

REPORT OF THE WSCUC VISITING TEAM

SEEKING ACCREDITATION VISIT 1

The University of the People

March 9-12, 2021

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The team evaluated the institution under the WSCUC Standards of Accreditation and prepared this report containing its collective judgment for consideration and action by the institution and by the WASC Senior College and University Commission. The formal action concerning the institution's status is taken by the Commission and is described in a letter from the Commission to the institution. Once an institution achieves either candidacy or initial accreditation, the team report and Commission Action Letter associated with the review that resulted in the granting of either candidacy or initial accreditation and the team reports and Commission Action Letters of any subsequent reviews will be made available to the public by publication on the WSCUC website.

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SECTION I – OVERVIEW AND CONTEXT

A. Description of Institution and Visit

Established in 2009, the University of the People (UoPeople) is an American non-profit, online, tuition-free institution dedicated to providing access to higher education by removing barriers related to affordability and geography as well as political and personal constraints. Currently serving over 50,000 students, including refugees, from more than 200 countries and territories, the UoPeople offers associate's, bachelor's, and master's degrees in business administration, associate's and bachelor's degrees in computer science and in health science, and a master's degree in education. The university also offers foundational courses which serve to determine college readiness. Of the currently enrolled students, 8,867 are degree-seeking; 76% are undergraduates and 24% are graduate students. Students pay only a one-time application fee of \$60 and assessment fees for each course: \$120 for undergraduate courses and \$240 for graduate courses. The university's affordability is enabled through the use of innovative technology, open educational resources, peer-to-peer learning, and volunteer staffing for many positions, including faculty who are paid an honorarium. Within the UoPeople's current workforce of 1,172, are 888 volunteer faculty and 16 administrative volunteers. (See also CFR 3.1) Gifts to the institution are significant. The UoPeople has received over 3,700 grants ranging from \$12,600 to \$4,315,000 since 2009. The university's office is located in Pasadena, California. Faculty and staff, both compensated and volunteer, are located throughout the globe.

On December 10, 2019, the UoPeople was granted eligibility to seek accreditation by the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC). This report represents the university's first Seeking Accreditation Visit (SAV1). All of the university's programs are offered online.

B. The Institution's Seeking Accreditation Visit 1 Report

Alignment with the Letter of Intent

From its review of the UoPeople's application for accreditation, WSCUC encouraged special attention to all criteria for eligibility and recommended special emphasis for six of the criteria, as noted below:

Criterion	Recommendation	CFR
7. Governance and Administration	Memorialize board size, contingency plan when board chair temporarily fulfills CEO role, and CEO hiring and evaluation; CFO role and evaluation of all faculty and staff	3.1, 3.8, 3.9
8. Financial Resources and Accountability	Contingency plan for paid staffing positions	3.4
10. Degree Programs	Graduate program culture; graduate program core competencies development and assessment	2.2b
13. Faculty	Faculty culture	2.4, 2.8, 3.10
14. Student Success	Student support that reflects the academic profile of students	2.11, 2.12, 2.13
16. Information and Learning Resources	Core competencies development and evaluation including information literacy	2.2, 3.5

The UoPeople's Letter of Intent described policies and procedures already in place that are believed to respond to the "special emphasis" areas. It also identified new initiatives recommended by the Eligibility Review Committee (ERC) for three of the criteria that are

completed or underway, including;

- Criterion 7) Revisions of the board bylaws to address interim presidential authority and CEO hiring and evaluation, a board resolution to expand, and the hire of a Chief Financial Officer (CFO),
- Criterion 8) Creation of a contingency plan for paid faculty positions, and
- Criterion 16) Piloting an information literacy resource that resides in the online learning resource center. Additional information on these responses is provided in Section C: Response to Issues Raised in the ERC Letter.

The university also identified changes in leadership since the ERC and provided the most recently audited financial statements as well as the auditor's management letter. No new programs were added since the ERC review, however an Arabic-language version of the existing Associate's program in Business Administration degree was launched by the UoPeople in September 2020, as stated in Section 5 of UoPeople's SAVI Report. It was approved by WSCUC in spring 2021 and reviewed by the SAVI team during its visit. The program currently enrolls approximately 3,000 students.

Quality and Rigor of the Review and Report

In preparation for the review process, and informed by a timeline of the significant milestones of the report process, the UoPeople formed a WSCUC Accreditation Committee consisting of 12 administrators and two faculty:

Dr. David Shulman; Executive Vice President of Academic Operations (Chair)
 Ms. Diana Bowman; Volunteer, UoPeople Faculty
 Dr. David Clinefelter; Dean of Student Affairs
 Dr. David H. Cohen; Volunteer, Provost
 Mr. Robert Holcomb, Vice President for Development
 Mr. Rami Ish-Hurvitz, Senior Vice President for Operations
 Dr. Shawn Moustafa, Vice Provost
 Dr. Roxie R. Smith; Volunteer, Associate Provost
 Mr. Asaf Wolf, Esq., Senior Vice President of Enrollment

Ms. Caroline Powers, Chief of Staff

Dr. Brian Harlan: Volunteer, Director of Institutional Research and Assessment at the California Institute of the Arts, Director of Institutional Research at the UoPeople

Dr. William Speier; Volunteer, UoPeople Faculty

Committee members were knowledgeable about and engaged with the process. During a meeting with the members, the process was described as guided and coordinated by the EVP of Academic Operations and with the support of three external advisors with WSCUC experience. The role of the members was to draft an assigned section of the report which was then compiled by the EVP. One of the two faculty members on the committee described her contribution as reviewing and providing input to the draft report. When asked about outcomes from the process, members noted several additional insights and initiatives, including the priority of service to students, the need to move from course assessment to program assessment and to integrate these findings with the program reviews, to assess general education learning, to have the board evaluate the president, and to strengthen the student complaint procedure.

The committee defined three outcomes that the university hopes to achieve through WSCUC accreditation:

1. Self-improvement through the focused reflection prompted by the review process.
2. To assure the public that the institution achieved the quality required for regional accreditation.
3. To support students seeking further study or transfer credit when regional accreditation is preferred or required by other institutions.

The UoPeople's 108-page report for its first Seeking Accreditation Visit was well-written and supported by related and accessible appendices, though not always conclusive. The team was able to find additional evidence for some Criteria for Review (CFRs) by reviewing appendices attached to other Standards, interviews with personnel, as well as in requests for additional information. The report followed the required format although not all appendices were included.

The missing and supplemental information requested by the visit team was provided by the UoPeople to the visit team before and during the SAV1 visit. Each CFR was addressed in the Evidence of Compliance in accordance with the 2013 Standards and Criteria for Review. A summary synthesis and reflection on the most important issues, institutional strengths, and areas for improvement was provided for each Standard. The UoPeople updated the initial submission of the report on February 17, 2021 to address link and format errors.

The institution received 405 responses to the confidential email message that was sent to students, staff, and faculty. Of the responses received, 120 indicated satisfaction with the program and faculty. The students highlighted the UoPeople's mission to offer affordable programs. Thirty-two students expressed some form of concern, with a few students mentioning delayed response time, technical issues, registration issues, curriculum issues, and faculty complaints. The remaining 16 student concerns centered around the peer review process. It is important to point out that more comments were received praising the peer review process than concerns. The institution recently started an Arabic program, which resulted in 66 responses in Arabic that were not reviewed. There also appeared to be some confusion between the confidential email response and the invitation to participate in the student open meeting with the team. Of the 405 responses, 184 indicated interest in attending the open meeting and requested additional information. Only two faculty responded, and both were complimentary. Finally, there was one student respondent, no longer an active student, expressing frustration with the peer review grading model.

C. Response to Issues Raised in the Eligibility Review Committee Letter

The UoPeople responded to each of the recommendations for criteria identified by the WSCUC ERC as needing special emphasis.

Criterion 7: Governance and Administration:

1. *In cases where the UoPeople chairperson needs to assume the role of president, no matter how urgent or brief, that the board chooses another member of the board to serve as acting chair during this period and add the process to its bylaws. The UoPeople has amended its bylaws to select the interim president from a member of the senior academic or administrative leadership.*
2. *That the board establish an explicit goal for board size and a timeline for completion of board expansion and add it to its bylaws. On March 19, 2020, UoPeople's board resolved to appoint one to two new trustees each year and no fewer than four additional members in the next three years. The newest member was appointed to the board during its March 2, 2020, meeting.*
3. *That the board memorializes the process for hiring and evaluating the CEO in the board bylaws. The UoPeople's bylaws have been amended with the addition of a succession plan which includes the hiring process and goals. A second appendix describes the procedure for the Annual Review of the UoPeople president. A conversation with Board members during the SAV1 confirmed the board's understanding of this process.*
4. *That the CFO should be integral to the institution's leadership with evaluation reflective of the institutional purposes and educational objectives. The UoPeople has now hired a full-time, compensated CFO who reports directly to the president and the senior vice president of operations. The university's current organization charts should be updated to reflect this change at the senior level.*

Criterion 8: Financial Resources and Accountability:

The ERC recommended that the UoPeople develop a contingency plan for paid staffing positions that includes the implications of this plan on its financial viability. The UoPeople

developed an analysis of the financial impact of increasing its current instructor honorarium of \$600 per course to \$1,650 by 2023, which was considered to be competitive. Staff positions were not included. Implications included a balanced budget without an increase in student fees, assuming a reduction in growth and fewer instructors.

