Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
SACS: Self-Study Report

2.5 The institution engages in ongoing, integrated, and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation processes that (1) incorporate a systematic review of institutional mission, goals, and outcomes; (2) result in continuing improvement in institutional quality; and (3) demonstrate the institution is effectively accomplishing its mission. (Institutional Effectiveness)

Compliance Status: Compliance

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has employed an integrated and ongoing institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation process aimed at continuously improving the University, while demonstrating how effectively the University has worked at achieving its mission. Texas A&M-Corpus Christi systematically reviews its programs and services. Systematic reviews include but are not limited to annual reporting, annual budgeting, semi-annual compliance reviews of high-risk areas, strategic planning and compact programming, ongoing program assessment, personnel evaluation, student services evaluation, and curriculum review. Many of the aforementioned review processes involve people across departmental lines and often across divisional lines. Changes made to programs and operations, as a result of these reviews, are monitored by personnel within the program as well as other institutional offices, including Academic Affairs, Finance and Administration, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness and Student Affairs, to ensure effectiveness and process improvement.

In 1989, the University became a part of the A&M System with legislative approval, as noted in Section 87.401 of the Texas Education Code (TEC) [1]. The University originated as the University of Corpus Christi (UCC), an institution affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas. In 1971, the Baptist General Convention terminated their affiliation with UCC. That same year a coalition of civic leaders sought state legislation to convert the campus to a state-supported institution; legislation was passed in the 62nd session of the Texas Legislature, authorizing the creation of a state-supported institution in Corpus Christi [2]. The Board of Directors of the Texas A&I University System was authorized to establish an upper-level university and to prescribe courses for the new institution at the junior, senior and graduate levels leading to both bachelors and masters degrees. In 1977, the Legislature changed the name of the institution to Corpus Christi State University (CCSU) and changed the name of Texas A&I University System to the University System of South Texas (USST) [3]. In 1989, the Texas Legislature abolished the USST and merged CCSU into The Texas A&M University System [4]. In the same year, the Legislature approved the expansion of CCSU to a four-year comprehensive university, with enrollment of freshman and sophomores to begin five years later (fall 1994). In 1992, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board authorized the University to offer its first doctoral degree program [5]. The process by which the University obtains approval to offer new programs has remained virtually unchanged from the 1990s when the University added lower-division undergraduate students. Another milestone occurred in 1993 when The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents renamed the institution Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. The arrival of freshman and sophomores in 1994 marked the
transformation of the institution to a four-year university [6].

As Texas A&M-Corpus Christi has grown, the university community has continued to redefine its mission. While the core of the mission has been and remains centered on teaching, research, creative activity and service, the mission of the University has expanded to take advantage of its strategic Gulf location and federal designation as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). For example, the previously adopted mission of A&M-Corpus Christi (April 2003) read as follows [7] [8]:

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is devoted to discovering, communicating, and applying knowledge in a complex and changing world. The university identifies, attracts, and graduates students of high potential, especially those from groups who have been historically under-represented in Texas higher education. Through a commitment to excellence in teaching, research, and service, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi prepares students for lifelong learning and for responsible participation in the global community.

The recently adopted and approved mission statement (January 2009) [9] [10] demonstrates the growth of the University to a doctoral granting institution:

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is an expanding, doctoral-granting institution committed to preparing graduates for lifelong learning and responsible citizenship in the global community. We are dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, creative activity and service, and our supportive, multicultural learning community provides undergraduate and graduate students with a challenging educational experience. The university's federal designation as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) provides a foundation for closing historical educational gaps, while its strategic location on the Gulf of Mexico and on the cultural border with Latin America provides a basis for gaining national and international prominence.

It is clear that the more recent mission statement stems from the institution's previous statement for its basic philosophy, but the revised mission statement focuses more on the benefits derived from the institution's multicultural learning community. While acknowledging the University's dedication to closing historical educational gaps, A&M-Corpus Christi also acknowledges its commitment to gaining national and international prominence.

**Strategic Planning**

The strategic planning process provides a foundation for institutional effectiveness at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi.

