Referrals for student learning differences, physical challenges, and personal counseling.
- Access to grievance procedures.

Within the context of the program, the requirements of the program's students, and the type of institution, review each of the services and procedures listed above from the standpoint of a student for whom access to the campus is not feasible.

- Are the institution's policies and procedures appropriate and adequate from the standpoint of the distant student?
- If not all appropriate resources are routinely available at a distance, what arrangements has the institution made to provide them to distant students?
- Are these services perceived by distant students to be adequate and appropriate?
- Are these services perceived to be adequate and appropriate by those responsible for providing them?
- What modifications or improvements are planned?

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. All student services provided to LTU Online students is provided by existing campus service units, including the offices of Registrar, Financial Aid, Student Accounting, Academic Achievement, and Dean of Students. LTU Online staff has met with all campus student service providers to identify any issues impacting provision of student services to online students. Lawrence Tech has made great strides in improving student services with the construction of the A. Alfred Taubman Student Services Center, and the comprehensive business process improvement and cross-training initiatives associated with the movement of all student services into this new building. The "one stop" approach used in the Taubman Center is being extended into the web-based services provided by LTU student services offices.
2. All LTU students can presently handle all financial business with LTU (financial aid, payments, payment plans, refunds, etc.) via online, telephone, or fax services. These services are available to online students as well.
3. See Appendix G for an inventory of student services issues and plans being addressed by student services offices in collaboration with LTU Online staff.

4d. The institution recognizes that a sense of community is important to the success of many students, and that an ongoing, long-term relationship is beneficial to both student and institution. The design and administration of the program takes this factor into account as appropriate, through such actions as encouraging study groups, providing student directories (with the permission of those listed), including off-campus students in institutional publications and events, including these students in definitions of the academic community through such mechanisms as student government representation, invitations to campus events including graduation ceremonies, and similar strategies of inclusion.

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- What strategies and practices are implemented by this institution to involve distant students as part of an academic community? By their statements and actions, do administrators and participating faculty members communicate a belief that a sense of academic community is important?
- How are the learning needs of students enrolled in electronically offered programs identified, addressed, and linked to educational objectives and learning outcomes, particularly within the context of the institution's definition of itself as a learning community.
- Do representative students feel that they are part of a community, or that they are entirely on their own?

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online students are actively included in the academic community by their instructors, by LTU Online staff, and through University outreach efforts.
2. Lawrence Tech is increasing the number of streaming video and collaboration opportunities for all students.
3. LTU Online staff is in discussion with the Dean of Students to develop streaming video and collaboration opportunities for involvement in student government. LTU Online students will be recruited to form a student organization representing online students and their needs. Online student activities such as electronic gaming and interest groups will be established.
4. LTU Online is developing advising instructions for faculty members to better serve online students. These instructions will include ideas for involving students in campus research projects and activities.
5. LTU Online, in collaboration with the colleges, Admissions, and Marketing, will sponsor periodic seminars and outreach activities outside the metropolitan Detroit area marketed to online students.

## **5. Evaluation and Assessment**

Both the assessment of student achievement and evaluation of the overall program take on added importance as new techniques evolve. For example, in asynchronous programs the element of seat time is essentially removed from the equation. For these reasons, the institution conducts sustained, evidence-based and participatory inquiry as to whether distance learning programs are achieving objectives. The results of such inquiry are used to guide curriculum design and delivery, pedagogy, and educational processes, and may affect future policy and budgets and perhaps have implications for the institution's roles and mission.

5a. As a component of the institution's overall assessment activities, documented assessment of student achievement is conducted in each course and at the completion of the program, by comparing student performance to the intended learning outcomes.

- How does the institution review the effectiveness of its distance education programs to assure alignment with institutional priorities and educational objectives?
- How does evaluated student performance compare to intended learning outcomes?
- How is student performance evaluated?

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- How are assessment activities related to distance learning integrated into the institution's broader program of assessment?

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online courses will use the same outcome assessment methodologies used in Lawrence Tech's on-ground classes.
2. Each LTU Online course will use a pre-assessment process coupled with an end-of-course assessment to measure student learning achievement.
3. An LTU Online staff member participates on the University Assessment Committee.

5b. When examinations are employed (paper, online, demonstrations of competency, etc.), they take place in circumstances that include firm student identification. The institution otherwise seeks to assure the integrity of student work.

- If proctoring is used, what are the procedures for selecting proctors, establishing student identity, assuring security of test instruments, administering the examinations, and assuring secure and prompt evaluation?
- If other methods are used to identify those who take the examination, how is identification firmly established? How are the conditions of the examination (security, time limits, etc.) controlled?
- Does the institution have in place effective policies and procedures to assure the integrity of student work?