Criterion 10: Degree Programs:

1. *Demonstrate a graduate culture or appropriate plans to develop and foster such a culture, promoting the importance of scholarship and/or professional practice and to define its concept of graduate culture and efforts to foster it.* The “habits of the mind” of graduate life are defined by the UoPeople as a culture of reflection, questioning, and collaboration, supported by research training courses, library assignments, weekly discussion, and peer assessment. The university supports community engagement through Yammer and the Global Employment Network. To achieve student’s active engagement with the literature, the graduate programs require reflective portfolio activities or a research and practice portfolio. The reflective portfolio is used in the MBA program and focuses on self-reflection and evaluation within each course. The research and practice portfolio are used in the MEd program to compile instructional strategies and material throughout the program and includes the reflective portfolio activities as well as teaching and learning resources. Both graduate programs include research in courses such as Education in Context, Research in Education, and Managing in the Global Economy. Both graduate programs also include a capstone course that requires a research paper. (See also CFR 2.2b)

The UoPeople’s graduate programs focus on producing self-directed leaders capable of formulating moral, objective, and innovative solutions in the

classroom setting, and ultimately in the real-world. Students engage in peer review as a mechanism for grading. This supports an active engagement with the literature between students; however, based on student feedback from the open student forum, more directive feedback from faculty would be useful to promote the use and need for scholarship in graduate programs. The UoPeople also describes elements important for the development of an intellectual community and has begun a pilot program on student mentoring. (See also CFR 4.4)

2. Articulate the core competencies for each graduate program and the strategies for their development and assessment. The MBA and MEd Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) do address higher level evaluation and synthesis skills. Curriculum maps link courses to PLOs in which they are addressed. Levels of learning; introduction, reinforcement, and mastery are not included but should be in order to determine how and where to best improve learning on any one program learning outcome. At this time, however, the UoPeople's learning assessment strategy is based on course grades which represent achievement of all learning outcomes addressed in a class, but not each outcome separately. (See also CFRs 2.1, 2.6, 3.5, and 4.3)

Criterion 13: Faculty:

The ERC recommends that the institution articulate faculty culture and governance and describe how they are fostered. The UoPeople uses a volunteer faculty primarily for course instruction. Faculty culture is articulated as one focused on commitment to the mission. The onboarding process provides support and structure to the volunteer faculty as part of the onboarding process. Advisory Boards of “distinguished faculty from the world’s leading institutions” are responsible for the more traditional areas of faculty governance, including

curriculum oversight. The volunteer faculty may participate in course development as subject matter experts and may participate on the Appeals Committee, the Disability Services and Scholarship Committee, the Course Review Committee, and the Program Review Committee. However, no formal process for gathering faculty input on governance matters currently exists. (See also CFRs 2.2, 3.1, 3.10 4.4)

Criterion 14: Student Success:

1. *Give serious thought to the support services needed by its students to successfully complete the program.* The university identifies its program advisors as the primary support for students from admission through graduation. Disability, technology, online databases, writing, and career services are also provided. Data from its student survey results indicate that the majority of students interact with their program advisor “once every few weeks,” primarily on course and registration matters. Overall student satisfaction program advisors appear to be above average in the student survey results. Regarding “other needs,” surveyed students’ most frequently identified need is student ID cards.
2. *Give serious thought on how to provide these support services effectively within the remote learning environment.* In its student survey, the UoPeople asks for both usage and satisfaction with Moodle support, library, and their university experience. Overall, 94.3% of the students responding consider themselves satisfied with their studies with UoPeople. Satisfaction with information navigation and information finding are lower than average. The visit team encourages the university to continue further research of student perceptions on support services.
3. *Monitor student progress to determine what works and what improvements are*

needed. The UoPeople provides a significant amount of data regarding student progression and performance. An analysis of trend data over time regarding student satisfaction with the services provided, as well as an understanding of the importance of these services to them would more clearly determine if the UoPeople is providing services most useful to students and whether new efforts to improve student usage and satisfaction are successful. Correlation of satisfaction data with progress data, as well as the disaggregation of both, would give additional insights into student behaviors and perceptions that could identify and target services for student success. (See also CFRs 2.11)

Criterion 16: Information and Learning Resources:

The ERC recommends that the UoPeople develop and evaluate student achievement in undergraduate and graduate core competencies including proficiency in information literacy.

The university has identified two institutional learning outcomes indirectly related to information literacy; communication fluency and technological fluency. The UoPeople describes that information literacy competencies are included in a course all new undergraduates complete and that it is also piloting an information literacy resource in the online learning resource center. If the UoPeople employs a direct assessment of student learning on each of the program learning outcomes and core competencies individually, this will help determine whether students are achieving each requirement, including information literacy. (See also CFRs 2.1, 3.5, and 4.3)

The ERC also urged the institution to participate in WSCUC events such as the Assessment Leadership Academy, educational workshops and programs, and the annual Academic Resource Conference. The visit team also urges the broad participation of all UoPeople's constituency; board, administration, staff, and faculty, in WSCUC events to build institutional familiarity with its standards, resources, priorities, and practices.

SECTION II – EVALUATION OF INSTITUTIONAL COMPLIANCE WITH WSCUC’S STANDARDS

Standard 1 - Defining Institutional Purposes and Ensuring Educational Objectives

Institutional Purposes

CFR 1.1

The Institution’s formally approved statements of purpose are appropriate for an institution of higher education and clearly define its essential values and character and ways in which it contributes to the public good.

Standard 1 requires the institution to clearly define its purposes, essential values and characteristics, and to ensure its commitment to education, to the public good, and to integrity, transparency, and autonomy. The UoPeople statements of institutional purpose, including the vision, mission, goals, and values are published and accessible on its website and in its Outcomes Assessment Plan. Each clearly illustrates its unique commitment to provide affordable, quality education to any qualified student in the belief that education can be an important force for individual transformation and societal change. Institutional learning outcomes identify academic competencies, knowledge, and intellectual abilities, and personal and civic responsibility as key competencies for every program.

CFR 1.2

Educational objectives are widely recognized throughout the institution, are consistent with stated purposes, and are demonstrably achieved. The institution regularly generates, evaluates, and makes public data about student achievement, including measures of retention and graduation, and evidence of student learning.

PLOs and related course outcomes are established for each program. Curriculum maps illustrate the courses in which each PLO is addressed. The expected progression of learning (introduce, reinforce, master) in each course is not yet defined. The UoPeople’s outcomes assessment plan describes that students’ learning is demonstrated on posts, assignments, quizzes, final exams, and learning journals and that this learning is directly assessed by either student

peers or faculty. These combined results of these assessments contribute to the final student grade, which is the foundation of the program review. An example of embedded assignments related to the PLOs and course learning outcomes (CLOs) is provided in the plan, however a report on learning program outcomes was not included in the two program reviews completed to date. The visit team recommends the development of an assessment plan to evaluate student learning. (See also CFRs 2.1, 4.3)

The institutional effectiveness report includes an analysis of student grades and academic progress as well as other indirect measures of student achievement and program effectiveness. Regarding publication of this data, the program reviews and institutional effectiveness reports are provided to the board, the President's Forum, and the program advisory boards but not the general public. Available to the public on UoPeople's website is a Fact Sheet which includes retention data for first year BA students, time to completion, and employment data. The visit team encourages UoPeople to include data in its public information on student learning.

Integrity and Transparency

CFR 1.3

The institution publicly states its commitment to academic freedom for faculty, staff, and students, and acts accordingly. This commitment affirms that those in the academy are free to share their convictions and responsible conclusions with their colleagues and students in their teaching and writing.

The UoPeople's commitment to integrity and transparency is supported through publication of its academic freedom policy in the Faculty Handbook. The policy describes both the rights and responsibilities of those it covers, including students, course instructors, deans, faculty, and all other subject matter experts. It also describes expectations for the application of the policy and notes its endorsement of the AAUP/AAC 1940 Statement of Principles Defining Academic Freedom. Given that students are included in its application, the UoPeople is encouraged to consider including this policy in publications readily available to students.

CFR 1.4

Consistent with its purposes and character, the institution demonstrates an appropriate response to the increasing diversity in society through its policies, its educational and co-curricular programs, its hiring and admissions criteria, and its administrative and organizational practices.

The university's commitment to diversity is made clear through its mission to make available affordable, quality, online degrees to any qualified student; the policies and operations which enable the opportunity, access, and support required to fulfill this mission; its pedagogical approach; the hiring of personnel from around the globe; and its formal policies on diversity and inclusion. However, data from the student survey indicates that over half of respondents have experienced "disrespect because of your race, ethnicity, or religious beliefs." Faculty comments suggest that an understanding of the student perspective on how these practices address and strengthen learning and "campus climate," including those related to the interaction between individuals from many cultures, may be worth consideration. (See also CFR 3.1, 4.4)

CFR 1.5

Even when supported by or affiliated with governmental, corporate, or religious organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose and operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy.

The UoPeople's autonomous board of trustees has the sole authority to set policy and approve budgets. As stated in its bylaws, it is a nonprofit public benefit corporation and is not organized for the private gain of any person. No part of the net income or assets of the Corporation shall ever inure to the benefit of any trustee, officer, or member thereof or to the benefit of any private person. Discussions with the board members confirm their deep engagement with the mission of the UoPeople and the "democratization of education" for those who need affordable access to a quality education. Their highest priorities include the challenge of growth, that is, making affordable, accessible education available to those who have no other option, along with maintaining the quality of the education. The UoPeople's subsidiary

organization, the University of the People Education, which provides operational services to the UoPeople, has recently changed from a for-profit entity to a public benefit company. (See also CFR 3.4, 3.9)

CFR 1.6

The institution truthfully represents its academic goals, programs, services, and costs to students and to the larger public. The institution demonstrates that its academic programs can be completed in a timely fashion. The institution treats students fairly and equitably through established policies and procedures addressing student conduct, grievances, human subjects in research, disability, and financial matters, including refunds and financial aid.

Essential information related to programs and goals, policies related to admissions, technology, and support as well as costs is available on its website. UoPeople provides processes for appeals, grievances, and submitting complaints. To date, no adverse findings have been lodged by the state or programmatic accreditor. As noted in CFR 2.12, “Complete information about degree offerings; program goals, the application process including the two step pathway, admissions requirements, degree requirements, courses, and all costs are provided on the website and in the catalog.” Transfer credit processes and requirements are also prominent on the website.

CFR 1.7

The institution exhibits integrity and transparency in its operations, as demonstrated by the adoption and implementation of appropriate policies and procedures, sound business practices, timely and fair responses to complaints and grievances, and regular evaluation of its performance in these areas. The institution’s finances are regularly audited by qualified independent auditors.

The university’s practices include an appeals process for academic matters, a grievance procedure for all students and personnel, and both are available on its website and catalog. The grievance policy states specific deadlines for timely response. Every complaint filed thus far with the Distance Education Accreditation Commission has been resolved informally. Financial records are submitted annually for audit by an experienced auditing firm. The visiting team

encourages UoPeople to assure that specific deadlines are clear where timely response is needed for appropriate policies.

CFR 1.8

The institution is committed to honest and open communication with the Accrediting Commission; to undertaking the accreditation review process with seriousness and candor; to informing the commission promptly of any matter that could materially affect the accreditation status of the institution; and to abiding by Commission policies and procedures, including all substantive change practices.