In spring 2005, President Flavius C. Killebrew, along with Drs. Sandra Harper and Paul Orser, headed up a steering committee consisting of twenty members from the Texas A&M-Corpus Christi community to develop the institution's current strategic plan [11]. Twelve different task force committees, each consisting of no less than five individuals from the university community, participated in the process; each was charged with the responsibility of drafting a goal-oriented initiative/imperative aimed at achieving the Momentum 2015 mission. Task force committees submitted first drafts of their imperatives, and corresponding strategies, to the strategic plan
steering committee on May 19, 2005. Formulated responses by the steering committee were returned to the task force committee chairs on May 24, 2005. Steering committee feedback was incorporated into an expanded second draft of imperatives and then resubmitted for steering committee review on June 9, 2005. A second set of formulated responses by the steering committee were returned to the task force committee chairs on June 14, 2005. Task force committees responded to the feedback provided and completed their respective imperative drafts for review by relevant university councils. The College Deans Council, Faculty Senate, President’s Cabinet, Staff Advisory Council, and Student Government reviewed the third draft of imperatives and provided commentary on July 1, 2005. The steering committee edited the third draft and posted it on the university web site for public comment on July 11, 2005. During the month of August 2005 Town-Hall style meetings were held to allow for commentary by both the university community and the public. The steering committee then incorporated commentary received from those meetings into the final draft of Momentum 2015 and submitted the final draft to the President on Aug. 15, 2005. President Killebrew discussed the final iteration of Momentum 2015 with the broader community on September 10, 2005 [12]. After final revisions, the Momentum 2015 document was approved in fall 2005. It included three unifying themes of Excellence, Engagement and Expansion; nine institutional principles; and twelve imperatives.

In summer 2007 the Momentum 2015 Steering Committee was re-convened for the task of developing a shorter-term operational plan, under the umbrella of Momentum 2015. The shorter term plan was designed to cover a rolling five-year period and include measurable outcomes that explicitly identify the university’s focus on the accountability and assessment of all institutional processes [13]. A fourth unifying theme, Effectiveness, was added, which complements Momentum 2015’s Imperative XII (to establish a culture of assessment, investment, and stewardship). The plan was structured around the following objectives:

**Excellence**
1) provide excellent academic programs and instruction;
2) achieve targeted national prominence;

**Engagement**
3) promote lifelong learning and global citizenship;
4) provide a supportive and safe campus environment;
5) increase research and creative activity;
6) commitment to student diversity and quality;
7) commitment to faculty and staff diversity and quality;
8) build and sustain mutually supportive relationships;

**Expansion**
9) expand university impact and stature; and

**Effectiveness**
10) manage resources efficiently and effectively [14].

Evidence outlining the development process is included in the supporting documentation [15]. The Momentum 2015 Steering Committee will continue to monitor, evaluate, update and refine the...
operational plan. Over the summer of 2009, the steering committee will review and revise the measures, codify existing strategies and recommend new strategies based on the outcomes to date as well as a review of other internal and external data.

The plan is clearly linked to and draws heavily upon the established missions and strategic processes established by the five colleges within the University, as well as to the programs and initiatives within those colleges [16] [17] [18] [19] [20]. The integration of the different college mission statements demonstrates how connected the University's strategic planning process is to the overall strategic processes of campus constituents. For example, the emphasis of faculty intellectual contributions of applied scholarship and instructional development by the College of Business [16] had a clear influence on the University's plan in the areas of excellent instruction and scholarly research in a global environment. The College of Business' designed business program received accreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International). Accreditation by the AACSB International is a sign of program quality for the college since less than one-third of business programs in the United States are internationally accredited [21].

Formalizing Nursing and Health Sciences as an official college of the University in 2004 [22] established the University's concrete vision to provide students with a challenging educational experience in the field of nursing and health sciences. When drafting the strategic principles of Momentum 2015 in 2005, university administration recognized the important role the newly created college would have on expanding the University's impact and stature (objective 9). When developing the shorter-range plan in 2007, administration reflected on how the college's specialized accreditation might assist with the goal to elevate the university to national prominence in the field of nursing and health sciences. In 2006 the College of Nursing and Health Sciences achieved accreditation by the Collegiate Commission on Nursing Education (CCNE) for both its undergraduate and graduate nursing programs [23].

The entire strategic plan was devised so that academic programs and academic support programs could actively participate in each of the plan's ten objectives.

Objective One: Provide Excellent Academic Programs and Instruction stems from the University's goal to strengthen and grow its infrastructure to support existing programs while pursuing the development of new programs. An example of a developing program is the Mechanical Engineering Bachelor of Science program through the College of Science and Technology. The program was recently approved by the Texas A&M University Board of Regents and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board [24] [25].