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. Lawrence Tech has a strong policy on academic integrity which is applied to all students and courses, and associated processes to address violations of the policy.
2. LTU Online courses will use multiple approaches to assessment within an individual course to provide various perspectives on student performance.
3. LTU Online courses will use the SafeAssignment™ anti-plagiarism product currently deployed within the Blackboard™ environment. SafeAssignment clearly identifies instances of Internet plagiarism by students, and has the ability for Lawrence Tech to load prior student work into the online database to ensure that prior work has not been plagiarized.
4. All assessments will take place within the Blackboard™ environment, insuring that students must log on to the environment with their unique ID and password.
5. Blackboard™ provides a wide range of assessment options, and a variety of options are used in the assessment process (e.g. assessments will not consist solely of multiple choice questions).
6. Test question banks are developed for each LTU Online module, and the questions presented to students are randomly chosen and then randomized for presentation in a one-time testing session.
7. Where proctoring is needed, Lawrence Tech will arrange for remotely proctored test sites at existing course delivery sites, collaborating institutions, commercial testing services, or U.S. government offices in overseas locations.

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5c. Documented procedures assure that security of personal information is protected in the conduct of assessments and evaluations and in the dissemination of results.

- What procedures assure the security of personal information?
- How is personal information protected while providing appropriate dissemination of the evaluation results?

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. Personal information is protected by virtue of the Blackboard™ and Banner™ environments which are exclusively used for management and delivery of LTU Online courses.
2. Student access to assessment results is provided by Blackboard, and require positive authentication for individual students to see the evaluated results of their assessments.
3. Assessments of group assignments are returned to all members of a project group.

5d. Overall program effectiveness is determined by such measures as:

- The extent to which student learning matches intended outcomes, including for degree programs both the goals of general education and the objectives of the major.
- The extent to which student intent is met.
- Student retention rates, including variations over time.
- Student satisfaction, as measured by regular surveys.
- Faculty satisfaction, as measured by regular surveys and by formal and informal peer review processes.
- The extent to which access is provided to students not previously served.
- Measures of the extent to which library and learning resources are used appropriately by the program's students.
- Measures of student competence in fundamental skills such as communication, comprehension, and analysis.
- Cost effectiveness of the program to its students, as compared to campus-based alternatives.

Although not all of these measures will be applicable equally at every institution, appropriate evidence is generally available through:

- Evaluations of student performance (see 5a above).
- Review of student work and archive of student activities, if maintained, in the course of program reviews.
- Results from students' routine end-of-course and -program evaluations.
- Student surveys of overall satisfaction with the experience of electronically offered programs; surveys reflecting student cost trade-offs experienced as they pursued the program.
- Faculty surveys, peer reviews of programs, and discussion groups.
- Documentation concerning access provided to students not previously served, through a combination of enrollment records and student surveys.

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- Usage records concerning use of library and learning resources, and instructor assignments that require such usage.
- Assessment of students' fundamental skills in communication, comprehension, and analysis. How have the institution's usual measures of these skills been adapted to assess distant students?
- Documentation of the institution's analyses that relate costs to goals of the program.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. Each course is reviewed and assessed at the conclusion of the course from several perspectives including student academic performance, student evaluations of the course content and of the instructor, instructor evaluation of the student learning outcomes and course organization, and student and instructor evaluation of the services provided by LTU Online.
2. All course evaluations from LTU Online are maintained in the Lawrence Tech Library as are the course evaluation results from all University courses.
3. LTU Online faculty members are coached and mentored by LTU Online staff during the teaching of each course, and are provided opportunities to collaborate with their peer online instructors.
4. Students and faculty are provided with periodic opportunities to participate in focus groups to discuss general or specific issues related to the design and delivery of LTU Online courses. The results of these focus groups are shared with faculty and administration.
5. The effectiveness of the LTU Online program uses multiple measures including overall enrollment levels, student performance, student satisfaction, faculty satisfaction, and delivery cost.

5e. The institution conducts a program of continual self-evaluation directed toward program improvement, targeting more effective uses of technology to improve pedagogy, advances in student achievement of intended outcomes, improved retention rates, effective use of resources, and demonstrated improvements in the institution's service to its internal and external constituencies. The program and its results are reflected in the institution's ongoing self-evaluation process and are used to inform the further plans of the institution and those responsible for its academic programs.

- How is the institution's ongoing program of assessment and improvement developed and conducted?
- Does it cover the essential categories of improved learning outcomes, retention, use of resources, and service to core constituencies?
- Does the program appropriately involve academically qualified persons?
- What are the institution's mechanisms for review and revision of existing programs and courses?
- How does program evaluation affect institutional planning?
- What constituencies are actively involved in the ongoing process of planning for improvement?
- Has the process had measurable results to date?