From the clear and consistent message in the SAV1 report, as well as discussions with UoPeople faculty, administration, staff, and board members, accreditation by WSCUC is considered important to the future success of the institution. The commitment to the mission heard by the team from all of the constituent groups and the seriousness of the discussions held on what is needed to further compliance with the WSCUC requirements are consistent with the integrity and transparency required by WSCUC. One specific organizational example is the recent change of its subsidiary from a for-profit entity to a nonprofit entity to achieve greater message consistency. (See also CFR 3.4)

Summary of Standard 1

Areas of strengths identified by the SAV1 visit team included the UoPeople's statements of institutional purpose are the illustration of its unique commitment to provide affordable, quality education to all in order to impact individual transformation and societal change (CFR 1.1) It's commitment to integrity and transparency evidenced by its commitment to academic freedom (CFR 1.3) and the publication of accurate academic information (CFR 1.6), the deep engagement of their board of trustees (CFR 1.5), and the seriousness and candor that all of UoPeople's constituencies have brought to the SAV1 process (CFR 1.8). The visit team encourages the creation of timely response deadlines for all appropriate policies (CFR 1.7). The team recommends additional attention to the development of processes to assess and improve

learning on each PLO (CFR 1.2), and it suggests a deeper consideration of the role of diversity in its educational processes (CFR 1.4).

Standard 2: Achieving Educational Objectives Through Core Functions

Teaching and Learning

CFR 2.1

The institution's educational programs are appropriate in content, standards of performance, rigor, and nomenclature for the degree level awarded, regardless of mode of delivery. They are staffed by sufficient numbers of faculty qualified for the type and level of curriculum offered.

The UoPeople programs are comparable to similar degrees offered in terms of content, length, and rigor at other higher education institutions. All instruction, course development by subject matter experts, and program support comes from volunteer faculty and volunteer program deans. Faculty are considered credentialed once the curriculum vitae is reviewed to ensure alignment with content, participation in a teaching demonstration is complete, and final candidate transcripts are reviewed. If selected, faculty are expected to complete a rigorous training process prior to teaching a course.

The SAV1 team was not able to verify, through a review of the written documentation or conversations with faculty, that the institution includes standards of performance at the degree level. The UoPeople relies heavily on grades at the course level rather than assessing student performance at the program level. Program-level assessment allows faculty, academic leaders, and staff to determine the extent to which the students acquired the knowledge and skills needed to be successful in the program; and the standards of performance defines success. Graduate programs include a capstone course. This capstone should be the focus of summative program assessment as it is the last course the student takes and should represent the student's comprehension of the material across the curriculum. All program outcomes should be assessed

in the capstone course using the program rubric. The institutional report states, “Curricular decision making is handled by the respective program advisory board whose combined expertise far exceeds that of a single individual.” (page 42) However, the information used to make those decisions are not from a culminating experience and are not specific to each program outcome. The team encourages the academic leaders and faculty to review the WSCUC Capstone Rubric.

CFR 2.2

All degrees - undergraduate and graduate - awarded by the institution are clearly defined in terms of entry-level requirements and levels of student achievement necessary for graduation that represent more than simply an accumulation of courses or credits. The institution has both a coherent philosophy, expressive of its mission, which guides the meaning of its degrees and processes that ensure the quality and integrity of the program.

The program’s goals and objectives are available to the public through the institution’s website and catalog. While the catalog language appears to reflect similar outcomes at both the associate’s and bachelor’s degree level, the website clearly articulates the difference. The institution created a two-step admissions pathway to determine a student's preparedness for college-level study and ultimately admission as a degree-seeking student. Applicants must complete a minimum of three courses as a non-degree seeking student, with a grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 or better, to be eligible to enroll in the program. Currently, 39% of the 2017 undergraduates have become degree-seeking students. (See also CFR 2.10)

CFR 2.2a

Undergraduate programs engage students in an integrated course of study of sufficient breadth and depth to prepare them for work, citizenship, and life-long learning. These programs ensure the development of core competencies including, but not limited to, written and oral communication, quantitative reasoning, information literacy, and critical thinking. In addition, undergraduate programs actively foster creativity, innovation, an appreciation for diversity, ethical and civic responsibility, civic engagement, and the ability to work with others. Baccalaureate programs also ensure breadth for all students in cultural and aesthetic, social and political, and scientific and technical knowledge expected of education persons. Baccalaureate degrees include significant in-depth study in a given area of knowledge (typically described in terms of a program or major.)

The general education (GE) learning outcomes include academic competencies

(communication and quantitative reasoning), civic responsibilities, as well as integrative knowledge. The core program learning outcomes focus on decision making, teamwork, and ethical reasoning within the major. Similar to CFR 2.1, the GE outcomes require some work to define the levels of performance. The curriculum map does not reflect alignment between GE and core courses in the program. This gap, coupled with the reliance on course grades, makes it difficult to evaluate breadth and depth of the GE curriculum in impacting learning.

CFR 2.2b

The institution's graduate programs establish clearly stated objectives differentiated from and more advanced than undergraduate programs in terms of admissions, curricula, standards of performance, and student learning outcomes. Graduate programs foster students' active engagement with the literature of the field and create a culture that promotes the importance of scholarship and/or professional practice. Ordinarily, a baccalaureate degree is required for admission to a graduate program.

The graduate PLOs are consistent with the purpose and character of the discipline. The institution relies on the program advisory boards to develop the program competencies as well as to distinguish the curricula between graduate and undergraduate programs. The ERC recommended the UoPeople “define their concept of graduate culture and describe their efforts to foster it.” To achieve student’s active engagement with the literature, the graduate programs require reflective portfolio activities or a research and practice portfolio. The reflective portfolio is used in the MBA program and focuses on self-reflection and evaluation within each course. The research and practice portfolio are used in the MEd program to compile instructional strategies and material throughout the program and includes the reflective portfolio activities as well as teaching and learning resources. Both graduate programs include research in courses such as Education in Context, Research in Education, and Managing in the Global Economy. Both graduate programs also include a capstone course that requires a research paper.

The UoPeople’s graduate programs focus on producing self-directed leaders capable of

formulating moral, objective, and innovative solutions in the classroom setting, and ultimately in the real-world. Students engage in peer review as a mechanism for grading. This supports an active engagement with the literature between students. However, based on student feedback from the student forum, more directive feedback from faculty would be useful to promote the use and need for scholarship in graduate programs.

As stated in CFR 2.1, the curricular decisions are made by the program advisory members. Currently, according to the interviews and material reviewed, the volunteer faculty do not have program oversight or input to the standards of achievement, policy development, or quality control. The visit team recommends that the UoPeople involve the input of volunteer faculty in setting and reviewing the program outcomes and standards for student achievement at the program level. (See also CFRs 2.4, 3.10)

CFR 2.3

The institution's student learning outcomes and standards of performance are clearly stated at the course, program, and as appropriate, institutional level. These outcomes and standards are reflected in academic programs, policies and curricula, and are aligned with advisement, library, and information and technology resources, and the wider learning environment.

The institution's student learning outcomes are clearly stated and made available at the course, program, and institutional level. The stated performance standards focus on indirect measures such as GPA, satisfactory academic progress, and retention data. The institution has also developed numerous dashboards to aid in evaluating student performance. The UoPeople does not utilize out-of-class learning experiences such as internships and service learning although a mentoring program pilot program is currently underway.

CFR 2.4

The institution's student learning outcomes and standards of performance are developed by faculty and widely shared among faculty, students, staff, and (where appropriate) external stakeholders. The institution's faculty take collective responsibility for establishing appropriate standards of performance and demonstrating through assessment the

achievement of these standards.

During the interviews, the academic leaders and instructional design team stated that the CLO) are written by faculty in consultation with the program advisory board. The same team indicated that the PLOs are written by the Program Advisory board. Standards for direct learning outcomes are not widely shared among the institution according to the responses to interview questions. Most faculty focus on grades within a course to determine how well a student is performing. Program review involves the indirect measures previously described. Developing the standards, measurements, and instruments for the direct assessment of student learning on the PLOs requires attention from the UoPeople's academic leaders and faculty. Given the academic team is made up of volunteers, UoPeople appears to focus on developing assessment measures that can be pulled from a database such as grades and completion rate and other progression data. A similar approach could be made possible with an assessment plan that utilizes rubrics to assess learning on key assignments addressing relevant PLOs throughout the program. The UoPeople is encouraged to develop a mechanism for faculty engagement in the assessment of student learning that goes beyond grades, retention, and satisfactory academic progress as the core assessment resources. (See also CFRs 2.2b, 3.1, 3.10)

CFR 2.5

The institution's academic programs actively involve students in learning, take into account students' prior knowledge of the subject matter, challenge students to meet high standards of performance, offer opportunities for them to practice, generalize, and apply what they have learned and provide them with appropriate and ongoing feedback about their performance and how it can be improved.

The UoPeople utilizes a social learning theory model, "with students learning from one another in a mutually beneficial manner..." (p. 48) Students are engaged in the learning process through peer-reviewed assessments and assignments. Each assignment includes a rubric to formalize and support consistency of the grading process. At the open forum for students, some

students indicated frustration with the peer-review grading process, stating student scores were often assigned without any explanation. Discussions with personnel from the Information Technology and Institutional Research departments also included student concerns with the peer review process. (See also CFRs 3.1, 4.4)

Prior knowledge is addressed through the use of prerequisite courses (i.e. Economics 1 and Economics 2). Curriculum maps are utilized to aid in the determination of where specific outcomes are integrated in the curriculum. However, this information does not appear to be used to determine how students are performing at the program level.

CFR 2.6

The institution demonstrates that its graduates consistently achieve its stated learning outcomes and established standards of performance. The institution ensures that its expectations for student learning are embedded in the standards faculty use to evaluate student work.

The UoPeople programs are assessed using dashboards that account for indirect measures such as retention, GPA, and satisfactory academic progress. As the institution continues to develop a comprehensive assessment plan, one area that requires attention is understanding the difference between grading and assessment. Currently, the UoPeople focuses on grading, which often includes criteria outside of course learning (i.e. late work, formatting, etc.). The team recommends that the institution focus on using the rubric results across the curriculum, and specifically on the capstone course, to determine student success. As noted in CFR 2.4, designated or key signature assessments embedded as part of the curriculum map may be a useful tool to aid in the determination of student academic achievement at the PLO level, and therefore the potential for improvement. With the support of outcome management software, greater efficiencies may also be possible. (See also CFR 4.3)

CFR 2.7

All programs offered by the institution are subject to systematic program review. The

program review process includes, but is not limited to, analyses of student achievement of the program’s learning outcomes; retention and graduation rates; and where appropriate, results of licensing examination and placement, and evidence from external constituencies such as employers and professional organizations.