Objective Two: Achieve Targeted National Prominence relies on A&M-Corpus Christi's plan to achieve a national reputation for high quality graduates by providing a rich research-oriented learning environment with strong comprehensive undergraduate programs and recognized graduate programs in areas important to the region. Recognizing the growing demand of skilled professionals in the medical field the university has partnered with the Office of Naval Research and Breakaway LTD to develop and implement PULSE!!, a virtual clinical learning lab designed to simulate operational health-care facilities, procedures and systems [26]. PULSE!! offers a critical-care learning environment for students pursuing professions in the medical field. The virtual program
strongly positions the University on the technology map of virtual medical training, with testing having taken place at the Yale University School of Medicine, Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and the National Naval Medical Center [27].

Development of the doctorate in Coastal and Marine System Science supports the University's plan to achieve targeted national prominence in disciplines where geographic location provides the opportunity to excel [28]. This program places great emphasis on scholarly research focused on biotic and a-biotic components of the coastal and marine environment, including quantitative investigation of socio-economic and political processes [29]. Additionally, the University received approval from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to offer a master of science degree and a joint doctor of philosophy degree in marine biology [30]. The marine biology academic program is the first of its kind in any state adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico [31]. Initial student enrollment in each of the aforementioned degree programs took place in fall 2008. A detailed catalog description of each degree program is included in the supporting documentation [32].

**Objective Three:** Promote Lifelong Learning and Global Citizenship recognizes the important role the University has in preparing its students for life in a global society. As part of its strategic plan, the University will incorporate worldwide perspectives across subject areas and encourage multidisciplinary exploration of global issues. To facilitate this principle the University has established the Global Ethics Consortium [33]. The online consortium explores academic, political and social ethical issues, with faculty and students participating actively in the process. Additionally, the University recognizes its role as host for nationally and internationally known artists, performers and speakers [34] [35] [36] [37] [38], and its role to serve as the location site for regional and national conferences [39] [40] [41], symposia [42], and festivals [43] [44].

**Objective Four:** Provide a Supportive and Safe Campus Environment addresses the University's need for maximizing its use of university space to best serve the students while at the same time ensuring that existing spaces are safe and secure. The University fully realizes the importance of cultivating a safe and secure campus environment for optimum learning and success for all its stakeholders. Departments in support of this strategic principle include the Environmental, Health and Safety, and the University Police Department [45] [46].

**Objective Five:** Increase Research and Creative Activity instills a research-minded focus across all disciplines of the University, with faculty scholars reaching beyond the classroom to contribute new knowledge and creative products or services. Institutes, such as the Conrad Blucher Institute for Surveying and Science [47] and Harte Research Institute [48], will capture unique research applicable to the University's location in the South Texas region [41] [49].

**Objective Six:** Commitment to Student Diversity and Quality recognizes the collaborative efforts across all academic discipline lines and academic support programs. In developing the University's strategic plan, considerable focus was given to academic support programs charged with the responsibility of student development outside of the classroom. Academic support programs include Title V / TRIO [50]; nationally recognized for implementing the "Opening the Pipeline/Closing the Gaps" program [51] and CASA - Center for Academic Student Achievement [52]; a tutoring and supplemental learning location on campus, formerly known as the Tutoring and Learning Center, that has recently implemented the online SMARTTHINKING tutoring software [53] to accommodate
student schedules and tutoring needs.

**Objective Seven**: Commitment to Faculty and Staff Diversity and Quality demonstrates the University's commitment in recruiting, developing and sustaining excellent faculty and staff. The establishment of the Faculty Renaissance Center serves to promote excellence in the University's faculty through its focus on leadership, engagement and academic excellence [54]. Professional development opportunities for university staff, such as the annual Employee Development Day [55], are coordinated through the Equal Employment Opportunity Office and the office of Professional Training and Development, allowing staff opportunities to develop or enhance job-required skills. Also through the office of Professional Training and Development, university employees can participate in a variety of regularly offered professional development seminars to improve communication skills, time management skills, team-building skills and leadership skills [56].