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### LTU Online evidence:

1. Lawrence Tech has a mature outcome assessment program led from the Office of the Provost. An active Outcomes Assessment Committee coordinates assessment activities within individual colleges. LTU Online Producer Diane Cairns is a member of the Outcomes Assessment Committee.
2. Lawrence Tech has established an Academic Program Review Committee which has developed a program review process and templates, and who consults with faculty members and administrators to consistently document proposed new and changed academic programs. Dr. McCord is a member of the Academic Program Review Committee.
3. The LTU Online initiative was designed and developed in collaboration with Vice President for Business and Finance Linda Height, who chairs the Academic Program Review Committee.

5f. Institutional evaluation of electronically offered programs takes place in the context of the regular evaluation of all academic programs.

- What are the administrative and procedural links between the evaluation of electronically offered programs and the ongoing evaluation of all academic programs?
- How are the respective characteristics of campus-based and electronically offered programs taken into account?

### LTU Online evidence:

1. Academic programs remain the responsibility of academic departments. LTU Online collaborates with academic departments to move selected programs online. LTU Online does not independently manage academic programs.
2. Candidate online programs are evaluated to ensure that they are pedagogically appropriate for online delivery. This decision is made collaboratively between the academic department and LTU Online.
3. In some cases LTU Online staff may advocate for the establishment of new certificate or degree programs. In these cases, LTU Online will seek one or more academic departments to propose the program. LTU Online is in a unique position to advocate for interdisciplinary programs.

### *Sloan Consortium Effective Practices*

The Sloan Consortium<sup>25</sup> outlines a series of “pillar goals” and an accompanying quality framework. The quality framework is forward-looking and is used to help define an assessment program for the LTU Online initiative.

#### **Pillar Goals**

1. Learning Effectiveness

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<sup>25</sup> See <http://www.sloan-c.org/> for more information.

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- The provider demonstrates that the quality of learning online is comparable to the quality of its traditional programs
  - Interaction is key: with instructors, classmates, the interface, and via vicarious interaction
  - Metrics are used for comparing online and traditional courses
  - Online course design takes advantage of capabilities of the medium to improve learning (testing, discussion, materials)
  - Courses are instructor-led
  - Communications and community building are emphasized
  - Swift trust characterizes the online learning community
  - Distinctive characteristics of programs are highlighted to demonstrate improved learning
  - On-campus and online instruction achieve comparable learning outcomes, and the institution ensures the quality of learning in both modes by tracking instructional methods, student constituencies and class size
2. Cost Effectiveness
- Institutions continuously improve services while reducing cost
  - Cost effectiveness models are tuned to institutional goals
  - Tuition and fees reflect cost of services delivery
  - Scalability, if an institutional objective, can be accommodated.
  - Partnering and resource sharing are institutional strategies for reducing costs
  - Mission-based strategies for cost reduction are continuously formulated and tested
  - Intellectual property policies encourage cost effective strategies
3. Access
- All learners who wish to learn online have the opportunity and can achieve success
  - Diverse learning abilities are provided for (at-risk, disabilities, expert learners)
  - The reliability and functionality of delivery mechanisms are continuously evaluated
  - Learner-centered courseware is provided
  - Feedback from learners is taken seriously and used for continuous improvement
  - Courses that students want are available when they want them
  - Connectivity to multiple opportunities for learning and service is provided
4. Faculty Satisfaction
- Faculty achieve success with teaching online, citing appreciation and happiness
  - Faculty satisfaction metrics show improvement over time
  - Faculty contribute to, and benefit from, online teaching
  - Faculty are rewarded for teaching online and for conducting research about improving teaching
    - online
  - Sharing of faculty experiences, practices and knowledge about online learning is part of the
    - institutional knowledge sharing structure
  - There is a parity in workload between classroom and online teaching
  - Significant technical support and training are provided by the institution

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### 5. Student Satisfaction

- Students are successful in learning online and are typically pleased with their experiences.
- Measurement of student attitudes finds that:
- Discussion and interaction with instructors and peers is satisfactory
- Actual learning experiences match expectations
- Satisfaction for services (advising, registration, access to materials) are at least as good as on the
- traditional campus
- Orientation for how to learn online is satisfactory
- Outcomes are useful for career, professional and academic development

### Quality Framework

#### 1. Learning Effectiveness

- Goal: The quality of learning online is demonstrated to be at least as good as the institutional norm.
- Process/Practice: Academic integrity and control reside with faculty in the same way as in traditional programs at the provider institution.
- Candidate metrics: Faculty perception surveys or sampled interviews compare learning effectiveness in delivery modes. Learner/graduate/employer focus groups or interviews measure learning gains.
- Progress Indices: Faculty report online learning is equivalent or better. Direct assessment of student learning is equivalent or better.

#### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online course assessments are integrated with Lawrence Tech's assessment program.
2. LTU Online courses use the same outcome assessment tools used with on-ground courses.
3. A wide range of learning and assessment approaches are used within LTU Online courses.
4. All LTU Online courses are instructor-led, and all LTU Online instructors are trained to teach effectively in the online medium.

#### 2. Cost Effectiveness And Institutional Commitment

- Goal: The institution continuously improves services while reducing costs.
- Process/Practice: The institution demonstrates financial and technical commitment to its online programs. Tuition rates provide a fair return to the institution and best value to learners.
- Candidate metrics: Institutional stakeholders show support for participation in online education. Effective practices are identified and shared.
- Progress Indices: The institution sustains the program, expands and scales upward as desired, strengthens and disseminates its mission and core values through online education.

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### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online is designed to minimize the cost of developing and delivering instruction by allocating specific funding for course development and by employing all faculty members at adjunct compensation rates.
2. The LTU Online budget is developed to ensure recovery of costs while using a minimum enrollment level of seven (7) students per course.
3. LTU Online leverages existing University technology and service investments, and does not maintain its own technology or service infrastructure.
4. The LTU Online budget is forward-looking and considers scalability of technology infrastructure, library, and student service capabilities.
5. LTU Online partners with the Educational Teleconsortium of Michigan to provide online education services for its faculty members.
6. Lawrence Tech's new intellectual property policy is incorporated into LTU Online course development and teaching policies.

### 3. Access

- Goal: All learners who wish to learn online can access learning in a wide array of programs and courses.
- Process/Practice: Program entry and support processes inform learners of opportunities, and ensure that qualified, motivated learners have reliable access.
- Candidate Metrics: Administrative and technical infrastructure provides access to all prospective and enrolled learners. Quality metrics for: information dissemination; learning resources delivery; tutoring services.
- Progress Indices: Qualitative indicators show continuous improvement in growth and effectiveness rates.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online courses are available to all Lawrence Tech students using the same admission and prerequisite requirements as traditional on-ground programs and courses.
2. LTU Online courses are flexibly designed to accommodate differing academic backgrounds and skillsets.
3. LTU Online uses the Blackboard™ course management system to manage delivery of all online courses.
4. LTU Online courses are improved using feedback from both students and instructors.

### 4. Faculty Satisfaction

- Goal: Faculty are pleased with teaching online, citing appreciation and happiness.
- Process/Practice: Processes ensure faculty participation and support in online education (e.g. governance, intellectual property, royalty sharing, training, preparation, rewards, and incentives).
- Candidate Metrics: Repeat teaching of online courses by individual faculty indicates approval. Addition of new faculty shows growing endorsement.
- Progress Indices: Data from post-course surveys show continuous improvement: At least 90% of faculty believe the overall online teaching/learning experience is positive; Willingness/desire to teach additional courses in the program is 80% positive.

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### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. LTU Online programs and courses are designed to provide ongoing mentoring and consulting support to faculty.
2. All LTU Online faculty participate in an online teaching training program developed by the Educational Teleconsortium of Michigan.
3. Faculty are encouraged to prepare manuscripts for publication which address key issues in online teaching and learning.
4. All full-time faculty are able to request to teach an LTU Online course on an overload basis.
5. Significant technical support is provided to all LTU Online faculty members by the Veraldi Instructional Technology Resource Center and LTU Online staff.

### 5. Student Satisfaction

- Goal: Students are pleased with their experiences in learning online, including interaction with instructors and peers, learning outcomes that match expectations, services, and orientation.
- Process/Practice: Faculty/learner interaction is timely and substantive. Adequate and fair systems assess course learning objectives; results are used for improvement.
- Candidate Metrics: Metrics show growing satisfaction: Surveys (see above) and/or interviews; Alumni surveys, referrals, testimonials; Outcomes measures; Focus groups; Faculty/Mentor/Advisor perceptions.
- Progress Indices: Satisfaction measures show continuously increasing improvement. Institutional surveys, interviews, or other metrics show satisfaction levels are at least equivalent to those of other delivery modes for the institution.

### **LTU Online evidence:**

1. All LTU Online courses include a student satisfaction survey administered during and after the course has concluded.
2. A formal orientation program is available to all LTU Online students.
3. Lawrence Tech will consider incorporating specific questions regarding online student services into future Noel Levitz student satisfaction surveys.