The Program Review Guide describes how the institution engages in a systematic course and program review. During the interviews, the UoPeople team clarified that this review occurs every six years. The review includes an in-depth evaluation of course curriculum currency and relevance. This process appears to be an opinion of the program advisory reviewer based on professional knowledge of the subject rather than using student achievement data to determine if the students are learning what is expected in the course (see also CFR 2.5). For example, the undergraduate business program review report was completed in October 2020. The two reviewers evaluated currency and relevance of the reading material, program goals, overall curriculum structure, and examinations and other assessments. The reviewers were asked to answer the following five questions:

1. How would you describe the overall quality of the curriculum compared to peer programs?
2. Could you define the highlights and shortfalls of the curriculum?
3. How would you describe the best areas of UoPeople to focus improvement for this curriculum over the coming five years?
4. Are there any “mission critical” courses that we are missing?
5. Is the quality of the courses in the different disciplines consistent across the curriculum or do some areas differ?

The two external reviewers are not provided data on student achievement. Instead, the reviewers are asked if the assessment tools are suitable for testing what has been covered in the course. The visit team recommends that the UoPeople focus attention on program review across the curriculum rather than at a course level and suggests consideration of the WSCUC Program

Review Rubric for this purpose. Data should be used to determine if students are learning at the program level. As stated in CFR 2.4, the faculty should work with key academic leaders to develop standards of achievement. The UoPeople may benefit from participating in the WSCUC Assessment Leadership Academy to support the institutional development of a comprehensive program review plan.

Scholarship and Creative Activity

CFR 2.8

The institution clearly defines expectations for research, scholarship, and creative activity for its students and all categories of faculty. The institution actively values and promotes scholarship, creative activity, and curricular and instructional innovation, and their dissemination appropriate to the institution’s purposes and character.

According to the Faculty Handbook, the university requires all volunteer faculty to engage in a minimum of three faculty development activities annually. However, there is no mention of the need for research, scholarship, and creative activity. This could be accomplished presentations to the volunteer faculty network, professional development initiatives offered through UoPeople, presentations at conferences, book chapters, articles, and other opportunities. Many volunteer faculty have a full-time position at a “home” institution and the UoPeople policy allows professional development to be achieved through a home institution. In 2020, UoPeople faculty research and professional development included 95 publications, 100 presentations, and 126 opportunities to develop educational materials.

CFR 2.9

The institution recognizes and promotes appropriate linkages among scholarship, teaching, assessment, student learning, and service.

Evaluation of teaching performance combines the functions of presence, engagement, and responsiveness with the deeper connection to pedagogy and best practices in online education. Instructional faculty undergo a formal classroom observation each year in which they are able to

demonstrate their academic expertise and pedagogical mastery along three dimensions: Classroom presence, quality engagement, and timeliness. However, scholarship requirements are based on the instructors' "home" institution. Some instructors are in industry and, therefore, are not required to complete scholarship activities. There is no mention in the faculty handbook of the requirements for service to the institution outside of teaching. If the incorporation of new knowledge from scholarship into course and program content is a goal for the UoPeople, the visit team suggests the development of a mechanism for incentive as well as the collection of information for this purpose from faculty.

CFR 2.10

The institution demonstrates that students make timely progress toward the completion of their degrees and that an acceptable proportion of students complete their degrees in a timely fashion, given the institution's mission, the nature of the students it serves, and the kinds of programs it offers. The institution collects and analyzes student data, disaggregated by appropriate demographic categories and areas of study. It tracks achievement, satisfaction, and the extent to which the campus climate supports student success. The institution regularly identifies the characteristics of its students; assesses their preparation, need, and experiences; and uses these data to improve student achievement.

A powerful component of the UoPeople's mission and operation is to provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate preparedness for college-level (or graduate-level) work without some of the more traditional admissions requirements; test the university's pedagogical approach for personal fit; and determine if they have the time, commitment, and support structures needed for the level of work required. Students in this stage who complete the first two courses with a grade of GPA of 2.00 or higher and who have submitted the official documentation may begin studying towards their degree. Those earning below 2.00 in their first two courses may take up to five courses to achieve a minimum GPA of 2.00 or higher to be accepted to degree study. Only at this second stage can the individual be admitted for study toward a degree. Four-year cohort data as of fall 2020 (term starting 2017-T1-Undergraduates) show that 400 (39%) became degree seeking students and 11 had already graduated. Six-year

cohort data will be available in summer 2022. A cross-institutional Retention Committee composed of academic and operational personnel has been established to guide implementation and monitor progress and a part-time Director of Retention and Student Experience has been hired. The UoPeople is increasing efforts to disaggregate data by meaningful demographic categories. In addition, the institution is working toward increased tracking of student progression to degree at the program-level. Table 2.10-2 in the UoPeople SAV1 report shows disaggregation of student graduation data by gender, program, age, and region. Further hires have been made to expand institutional research capacity within the Information Technology department. The academic affairs strategic plan outlines the efforts being made to increase student achievement and graduation with timelines and milestones. Dashboards are leveraged to track retention efforts as evidenced in appendix 2.10-4 of the SAV1 report. In support of the institutional commitment to the mission and in service to the diverse student population, UoPeople should continue to build out its capacity to collect and analyze student data, disaggregated by appropriate demographic categories and areas of study, to track the progress toward degree completion. It also recommended that the university track the campus climate to ensure it is supporting student success. (See also CFR 3.5 and 4.2)

CFR 2.11

Consistent with its purposes, the institution offers co-curricular programs that are aligned with its academic goals, integrated with academic programs, and designed to support all students' personal and professional development. The institution assesses the effectiveness of its co-curricular programs and uses the results for improvements.

Co-curricular activities include a career service center that provides career guidance and advising while students are enrolled as well as after they graduate. The center provides services including resume building, job search skills, professional networking skills, and interviewing techniques. The institution utilizes Yammer as a community for students to communicate with one another on areas of interest. The Global Employment Network within Yammer allows for

students, faculty, and volunteers to connect. UoPeople also is piloting a student mentorship program leveraging volunteers to mentor students in the areas of academic, personal, and professional success. In interviews with advisory boards and academic operation staff, it was confirmed that student feedback survey results on support services are discussed during monthly advisory meetings. Alumni are surveyed to provide feedback on how UoPeople supported their career trajectory. The 2019 Alumni survey showed that over 79 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that UoPeople helped them prepare for their current career. The team encourages UoPeople to develop and execute a plan, beyond leveraging surveys, to assess the effectiveness of co-curricular programs, and use the results for improvement in order to provide appropriate services that are aligned to academic goals of students and that are integrated with academic programs.

CFR 2.12

The institution ensures that all students understand the requirements of their academic programs and receive timely, useful, and complete information and advising about relevant academic requirements.

Complete information about degree offerings; program goals, the application process, including the two-step pathway, admissions requirements, degree requirements, courses, and all costs are provided on the website and in the catalogs. The admissions advisor communicates with them about their educational goals, the nature of the UoPeople's program offerings and its pedagogical model, and the demands of online education. Faculty are the first point of contact for any course-related questions or concerns that a student may have, and students are able to consult with faculty directly through an internal messaging system. All other advising is provided by program advisors who are charged with providing guidance and support to increase retention, satisfaction, and success. Upon joining the university, a student is assigned a personal program advisor who remains with them as their single point of contact for their entire time at

the university. Student survey results as well as students in the open forum expressed satisfaction with their program advisors. Student Affairs staff described a robust onboarding process and ongoing professional development sessions for program advisors.

CFR 2.13

The institution provides academic and other student support services such as tutoring, services for students with disabilities, financial aid counseling, career counseling and placement, residential life, athletics, and other services and programs as appropriate, which meet the needs of the specific types of students that the institution serves and the programs it offers.

The UoPeople provides reasonable accommodations in all university programs and activities for qualified students with disabilities. Related policy and procedures are published on the website and in the catalogs, which ensures that prospective students are informed even before they apply. While the UoPeople does not provide federal financial aid, it does provide scholarships to support as many students experiencing financial difficulty as funds allow. Financial aid personnel advise both applicants and students on the availability of awards and on the application process. The learning management system support team helps students with technical challenges and works with the instructional design team to update and keep courses current. A student portal is used for self-monitoring and program planning, and institution staff leverage it to review and advise students. Students gain access to academic support through the Learning Resource Center, the Online Writing Center, and faculty tutors who provide assistance with research and writing processes, while the Peer Assessment Center helps students fine-tune their peer assessing skills. Students provide feedback on these support services through ongoing surveys and the advisory boards review the data on a monthly basis. Question 26 on the annual student survey asked about students' satisfaction with the peer review process. Each of the four categories scored between 3 and 4 on a five-point Likert scale. During the student forum, students expressed concern with the peer assessment process, yet some stated that they enjoyed

receiving feedback from other students. While students are surveyed about the support services they receive, the institution is encouraged to reflect on the sufficiency of the support services for this diverse and regionally dispersed body of students; both satisfaction with and the importance of these services. All of these services should be monitored for effectiveness to ensure long-term sufficiency, particularly given the UoPeople's aggressive growth projection.

CFR 2.14

Institutions that serve transfer students provide clear, accurate, and timely information, ensure equitable treatment under academic policies, provide such students access to student services, and ensure that they are not unduly disadvantaged by the transfer process.

The website and catalogs clearly and accurately describe the policies and procedures for requesting review of previous college coursework. The UoPeople accepts up to 75% of the minimum number of semester hour credits required for an undergraduate degree and up to 50% of the minimum number of semester hour credits required for a graduate degree. Of the 8,867 degree seeking students enrolled in the institution in fall 2020, 187 (2%) had requested review of credits taken elsewhere for the award of transfer credit. Of those requests, 134 (72%) received credit for some or all of the courses that they had submitted for transfer credit review. Initial decisions of transfer credit acceptance are made by the Transfer Credit Officer and then are reviewed by the Transfer Team Leader. Because these positions report up to the Director of Admissions, the visit team encourages academic oversight of the policies and procedures that govern this process. Sample transfer unit evaluations were provided in the appendices. During the site visit students provided positive feedback on the clear, accurate, and timely information they received on the transfer credit process.