**Objective Eight**: Build and Sustain Mutually Supportive Relationships addresses the importance of cohesion for stakeholders of the campus community. Understanding how successful partnerships with both internal and external university stakeholders bring about mutually successful outcomes, A&M-Corpus Christi has cultivated engagement opportunities for campus faculty, staff, students and the public. Internally, the University supports the institutional cohesion efforts of Faculty Senate [57], Staff Advisory Council [58], and Student Government [59]. Externally, the University sustains a supportive relationship with the community by hosting events at American Bank Center [60], Performing Arts Center [34] [35] [36] [37], and university art galleries [61] [62]. Additionally, A&M-Corpus Christi partners with community leaders to identify the University's role in educational opportunities: such as the Garcia Center Life Enhancement and Academic Direction Program [63], and the University Preparatory High School Program with Flour Bluff High School [64], and to identify economic impact and growth opportunities for the community and the greater South Texas region [65].

**Objective Nine**: Expand University Impact and Stature recognizes the important role the University has in serving the public well, now and into the future. Historically, the University recognized the need for constructing adequate and necessary facilities for program and service growth. From 1991-2002 the University expanded its physical size with the addition of 34 buildings [66]. The University's current strategic plan details the institution's ongoing commitment of institutional facility construction to support the spatial needs of university academic programs and academic support programs and services. Examples of such planned growth include a wellness facility [67] [68] and instructional building to better support the instructional demands of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences [69] [70]. The addition of these two facilities is an example of how the University intends to accommodate the influx of students on its campus, while providing the spatial resources needed to support growing academic and athletic programs.

The University has also sought out expansion opportunities within the community. The recent level of campus growth indicates that Ward Island's capacity will be reached within the next few years. By concentrating academic activities on the island and shifting the land usage for other units to an additional site, the University has the opportunity to serve a market potential of 16,000 students. In 2008, after more than a year of laying the groundwork for Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi's future expansion, President Flavius Killebrew and Corpus Christi Mayor Henry Garrett signed an agreement formally transferring 137 acres of city land near the intersection of Ennis Joslin Road and
Nile Drive to the University [71] [72] [73].

Objective Ten: Manage Resources Efficiently and Effectively establishes a culture of assessment and accountability for the University. Coordination between the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness and Budget Office has produced an integrated process of unit plan assessment and unit budgetary requests [74].

Strategic planning is a living process for the institution, with institution, college and department mission statements serving as living documents. In March 2007, the strategic plan steering committee came together to revisit Momentum 2015 to make the document operational [75]. Long-term, three-to-five year institutional goals were developed in the context of Momentum 2015, with each unifying theme serving as a goal rubric. Additionally, the University mission statement was revised so that it would 1) be better aligned with the four unifying themes of Momentum 2015, and 2) be specifically worded to address the unique opportunities for distinction inherent to the institution’s location [76].

Ongoing Improvements—Momentum 2015 Strategic Plan

Given a track record of accomplishing elements of previous strategic plans, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi anticipates fairly rapid completion of some elements within the new plan, while others will take longer by design. For example, in support of the University’s expansion theme the following planned facility expansions have been completed: (Imperative I) Early Childhood Development Center addition (FY 2007) [77] - designed to support the growing programs through the College of Education, and the Harte Research Institute (FY 2006) [48]-constructed to support coastal studies and research (Imperative III). Additionally, the University conducted the planned master planning feasibility study (Imperative XI) as a way to identify facility needs and estimated costs for a student body of 15,000 students [78] [79].

Understanding the importance of recruiting and retaining diverse, quality employees for a growing institution, the University has taken the preliminary steps towards the redesign of the faculty and staff evaluation process (Imperative VII), including revisions of merit reward and performance management practices so that reward is tied to the four unifying themes of the strategic plan [80] [81]. Other ongoing improvements that have been initiated for the betterment of students and alumni of the university community include: Office of International Education, (Imperative III) an office structured to support the international student body of the campus [82] [83]. University Islander Guarantee, (Imperative VI) a tuition assistance program designed to promote full-time student enrollment of undergraduate students from low-income families [84], and Alumni Welcome Center, (Imperative I, Imperative VIII) [85] a near-campus site dedicated to supporting the University’s alumni community while promoting lifelong partnerships between alumni and the University. Improvements still in the formative stage include: (Imperative VI) the formation of the new CASA- Center for Academic Student Achievement, (formerly known as the institution’s Tutoring and Learning Center). CASA is a mega-tutoring and supplemental instruction center that will be housed in the renovated Glasscock Building on campus; (Imperative XI) construction of the school of Business building to support the College of Business [86].

Past Strategic Planning Improvements

The previous Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi strategic plans clearly have led to major
expansions of the University and major improvements in the areas of teaching, research, and service. A cursory review of the two archived strategic plans (the two plans produced after the University was founded as Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi) reveal that several of the plans' components have been addressed successfully. The following items do not comprise the complete list of accomplishments but rather some of the highlights.