Summary of Standard 2

Areas of strengths identified by the SAVI visit team include the UoPeople's program goals and GE learning outcomes, admissions criteria, and graduation criteria which are clearly

stated and made available to the public. (CFRs 2.1, 2.2, 2.2a, and 2.3) The graduate programs made progress on defining and fostering a graduate culture through the development and use of learning journals, quizzes and exams, discussion forums, written assignments, group projects, portfolios, and a capstone as a way to actively involve students in their learning. (CFRs 2.2b and 2.5) The addition of the two-step admissions pathway is to be commended. Furthermore, the institution provides clear program advisement for students along with accurate and timely information for transfer students. (CFRs 2.12 and 2.14)

The team encourages that faculty begin to develop standards of performance to assist with the assessment of student learning outcomes beyond the use of grades. It is important to engage the volunteer faculty in developing standards of performance, measurements, and instruments across the curriculum to assess student learning is taking place. (CFR 2.4) Another area that requires attention is understanding the difference between grading and assessment. The team encourages the UoPeople leaders to review the WSCUC [Assessment Rubrics Combined](#) document as well as the [Principles for Effective Assessment of Student Achievement](#). By transitioning from grading to assessment across the curriculum, data will be used to determine if the students are meeting the program goals for their learning. (CFRs 2.6 and 2.7) The team recommends that the institution create opportunities for faculty to incorporate developing scholarship to develop current and relevant course content. To better support faculty, the institution would benefit from modifying the current policy to promote research, scholarship and creative activity for all volunteer faculty as well as a mechanism for collecting the data. (CFRs 2.8 and 2.9) In support of the institutional commitment to the mission and in service to the diverse student population, UoPeople should continue to build out its capacity to collect and analyze student data, disaggregated by appropriate demographic categories and areas of study, to track the progress toward degree completion. It also recommended that the university track the

campus climate to ensure it is supporting student success. (CFR 2.10) The team also recommends that UoPeople develop an annual co-curricular plan to assess and improve the sufficiency of student support services to meet the needs of a growing student population. (CFR 2.11, 2.13, and 3.4)

Standard 3: Developing and Applying Resources and Organizational Structures to Ensure Quality and Sustainability

Faculty and Staff

CFR 3.1

The institution employs faculty and staff with substantial and continuing commitment to the institution. The faculty and staff are sufficient in number, professional qualification, and diversity, and to achieve the institution’s education objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and ensure the integrity and continuity of its academic and co-curricular programs wherever and however delivered.

The UoPeople employs qualified and dedicated personnel to provide program instruction, infrastructure support, and management oversight. A key distinction that sets the institution apart is the use of volunteer staff and faculty. In the SAV1 report, the UoPeople described its current workforce of 1,172, with 888 volunteer faculty and 16 administrative volunteers. Additional details on the workforce included on the “Chart of Current Employee Counts by Volunteer and Compensated for FY18, FY19 and FY20” describes slightly lower numbers for 2020, but includes additional information on the categories. For context on the comparison of these categories, this data point describes workforce data at 1,068 personnel represented by 800 volunteer/honoraria faculty, 198 contractors, 59 compensated staff, and 11 volunteer staff of whom 9 are deans, vice presidents, and the president. As it relates to faculty, the institution reports it maintains an average 1:20 faculty to student ratio which is competitive in the online space. The volunteer faculty are engaged in the instruction of the material with little to no involvement beyond the instruction level. The institutions’ academic oversight is exercised

through the program advisory boards which include accomplished faculty from other institutions but not faculty teaching in the program. The team recommends that UoPeople consider that faculty responsibility for instruction, and their significant interaction with students suggests that their input would contribute a meaningful perspective to academic governance and program stewardship beyond filling instructional needs. The institution does not currently recognize this as an issue, however, worth note is that the UoPeople's current strategic plan calls for the design of a structure for faculty leadership such as chairs or course leads. (See also CFRs 2.2, 2.4, 3.0)

Regarding diversity, the UoPeople seeks to provide affordable access to education on a global scale which has and will continue to attract a diverse student body. It has a diverse personnel base given the list of countries from which faculty originated, the various interviews the team conducted with individuals from around the globe, and its 2016 non-discrimination policy which states that the university will not engage in discrimination or harassment and will comply with related state and federal requirements. WSCUC however envisions a broader need for diversity beyond representation, including a climate of respect for all students and efforts to constructively address issues of equity and inclusion. Input the team received from faculty and students in the open forums regarding concerns about backgrounds and cultures possibly influencing the peer review process, as well as findings from the student survey that some have experienced "disrespect because of your race, ethnicity, or religious beliefs, the visit team suggests that the UoPeople assure alignment of its own policy and practices with the expectations and good practices described in WSCUC's Equity and Inclusion Policy. (See also CFRs 1.4, 4.4)

CFR 3.2

Faculty and staff recruitment, hiring, orientation, workload, incentives, and evaluation practices are aligned with institutional purposes and educational objectives. Evaluation is consistent with best practices in performance appraisal, including multisource feedback and appropriate peer review. Faculty evaluation processes are systematic and are used to

improve teaching and learning.

The institution's hiring and evaluation practice and policies are in place for both volunteer and compensated personnel. The hiring, on-boarding and orientation of personnel seems to be well developed. (See also CFRs 2.8 and 2.9) Once hired, faculty are required to participate in training on the UoPeople pedagogy and how to teach online. All faculty are assessed on their teaching skills before they are allowed to teach a course. Staff training often includes pairing with another staff member as a "buddy." Program advisors are assigned to an eight-week training program. (See also CFR 2.1)

CFR 3.3

The institution maintains appropriate and sufficiently supported faculty and staff development activities designed to improve teaching, learning, and assessment of learning outcomes.

Through the team's interviews, staff reported that professional development was consistently encouraged and supported by leadership. As described in CFR 2.8, faculty are required to participate in three professional development activities each year. This includes opportunities such as access to on-demand training, a newsletter, and paid access to the Online Learning Consortium virtual conference for all faculty to attend this year. The institution may want to consider strengthening opportunities and incentives for faculty to further develop and apply their scholarship, service to the profession, professional activities, and teaching effectiveness to their classroom role. (See also CFR 2.8, 2.9)

Fiscal, Physical, and Information Resources

CFR 3.4

The institution is financially stable and has unqualified independent financial audits and resources sufficient to ensure long-term viability. Resource planning and development include realistic budgeting, enrollment management, and diversification of revenue sources. Resource planning is integrated with all other institutional planning. Resources are aligned with educational purposes and objectives.

The institution has been successful in receiving three years of unqualified independent audit reports and has operated without a financial deficit for the past three years. The financial model in which the institution operates is one that seeks to keep student fees to a nominal level through maximizing labor and operating costs. The bulk of the savings is found in maintaining a small, compensated staff and management team and a 100% volunteer/honorarium faculty body. Since 2010 the institution has outsourced operations and services to its wholly owned subsidiary, University of the People Education Ltd. which is based in Israel due to the lower labor costs in Israel compared to the United States. Recently, the subsidiary was reorganized from a for-profit entity to a public benefit company in order to be more consistent with the mission of the university, according to its CEO. Both legal and financial advisors encouraged the UoPeople president to move in this direction. The subsidiary charges actual costs plus five percent. The original 2010 contract stated that the CEO of the entity is the same person as the president of the UoPeople and that provision remains today.

The team recommends clear alignment of the current resource allocation with its commitment to quality and the support of students and faculty of the university. In the Financial Viability document submitted to the team, there is a significant allocation of resources directed to marketing and advertising at over 20% in the current fiscal year and by 2025 the amount is 16% of total expenses. While the plans indicate the majority of the budget is spent on academic requirements at 49% in the current year going up to 65% by 2025, it is not clear what is included in those figures, given the model is heavily dependent on volunteers. The document does indicate the institution is planning to raise the faculty honorarium to “market rate” by 2025 and it was stated in interviews that they are reviewing but not committing to hiring full- or part-time faculty. As noted in CFR 3.1, Goal 3, from the UoPeople’s Three-Year Strategic Plan to “Pursue Academic Excellence includes developing a structure for faculty leadership such as chairs or

course leads and the visit team encourages continuation of this strategy. (See also CFRs 2.2, 3.1, 3.10) The strategy of Student services allocation is 2% in the current year and through 2025. Support from the program advisors, which the institution says is a major part of serving its students, accounts for only 4% of the budget in the current year.

Also, in interviews with technology personnel it was clear that technology is an important driver for the institution's affordability, however the balance of expenditures suggests that consideration of its current priorities is needed. Currently, over 30 staff are employed to design and develop internal software and business systems and only three staff work on instructional design. The team urges consideration of allocating resources that directly support a student body that is intended to grow at an astonishing rate. As to the long-term viability of the institution, the summary forecasts that have been provided do indicate better than break-even results however margins are very thin, there are no reserves or contingency funds designated, and cash and investment balances are increasing but minimal compared to the size of the institution. There also seems to be varying opinions amongst the management team as to whether fundraising is needed. However, without this diversification of revenue the institution would most certainly be running deficits now and in the financial models presented to the team. The material presented and the interviews did not provide a clear response to how the university plans to align its scarce resources to the most crucial elements such as student success and program quality. (See also CFR 4.4, 4.6)

CFR 3.5

The institution provides access to information and technology resources sufficient in scope, quality, currency, and kind at physical sites and online, as appropriate, to support its academic offerings and the research and scholarship of its faculty, staff, and students. These information resources, services, and facilities are consistent with the institution's educational objectives and are aligned with student learning outcomes.

The institution places a heavy emphasis and allocates a fair amount of resources on

technology. Students are provided access to a sufficient digital library, Moodle has been adopted as the learning management system, and program advisors are made available to support students when technology issues and other information needs arise. Staff are provided the necessary technology resources and support to do their jobs well. Faculty are provided training on the technology employed at the institution and have access to staff that support technology resources. The collection of information and data is an evolving area for the institution and significant investments have been made with the expansion of an institutional research team. The analysis and what to do with the data however is an area that should be reviewed and enhanced particularly as it relates to student learning outcomes. (See also CFR 2.10, 4.2)

Organizational Structures and Decision-Making Processes

CFR 3.6

The institution's leadership, at all levels, is characterized by integrity, high performance, appropriate responsibility, and accountability.

Through the interview process leadership at all levels of the institution have demonstrated a deep commitment and enthusiasm for the mission and direction of the institution. Leadership operates with integrity and are given a level of responsibility that is appropriate for their roles. It is unclear how accountability and high-performance requirements are in place when the majority of leadership are volunteers, some of whom hold significant roles in other institutions at the same time.

CFR 3.7

The institution's organizational structures and decision-making processes are clear and consistent with its purposes, support effective decision making, and place priority on sustaining institutional capacity and educational effectiveness.

Given the unusual organizational structure of the institution and the large volunteer leadership, the university is able to make clear and consistent decisions throughout the institution. The university is encouraged to determine whether this current model can be

sustained at the high levels of enrollment growth the institution is seeking.

CFR 3.8

The institution has a full-time chief executive officer and a chief financial officer whose primary or full-time responsibilities are to the institution. In addition, the institution has a sufficient number of other qualified administrators to provide effective educational leadership and management.

The institution has a full-time unpaid chief executive officer and full-time paid head of finance whose primary responsibilities are to the institution. There appears to be a sufficient number of other qualified administrators on staff, with most of them participating as volunteers to the university.

CFR 3.9

The institution has an independent governing board or similar authority that, consistent with its legal and fiduciary authority, exercises appropriate oversight over institutional integrity, policies, and ongoing operations, including hiring and evaluating the chief executive officer.

The institution has in place an independent governing board that does exercise appropriate oversight of the institution. The board regularly meets, has several committees such as audit, finance and development, and now evaluates the President on an annual basis. As encouraged by the Eligibility Review Committee, the board has considered its membership size and has developed growth goals to an appropriate amount with members that bring a diverse set of backgrounds and expertise that align with the needs of the institution. The team encourages the UoPeople to assure alignment with WSCUC's Governing Board Policy and to monitor the application of Section 7.9 of its Bylaws to ensure that trustees do not benefit financially from their membership.

CFR 3.10

The institution's faculty exercises effective academic leadership and acts consistently to ensure that both academic quality and the institution's educational purposes and character are sustained.

Academic leadership of the institution is held primarily with volunteer administrators and an outside Program Advisory Board. The institution does clearly define the roles of the volunteer faculty body in its handbook which places a heavy emphasis on teaching. So, it is unclear how the institution can sufficiently satisfy this standard when the faculty, who are delivering instruction and working directly with students, are excluded from governance, policy development and program stewardship. (See also 2.2, 3.1)

Summary of Standard 3

In summary for this standard the institution has demonstrated strengths in several areas. Hiring, on-boarding and evaluation practices are in place (CFR 3.2), the institution's leadership is responsible and operates with integrity (CFR 3.6), the organization's structures are in place for decision making processes to be clear and consistent (CFR 3.7), there is a full-time chief executive officer and financial officer (CFR 3.8), and there is an independent governing board that provides fiduciary oversight of the institution (CFR 3.9). The team suggests that the UoPeople review and consider adopting the WSCUC policy on Equity and Inclusion (CFR 3.1), It is recommended the institution strengthen and make improvements in several key areas. The UoPeople should fully develop integrated financial and business planning models to consider resource allocations to critical areas (CFRs 3.1, 3.4, and 3.7), continue to develop a data infrastructure that is put to good use for analysis (CFRs 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5), and develop opportunities for faculty to contribute in meaningful ways in the academic governance of the institution. (CFRs 3.1, 3.3, and 3.10) Overall, the team finds that the institution meets the level sufficient for Candidacy for Standard 3, subject to the WSCUC Commission review and final determination regarding compliance with this Standard.

Standard 4: Creating an Organization Committed to Quality Assurance, Institutional Learning, and Improvement

Quality Assurance Processes

CFR 4.1

The institution employs a deliberate set of quality-assurance processes in both academic and non-academic areas, including new curriculum and program approval processes, periodic program review, assessment of student learning, and other forms of ongoing evaluation. These processes include collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data; tracking learning results over time; using comparative data from external sources; and improving structures, services, processes, curricula, pedagogy, and learning results.

The UoPeople has designed a comprehensive data set collection to include enrollment, retention, grades, student satisfaction, and finances. Business intelligence dashboards are developed to track the key performance indicators identified by departmental leadership. IR and IT stated they saw the need to harness and adequately assess the data and has recently hired business and data analysts to support this initiative. Currently, they are focusing on the consistency of data, quality standards, and common nomenclature across the university. The SVP of enrollment stated they “are using data to make decisions” and offered a few examples. One included a project that is currently in progress; a predictive model for “at risk” students and the impact on retention. Qualitative data showed that 40% of recently dropped students did so due to financial difficulties. A scholarship was offered to those students and the newly hired Director of Retention and Student Services stated that “thousands of students returned.”

With newly created positions and committees, the UoPeople is evolving the way data is evaluated to identify areas requiring improvements. During the interviews they stated they are aware that deeper analysis of the data needs to be conducted to better understand its importance for quality assurance. Currently, the process of making improvements across the university is in the development phase. (See also 2.10, 3.5, 4.2)

CFR 4.2

The institution has institutional research capacity consistent with its purposes and characteristics. Data are disseminated internally and externally in a timely manner, and analyzed, interpreted, and incorporated in institutional review, planning, and decision-making. Periodic reviews are conducted to ensure the effectiveness of the institutional research function and the suitability and usefulness of the data generated.

During the seeking accreditation self-study, the UoPeople recognized the need for a more robust Office of Institutional Research (OIR). Recently, UoPeople hired a part-time Director of Institutional Research to provide professional guidance in gathering and analyzing institutional data. Two business analysts were recently hired and a search for a manager to oversee institutional research operations is currently underway. Members of the OIR have stated that data collection and dissemination is currently a transactional process and that they are adapting a more strategic approach to data analysis. As such, in alignment with the university's strategic plan, the OIR has created a plan identifying four priorities to assess IR capacity and to address its effectiveness. In addition to addressing and implementing these four key priorities, the OIR is responsible for the university's broader data and reporting needs. Overall, institutional research at the UoPeople is fairly new and is in the very early stages of development. Specifically, the effectiveness of IR cannot be addressed at this time. (See also CFR 2.10, 3.5, 4.1)

Institutional Learning and Improvement

CFR 4.3

Leadership at all levels, including faculty, staff and administration is committed to improvement based on the results of inquiry, evidence, and evaluation. Assessment of teaching, learning, and the campus environment - in support of academic and co-curricular objectives - is undertaken, used for improvement, and incorporated into institutional planning processes.

Program advisory boards are responsible for determining PLOs. The board(s) set curricular requirements and course sequencing. This information is shared with the instructional designer (ID) and Subject Matter Expert (SME) prior to course development.

UoPeople have recently started the Program Review Process which occurs on a six-year assessment schedule. Two programs have completed a program review to date. Additionally, IR stated that the university is identifying ways to bring actual data into the assessment process. Currently, PLO assessment is conducted using anecdotal information from student and faculty feedback. There is no “automation for assessing PLOs”, and while “formative assessment is very important”, summative assessment is currently employed. It was stated that “outcomes based assessment will be a core part of Program Review incorporating direct assessment into the process.” (See also CFRs 1.2, 2.3, 2.4)

The UoPeople is assuredly committed to improving the quality of the courses and programs they offer. They stated they want faculty to be included in reviewing the evidence of student learning and involved in the “action planning” as well. Overall, the desire for a systematic assessment of student learning in each program is evident. They intend to research whether a technological approach to mapping learning to specific learning outcomes can be implemented. Currently, the direct assessment and analysis of student learning on the PLOs is not achieved. (See also CFR 2.6)

CFR 4.4

The institution, with significant faculty involvement, engages in ongoing inquiry into the processes of teaching and learning, and the conditions and practices that ensure that the standards of performance established by the institution are being achieved. The faculty and other educators take responsibility for evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and learning processes and use the results for improvement of student learning and success. The findings from such inquiries are applied to the design and improvement of curricula, pedagogy, and assessment methodology.

The pedagogical approach of course design is based on the use of Open Education Resources (OER) and the peer assessment model. Curriculum development leadership stated that it is a challenge to ensure that OER within the more than 120 courses are current and relevant. Prior to the start of each term, faculty are asked to review all of the OER Uniform Resource

Locators (URLs) in their course(s) to ensure they are available and current. Faculty submit tickets to IT for any broken URLs they find. It was stated that these “quick fix” edits are addressed promptly. Additionally, it was stated if any minor content changes are required, edits are made quickly.

The UoPeople uses the open-source learning platform, Moodle, for all of their course delivery. Due to the rapid growth of enrollment, IT stated there is a considerable strain on the hosting system. Currently, Moodle is hosted on Amazon Web Services, however IT stated they will be moving to a more scalable hosting service. The UoPeople has three Moodle support technicians on staff. LMS consideration is included in their three-year technology strategic plan. There is some discussion about changing the learning platform to a more “cutting edge” LMS, but it is currently in the research phase. (See also CFR 3.4)

All of the UoPeople’s instructional design is done “in house.” They employ three instructional designers, a media specialist, and a quality assurance specialist. The Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) are most often from the current faculty. It was stated that on occasion, the UoPeople has needed to seek external SMEs for specific content to find faculty who specialized in a particular subject matter. SMEs are partnered with an instructional designer and collaborate for 10 to 15 weeks on new course development, and approximately 10 to 12 weeks on course revision. SMEs develop CLOs in collaboration with the instructional designer. The media specialist is available should a course require multimedia or interactive components. Courses are reviewed by the instructional designer and quality assurance using the Quality Matters course review checklist. The UoPeople curriculum development department ensures all courses are in compliance with the Section 508 Amendment to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 for accessibility. The Director of Curriculum Development states that all instructional designers have completed the Quality Matters training. Once courses have been reviewed by the instructional designer, the

SME reviews it before it “goes live.” On occasion, the Program Advisory Board may ask to review a new course for a particular program.