In the 1999-03 Strategic Plan, produced in June 1998, the institution focused on the continued expansion of the University and the institution's continued development as a comprehensive, four-year university [87]. In achieving the University's mission President Robert Ferguson identified the challenges faced by Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, many of which have successfully been addressed. For example, to serve a growing student body, the University further expanded its facilities to include a University Center [88] [89], additional student housing [90], additional classroom/laboratory buildings [91] [92], and a Performing Arts Auditorium [93] [94] [95]. All of the aforementioned facilities were constructed; thus expanding the size of the institution to include state of the art learning and research facilities.

Also as part of the 1999-2003 Strategic Plan, the institution focused on the challenge of building exemplary programs for lower-division students while expanding on both its undergraduate and graduate degree programs. Between 1999 and 2003 the university added the Generalist EC-4 Teacher Certification, Master of Art (Studio Art), Master of Fine Art (Studio Art) and Doctorate of Education for School Counseling (later changed to a Doctorate of Philosophy with the approval of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board) [96] [97] [98] [99].

Like its predecessor, the 2001-05 university Strategic Plan [100] continued its focus on building exemplary programs for lower-division students while expanding on both undergraduate and graduate degree programs [101]. Since 2003, the following programs have been added: Bachelor of Science degree for Athletic Training [102] [103] and Biomedical Sciences [104] [105]; Bachelor of Arts degree for Economics [106] [102]; Bachelor of Business Administration in Economics [107] [102]; Master of Science degree for Geospatial Surveying Engineering and Kinesiology [108] [109] [102]; and a Doctorate of Philosophy for Coastal and Marine System Science [28] [110].

In addition to academic program development, the University's 2001-05 strategic plan recognized the importance of establishing long-term goals, aimed at improving institutional quality, increasing higher education access opportunities, and promoting institutional diversity and sense of community. The following list of targeted achievement levels from the 2001-05 plan demonstrates how Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi uses research-based strategic planning to accomplish its mission, while pursuing continuous improvement:

- **Percentage of Census Date Student Credit Hours Completed** [111]:
  - 2001 targeted level: 90 percent- achieved: 90 percent
  - 2002 targeted level: 91 percent- achieved: 92.5 percent
  - 2003 targeted level: 92 percent- achieved: 92.8 percent
  - 2004 targeted level: 93 percent- achieved: 93.3 percent

- **Percentage of First-time Freshmen who Graduate Within Six Years (FY 2003- first cohort to matriculate through Texas A&M -Corpus Christi):**
  - Targeted level: 39 percent- achieved level: 65 percent [112]
University Compacts

The university compact process is a newly incorporated and important element in the strategic planning at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, with the compacts playing an important role in assuring that the strategic plan will be fully realized. The compact process has been structured to cover a two-year period and designed to establish "a limited number of key priorities that complement and support the System Member's Strategic Plan" as noted by Texas A&M University System Chancellor Michael D. McKinney [114]. According to Chancellor McKinney, the compact process, "Sets clear objectives to accomplish and outlines the specific strategies that will be implemented over the next two years. It establishes performance measures to track the progress and results achieved over time." With the addition of this planning process, Texas A&M-Corpus Christi has fully integrated both short-term and long-term planning. The process focuses on a shorter timeframe than the strategic planning process, and, as such, the final documents can rely on more time-sensitive measures such as year-to-year enrollment gains for the University, location-based funded research, and/or appropriate use of acquired resources for the University.

The Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi compact process for 2008-09 [115] includes specific references to four priorities: 1) Increase the University's enrollment in support of "Closing the Gaps" and the University; 2) Increase the success of students in support of "Closing the Gaps" and the University's mission; 3) Acquire resources needed for expansion while being good stewards of resources; and 4) Increase the amount of externally funded research through a focus on location-related expertise (page 2) [116].

Each identified priority establishes a direct link to the University's strategic plan, while identifying how the University intends to improve over time. Priority one of Texas A&M-Corpus Christi's compact with The University of Texas A&M System intersects with the University's strategic plan to expand the University's impact in size, scope and stature (page 3) [117]. The University is on-target with its long-term goal of student enrollment of 10,000 by 2015. Student enrollment increased by five percent from fall 2007 to fall 2008, with an enrollment of 9,007 students at the University [118]. University enrollment trend analysis forecasts the University's goal to be achieved by 2013 [119].