The peer assessment model is the deliberate pedagogical approach embraced by the UoPeople. Using a published rubric developed by the curriculum development department, students provide quantitative feedback on discussion questions and assignments in each of the eight units in a course. The averaged results for peer grading are reflected in a student’s grade for a particular discussion question or assignment. Faculty stated that the majority of “intro” students struggle with conducting peer evaluations, and often “bring their cultures and backgrounds into the evaluation.” (See also 2.5, 3.1) Faculty stated that they spend significant time advising, coaching, and “teaching them how to be fair.” When asked how much time is spent in the courses, faculty responses ranged from 20 to 25 hours per week. It was stated that peer assessment was an “arduous and difficult process,” but that is one reason they wanted to teach for the UoPeople. When asked specifically why they chose to volunteer to teach for the UoPeople, the overwhelming response was to “give back.” Faculty value the mission of the university in serving an underrepresented population of international students and the “opportunity to help others all over the world.”

Personnel from the departments of IR and IT stated that students reported a dissatisfaction with the peer assessment during their first year. (see also CFR 3.1) The university conducted a pilot study reducing the level of peer assessment in certain courses and found a 30% improvement in student satisfaction in those courses. Additionally, they stated that a similar pilot was performed for graduate programs, but there was no apparent change in student satisfaction. In addition to peer assessment, most courses include electronically graded quizzes and final examinations. The UoPeople stated that final exams are proctored either through an arrangement with the UoPeople or a third party, ProctorU. In addition to faculty support, students have access

to peer assessment tutorials and sample responses in the Peer Assessment Office located in the Learning Resource Center.

Students are asked to complete a qualitative end of course evaluation for every completed course. The evaluations largely appear to focus on how students liked the course and/or instructor rather than their perceptions on their learning outcome achievement. There appears to be a lack of individualized feedback from peers and faculty within the courses reviewed. Some students mentioned that they wanted more faculty engagement, interactive activities and assignments, and multimedia components. It was stated that the curriculum design team has started adding videos, scenario based learning, multimedia, 3D modeling, and interactive quizzing tools using Kaltura. So far, these components have been added to about 20 courses in the institution's portfolio.

The UoPeople stated that courses are reviewed every three years by the original SME. Student satisfaction and completion rates determine the priority of course revisions. Assessment of CLOs does not appear to be included in course revision prioritization and faculty do not complete an end of course assessment to determine whether learning activities are aligned to CLO achievement. An emphasis on course completion, grades, and overall GPA is the benchmark by which assessment of learning is conducted. Currently, there is no evidence of direct assessment of CLOs and PLOs. (See also CFRs 1.2, 2.1, 2.4, and 2.7)

CFR 4.5

Appropriate stakeholders, including alumni, employers, practitioners, students, and others designated by the institution, are regularly involved in the assessment and alignment of educational programs.

Currently the UoPeople has the dedicated leadership, faculty, and staff to support the students they serve. The process by which regular assessment for effectiveness is currently conducted is in the developing stage. Currently, faculty are not represented on key committees,

such as Program Review and Student Retention. The Director of IR stated that the UoPeople has not “done a lot of sharing information back to students” who are considered key stakeholders at the institution. It is unclear if front-line staff are surveyed to offer feedback on essential improvements and effectiveness university-wide.

Annual evaluations are sent to students and alumni. The alumni survey asks 32 questions some of which are centered on graduates’ current employment. Almost 90% of respondents gave a 4.47/5.0 overall satisfaction rate of UoPeople. The student survey asks 38 questions including assessment on overall satisfaction and student experience, student support services, library services, peer assessment, technology and Moodle, referrals, and marketing. There are two questions specifically asking about instruction.

Overall, an effort to include most stakeholders in assessing institutional effectiveness is evident. However, UoPeople is still in the development phase of creating a systematic and sustainable process to include all key stakeholders to assess institutional effectiveness.

CFR 4.6

The institution periodically engages its multiple constituencies, including the governing board, faculty, staff, and others, in institutional reflection and planning processes that are based on the examination of data and evidence. These processes assess the institution’s strategic position, articulate priorities, examine the alignment of its purposes, core functions, and resources, and define the future direction of the institution.

UoPeople’s 2019-2021 strategic plan focuses on the “alignment with budgetary, personnel and technology planning” of the institution. The “Open the Gates” goal to provide more students with access to education by increasing student recruitment capabilities to increase enrollments by over 50% in the next five years is both altruistic and ambitious. In addition to the resources necessary to support more students and to assure the continued quality of programming, alignment with enrollment management and IT is necessary to assure rapid growth is sustainable. (See also CFR 3.4)

The technology unit at the UoPeople is led by the Sr. Vice President and the Vice President of Technology to whom all personnel report is dynamic and enterprising. The unit includes 22 software developers, three business analysts, four data analysts, and six quality assurance specialists. UoPeople stated they are a “software house inside UoPeople” since they develop and maintain the systems architecture of the institution. Currently, they are scaling the infrastructure, “ramping up data analytics”, substantially upgrading the core portal which “sits on top of the CRM”, and researching alternate LMSs. When asked whether there were technology concerns with the projected rapid growth, the response was “growth justifies increased spends on technology.” It was stated that “the organization is moving fast, but organically.” However, a concern was expressed that while ITs mission is “to allow the business to grow”, they want to do it responsibly. There is increased demand for updates and enhancements, but it was stated they will not “do it if it’s unstable.” The 10-week term cycle can often be challenging with 54 individual “tasks” that are required to run error-free. This places pressure on both the unit and the infrastructure. They stated that they want to be “on top of new technologies to become faster and scalable.” Automated procedures and processes would improve overall efficiency by reducing current manual work. (See also CFR 2.6) The UoPeople personnel are aware they must improve the capabilities of the current infrastructure since a more solid infrastructure is required to sustain the planned growth at the institution.

The UoPeople stated that there is a need to focus on fundraising and corporate partnerships to ensure financial viability. Grants and gifts are needed to support the rapid growth initiative in addition to providing scholarships. However, growth projections are currently outpacing donor contribution and corporate sponsorship. (See also 3.4)

The UoPeople’s plan for rapid growth to align with the mission and vision of the institution is admirable. Although, in this framework, this initiative needs to be fully supported

by budget and planning and IT prior to implementation.

CFR 4.7

Within the context of its mission and instructional and financial realities, the institution considers changes that are currently taking place and are anticipated to take place within the institution and higher education environment as part of its planning, new program development, and resource allocation.

UoPeople state they have formal and informal methods by which they anticipate and respond to a changing higher ed environment. Their international advisory boards provide a wealth of information, knowledge, and strategic perspective as does their outside general council and President's Council. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) implemented in 2018 by the EU required UoPeople to respond very quickly. As a fully online institution, it was stated that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was minimal.

UoPeople's most recent (2019) SWOT analysis for goal setting was conducted to determine the viability of adding additional programs to the university's portfolio. The strengths and opportunities are aligned with its mission statement. The weaknesses and threats include the area of restricted financial resources which impacts technology development and staff investment. Additionally, lack of organizational capacity to support growth was identified. These challenges have been explored throughout this report.

UoPeople is assuredly keeping their finger on the pulse of the higher education landscape. The ability to respond to the inevitable changes is dependent on whether the institution has built the financial capacity to scale and sustain.

Summary of Standard 4

The UoPeople exhibits a strong commitment to assure that quality programming is available to those who need access to affordable education. They have identified the need to improve the quality assurance process by creating several key positions within the institution and a comprehensive information technology (IT) infrastructure (CFR 4.1, 4.2). Since there are

considerable new processes, personnel, and committees, there is still work to be done. The data that the UoPeople collects is quite substantial and admittedly, still in the developing stage of assessing the data. The staff remains optimistic about the evolution of data analysis at the institution and states that fiscal resources will support several initiatives.

A key area that is not currently developed is the direct assessment of student learning on the required learning outcomes (CFR 4.3 and 4.4). The peer to peer learning and assessment model is the cornerstone of instruction at UoPeople. While peer to peer assessment has its benefits, it is still unclear if peer assessment is effective. In some instances, this model is inconsistent, particularly with undergraduate students (CFR 4.3). Students and alumni participate in various surveys which provide useful feedback, however these measure satisfaction rather than achievement. A formal assessment process is needed to determine if Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) are being achieved. The results of this process will inform the necessary changes needed for improvement. Overall, the UoPeople personnel are deeply committed to student success and have a desire “to change the world” by offering quality education. They are aware that deeper analysis of the data needs to be conducted to better understand its importance for quality assurance. Currently, the process of making improvements across the university is in the development phase.

SECTION III. PREPARATION FOR ACCREDITATION UNDER THE 2013 HANDBOOK OF ACCREDITATION

The UoPeople’s plans to address the Meaning, Quality, and Integrity of Degrees identifies a commitment to offer viable new programs that will respond to global needs and student opportunity. Regarding Educational Quality, its plans include strengthening its processes to monitor quality, to improve student completion, and to monitor and maintain the appropriate balance between growth and quality. The UoPeople will monitor the longer-term impact of the

recent shift to online education, and the potential impact of governmental changes to online education, international student status, and costs due to new local and national government administrations in order to prepare for its future sustainability. The SAV1 visit team is encouraged by the UoPeople's commitment to achieve accreditation and its reflection on areas for improvement in each of the Standards in its SAV1 report. The team believes that greater engagement with WSCUC; its experts and expectations, particularly on educational quality, will lead to sound advance preparation for future accreditation visits.

SECTION IV. FINDINGS, COMMENDATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings

For Standard 1, the visit team finds that overall, their review of University of the People is sufficient for Initial Accreditation. The university provides clear and substantial articulation of its values and character, appropriate statements of its educational purpose and its commitment to integrity and transparency with regard to its operations, public information, and board. Areas for additional progress are its approach to diversity and the assessment of student learning. Only the WSCUC Commission is authorized to make the final determination as to whether or not an institution is in compliance with the Standards.

For Standard 2, the visit team finds that overall, their review of the University of the People is sufficient for Candidacy. The university's program rigor and goals, graduate culture, faculty qualifications, degree design and requirements, student engagement, scholarship, and advising are met at minimal level. The team recommends greater attention to faculty engagement, and to improvements in program and co-curricular learning. Only the WSCUC Commission is authorized to make the final determination as to whether or not an institution is in compliance with the Standards.

For Standard 3, the visit team finds that overall, the institution meets the level sufficient for Candidacy. Organizational and decision-making structures; the integrity and sufficiency of its leadership, the autonomy of its board; and governing policies for faculty and staff are in place at a minimal level. The team suggests consideration of its approach to diversity and recommends greater attention to faculty engagement, its data infrastructure, and planning to ensure the appropriate balance of resources given its aggressive growth goals. Only the WSCUC Commission is authorized to make the final determination as to whether or not an institution is in compliance with the Standards.