Priority two of the compact links with the University's strategic plan to provide students with excellent instruction in challenging programs aimed at developing disciplinary knowledge and expertise, while advancing intellectual competencies and perspectives (page 7) [120]. Furthermore, priority two links with the University's strategic plan of attracting, retaining and graduating a diverse and highly qualified student body consistent with the University's mission as a Hispanic-
serving institution (page 7) [120]. In addition to CASA, university administration implemented the Retention Taskforce Committee [121], a committee formed in 2008 to address issues impacting student retention at A&M-Corpus Christi.

During spring 2008 the University addressed the financial challenge of student tuition and fees when it unveiled the Islander Guarantee program, a scholarship incentive program for low-income students achieving a 2.5 GPA or higher upon completion of 30 hours in an academic one-year period [122]. The Fast Tracks Scholars Program (currently a pilot program) is a university scholarship incentive program aimed at motivating students to matriculate through their academic career successfully and in a timely manner. Students meeting the scholarship's criteria are awarded $500 towards tuition and fees accrued in their sophomore year [123]. Another way the University has addressed the financial burden of student tuition and fees is by offering a bulk-discount tuition incentive. Students enrolling in 12 or more credit hours per semester pay the 12 credit hour enrollment designated tuition rate [124].

Priority three of the compact connects with the University's strategic plan of managing financial, physical, technological and human resources efficiently and effectively (page 8) [125]. In March 2008, the University received a land donation of 137 acres, located adjacent to the University, from the city of Corpus Christi [73]. The land was surveyed and a master plan presentation was made to campus constituents in May 2008 [71].

Priority four of A&M-Corpus Christi's compact intersects with the University's strategic plan to increase and support research, scholarship and creative activity (page 11) [126]. Examples of institutional support are noted in the Graduate Studies and Research Office's FY08 annual report [127]. In recent years the University has increased its research expenditures funding [128] and will continue to pursue additional research revenue in the years to come.

THECB Accountability System
The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board established an accountability system in accordance with the governor's 2004 executive order that institutions must provide "the information necessary to determine the effectiveness and quality of the education students receive at individual institutions" and to provide "... the basis to evaluate the institutions' use of state resources. [129]" The Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness [130] annually reports data regarding 10 key accountability measures, including graduation rates, headcount, employment records, faculty/student ratios, class size, operating expenses, etc. This information is used in Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi's budget and planning processes as discussed below, as well as the University's efforts to increase (for example) graduation and retention rates (Objective 3 of Momentum 2015) and to use resources effectively (Objective 10 of Momentum 2015) [11]. Texas A&M-Corpus Christi's THECB Accountability reports are available on the THECB Web site. Examples of such reports have been included in the supporting documentation [131] [132] [133] [134] [135].

Periodic Academic Program Reviews
As more fully discussed in the responses to Principles 2.7.2 [136] and 3.3.1.1 [137], Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi's policy on Academic Program Review outlines the requirements for the periodic review of all academic programs [138] [139] [140] and requires the programs to revisit their mission statement and objectives documented in the University's official assessment software,
WEAVEonline. The program review provides feedback for needed improvements and involves participation by the dean responsible for the reviewed program and a reviewer or reviewers from other institutions. In the case of graduate level program reviews, the Dean of Graduate Studies brings in an external reviewer or reviewers from other institutions. The results of such reviews provide strategic initiatives that become a part of a school's budget presentation.

A program review begins with a self-study, such as the undergraduate Criminal Justice program self-study [141] and the graduate English program self-study [142]. Within the self-study, the program under review examines its program mission and academic and research focus, as well as other important program components. The self-study then serves as the basis of a review by primarily the external reviewer(s) receiving a specific charge for their review [143]. The external reviewer(s) examine the materials and provide a formal findings report. Reports from the undergraduate Criminal Justice program and graduate English program are included as examples in the supporting documentation [144] [145]. To explore retention issues at the program level, the University's program review process has undergone revisions in 2008 to include the review of freshman to sophomore retention [146]. The revised review process extracts evidence from multiple sources [147] and is more extensive than its predecessor [148].