For Standard 4, the visit team finds that overall, the institution meets the level sufficient for Candidacy with efforts to improve the quality assurance functions of the university with new institutional research personnel and its technology infrastructure. The team recommends greater attention to data analysis, the peer assessment model, and the direct assessment of student learning. Only the WSCUC Commission is authorized to make the final determination as to whether or not an institution is in compliance with the Standards.

Commendations

1. Through its commitment to serve the public good on a global scale through access to affordable education, the University of the People has embraced and created innovative concepts in the use of technology, community, and infrastructure. (CFRs 1.1, 1.5, 2.2, 2.5, 2.8)
2. The augmentation and implementation of program advising ensures that students have access to a consistent point of contact to support their needs upon entry and as they progress through their program. (CFRs 2.12 and 2.14)
3. Dedicated faculty, staff, and leadership team who are deeply committed to the mission of the University. (CFRs 1.5, 3.3, 3.6)
4. The Board of Trustees provides engaged, committed, and inspiring leadership to support the vision and mission of the University of the People. (CFR 3.9)
5. The two-step admissions process allows students to demonstrate preparedness for college-level work in lieu of traditional American colleges admissions requirements. (1.1, 2.2)

Recommendations

1. With faculty input, develop a teaching and learning assessment plan to directly assess and improve student achievement of course and program learning outcomes. (CFRs 1.2, 4.3 and 4.4) The assessment plan should include levels of learning (introduce, reinforce, mastery) and standards of performance. (CFRs 2.4, 2.6, and 2.7)
2. Strengthen the six-year review cycle to include the analysis of and actions to improve student learning (CFR 2.7), disaggregated data, co-curricular assessment, student satisfaction on support functions (CFRs 4.2, 4.3), environmental scan. (CFR 4.7)
3. Fully develop a pragmatic, detailed, and integrated multi-year financial and business planning model that ensures all critical functions of the institution are sufficiently supported to keep pace with growth. Consider the balance of resource allocation to the most critical areas such as student and academic support and develop further reserves and contingency plans before taking on significantly more enrollment. (CFRs 3.1, 3.4, and 3.7)
4. Continue to develop a data infrastructure and capacity to use data that informs institutional and programmatic decision-making including learning outcomes assessment. (CFRs 2.1, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 4.1,4.2)
5. Develop an annual co-curricular plan to assess and improve the sufficiency of student support services to meet the needs of a growing student population. (CFRs 2.10, 2.11, 2.13)
6. Create opportunities for faculty to engage in the academic governance, policy development, and program stewardship. (CFRs 2.4, 3.1, 3.3, 3.10, and 4.4)

APPENDICES

CREDIT HOUR AND PROGRAM LENGTH REVIEW FORM

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the Comments sections as appropriate.)
Policy on credit hour	Is this policy easily accessible? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, where is the policy located? https://catalog.uopeople.edu/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undergraduate (p.61) https://www.uopeople.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Clean-UG-Catalog-AY2020-ADDENDUM-5-Georgia.pdf • Graduate (p.59) https://www.uopeople.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Clean-Grad-Catalog-AY2020-ADDENDUM-5-Georgia.pdf • Website: https://www.uopeople.edu/student-experience/academic-degree-requirements/
Process(es)/ periodic review of credit hour	Does the institution have a procedure for periodic review of credit hour assignments to ensure that they are accurate and reliable (for example, through program review, new course approval process, periodic audits)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: UoPeople states faculty reviews content to ensure credit hours are achieved.
Schedule of on-ground courses showing when they meet	Does this schedule show that on-ground courses meet for the prescribed number of hours? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Not applicable
	Comments: UoPeople courses and programs are 100% online.
Sample syllabi or equivalent for online and hybrid courses <i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i>	How many syllabi were reviewed? Eight (8)
	What kind of courses (online or hybrid or both)? ONLINE
	What degree level(s)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AA/AS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BA/BS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MA <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral
	What discipline(s)? Business Administration, Computer Science, Education
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Sample syllabi or equivalent for other kinds of courses that do not meet for the prescribed hours (e.g., internships, labs, clinical, independent study, accelerated) <i>Please review at least 1 - 2 from each degree level.</i>	How many syllabi were reviewed? Not Applicable
	What kinds of courses?
	What degree level(s)? <input type="checkbox"/> AA/AS <input type="checkbox"/> BA/BS <input type="checkbox"/> MA <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral
	What discipline(s)?
	Does this material show that students are doing the equivalent amount of work to the prescribed hours to warrant the credit awarded? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Sample program information (catalog, website, or other program materials)	How many programs were reviewed? Eight (8)
	What kinds of programs were reviewed? See list in Distance Education Report
	What degree level(s)? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AA/AS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BA/BS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MA <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral
	What discipline(s)? Business Administration, Computer Science, Education

	Does this material show that the programs offered at the institution are of a generally acceptable length? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments:

Review Completed By: Roxanne M. Morrison, MSED

Date: March 15, 2021

MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT REVIEW FORM

Under federal regulation*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's recruiting and admissions practices.

Material Reviewed	Questions and Comments: Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this table as appropriate.
**Federal regulations	Does the institution follow federal regulations on recruiting students? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Comments:
Degree completion and cost	Does the institution provide information about the typical length of time to degree? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Does the institution provide information about the overall cost of the degree? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Comments: Undergraduate Catalog: https://www.uopeople.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Clean-UG-Catalog-AY2020-21-ADDENDUM-D-02.01.2021.pdf Graduate Catalog: https://www.uopeople.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Grad-Catalog-AY2020-21-ADDENDUM-D-12.16.2020.pdf Academic Calendar: https://www.uopeople.edu/become-student/academic-calendar/?utm_source=megamenu&utm_medium=academic-calendar&utm_campaign=menuA Fact Sheet: https://www.uopeople.edu/about/uopeople/fact-sheet/ Cost of the degree: https://www.uopeople.edu/tuition-free/processing-fees/
Careers and employment	Does the institution provide information about the kinds of jobs for which its graduates are qualified, as applicable? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Does the institution provide information about the employment of its graduates, as applicable? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO The UoPeople conducts alumni and student career data from surveys. The team encourages UoPeople to ensure that this data is readily available to the public.
	Comments: Example of career information: https://www.uopeople.edu/programs/ba/degrees/master-of-business-administration/careers/

*§602.16(a)(1)(vii)

**Section 487 (a)(20) of the Higher Education Act (HEA) prohibits Title IV eligible institutions from providing incentive compensation to employees or third-party entities for their success in securing student enrollments. Incentive compensation includes commissions, bonus payments, merit salary adjustments, and promotion decisions based solely on success in enrolling students. These regulations do not apply to the recruitment of international students residing in foreign countries who are not eligible to receive Federal financial aid.

Review Completed By: Kim Levey, Ed.D.
Date: March 17, 2021

STUDENT COMPLAINTS REVIEW FORM

Under federal regulation*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's student complaints policies, procedures, and records.

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
Policy on student complaints	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for student complaints? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, is the policy or procedure easily accessible? If so, where? Multiple locations to find student complaint policies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website for Public Disclosures: https://www.uopeople.edu/public-disclosures/ • Undergraduate Catalog (p.24) https://www.uopeople.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Clean-UG-Catalog-AY2020-ADDENDUM-5-Georgia.pdf • Graduate Catalog (p.25) https://www.uopeople.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Clean-Grad-Catalog-AY2020-ADDENDUM-5-Georgia.pdf
	Comments: Found in the Faculty Handbook (p.9) Grievance Policy The Grievance (formal complaint process) procedure is applicable to all students, administration, and instructional personnel of University of the People. UoPeople encourages its students and instructional personnel to resolve any disagreements, complaints, misunderstandings and grievances by informal means, where possible, before filing a formal grievance. Grade disputes, admissions decisions, graduation appeals and similar academic decisions are not issues for grievance, unless they are complaints of a civil rights nature, including complaints related to age, sex, race, religion, color, ethnic/national origin, disability, sexual orientation or veteran status. Allegations of discrimination are grounds for initiating a grievance.
Process(es)/ procedure	Does the institution have a procedure for addressing student complaints? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, please describe briefly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grievance Procedures: https://www.uopeople.edu/tuition-free/grievance-procedures/
	If so, does the institution adhere to this procedure? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: CFR 1.7-1 documentation details the Grievance Policy, Procedure, and Resolution (Informal and Formal).
Records	Does the institution maintain records of student complaints? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, where? A record of complaints and/or grievances is stored in the Student Information System for up to six years.
	Does the institution have an effective way of tracking and monitoring student complaints over time? X YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, please describe briefly: The Student Information System built in Microsoft Dynamic enables records to be searched. This has been in place since 2009.
	Comments:

*§602-16(1)(1)(ix)

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission's Complaints and Third Party Comment Policy.

Review Completed By: Roxanne M. Morrison, MEd

Date: March 16, 2021

TRANSFER CREDIT POLICY REVIEW FORM

Under federal regulations*, WSCUC is required to demonstrate that it monitors the institution's recruiting and admissions practices accordingly.

Material Reviewed	Questions/Comments (Please enter findings and recommendations in the comment section of this column as appropriate.)
Transfer Credit Policy(s)	Does the institution have a policy or formal procedure for receiving transfer credit? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	If so, is the policy publicly available? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If so, where? https://www.uopeople.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Transfer-Credit-Policy-1.pdf https://catalog.uopeople.edu/ug_term1_item/undergraduate-admissions/transfer-students https://catalog.uopeople.edu/graduate-catalog-t1/3-graduate-admissions/transfer-students https://www.uopeople.edu/become-student/application/transferring-credits-to-university-of-the-people/
	Does the policy(s) include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
	Comments: University of the People maintains a policy for receiving transfer credit and publishes it in multiple publicly-accessible locations on its website.

*§602.24(e): Transfer of credit policies. The accrediting agency must confirm, as part of its review for renewal of accreditation, that the institution has transfer of credit policies that--

- (1) Are publicly disclosed in accordance with 668.43(a)(11); and
- (2) Include a statement of the criteria established by the institution regarding the transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education.

See also WASC Senior College and University Commission's Transfer of Credit Policy.

Review Completed By: Kim Levey, Ed.D.

Date: March 17, 2021