All academic programs undergo a regular program review on a set schedule [149]. Programs with external accrediting agencies use the accreditation reaffirmation process instead of the prescribed program review process. For example, the College of Science and Technology's Computer Science department recently conducted a 2008 self study for the Bachelor of Science in Computer Science-Systems Programming as part of the accreditation process for the Accreditation Board of Engineering and Technology (ABET) [150]. The College of Business recently conducted its review and reported their findings in the 2008 Maintenance of Accreditation Report for the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International) [151]. Other accrediting agencies recognizing programs at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi include the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS, National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS), and National Association of Schools of Music (NASM). Reports and more information regarding these accreditation efforts are available in the response to Principle 3.3.1.1 [137]. The program review schedule listing recent and future reviews is included in the supporting documentation [149] [152]. It should be noted that the program review schedule was interrupted in 2007 due to the institution's implementation of the BANNER database system. Programs scheduled for 2007 review were rescheduled for 2008, with schedule changes noted in red on the program review schedule provided.

**Budget Process**

The annual budget process at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi requires academic and departmental units to submit budgetary request packets comprised of base budget worksheets [153], analysis reports of prior year expenditures by budget pool category [154], department budget request form [74], and prepared budget initiatives reports formatted to identify budget priorities stemming from the mission statement and objectives documented in WEAVEonline unit plans [155]. To initiate the yearly process, the Director of Budgets distributes instructions for completing the budgetary request packets to vice presidents and campus budget managers. Instructions for the FY 2009 budget cycle were distributed in February 2008 [156].
Using revenue and enrollment models prepared by the Budget Office, President Killebrew reviews funding outlooks and budget scenarios for the fiscal year with university vice presidents. Based upon the anticipated funding outlook, division vice presidents collaborate with their respective divisions to identify budgetary priorities for the unit. Divisions then undergo the process of preparing budgetary request packets using appropriate data that is relevant to and supportive of the budget requests made. Relevant data must establish a connection to the university strategic plan and mission, as well as the division’s mission and objectives.

Within the Student Affairs division, the budget process more directly involves student input than any other area of the University because student fees fund many of the division's operations. As such, students are notified of hearings and referendums, review budget presentations and requests and vote on the allocation of funds for the upcoming fiscal year. The Division of Student Affairs follows the requirements set forth in Vernon’s Texas Statutes and Codes, Title 3. Higher Education, Chapter 54: Tuition and Fees Subchapter E: Other Fees and Deposits. Each fee in the Division has different legislative requirements. The Student Service Fee, for example, requires that a Student Services Fee Committee review the fee and its expenditures and make a recommendation to the President of the University. Once all fees are reviewed by the committee, and all appropriate State and University procedures are finalized, the approved fee increases are sent to President's Cabinet for university approval. Subsequently they are sent forward to the Texas A&M University System for Board of Regents for final approval. At the annual May meeting of the Board of Regents all student fee increases are officially approved.

The vice president for Student Affairs meets with the Student Government Association and the appropriate student organizations throughout the year to keep the student groups apprised of budgetary issues. Every year, the University has a state required hearing to inform the entire student body of any increases in the designated tuition. This presentation is done by the President of the University. All prepared budgetary request packets are routed through appropriate administrative heads and eventually receive review and/or approval from the appropriate vice president before submission to the Budget Office. The Budget Office then prepares updated revenue and expense summaries and models, along with a formal summary documenting the collective budget requests, budget changes and budget reallocations of the university for presidential and vice presidential review. A timeline of the university budget process is included in the supporting documentation.

To the degree possible, based on projected revenues, budget requests beyond current baseline operations are funded based on requests' contributions to the University's strategic plan. The annual assessment process discussed below integrates the budget process, strategic planning and assessment.

**Annual Program Assessment**

As discussed in the responses to Principles on the assessment of educational programs, administrative support services, educational support services, research, and community outreach, Texas A&M-Corpus Christi has completed two cycles (2006-2007 and 2007-2008) of program assessments using WEAVEonline. The University has initiated its third assessment cycle (2008-2009) in fall 2008. The program
assessment process extends beyond the instructional realm and provides annual summaries of unit progress in targeted areas related to student achievement and satisfaction as well as program functioning.

In 2006-07, 68 academic programs, and 67 support services programs were assessed using the Texas A&M-Corpus Christi approved web-based assessment tool, WEAVEonline 3.5 [173]. Each unit documents into WEAVEonline its mission statement, its objectives, the measures used to assess its objectives, the findings based on those measurements, the actions planned to improve unit operations, and an analysis of the unit’s areas of strength and areas of improvement [174]. Based on the unit documentation entered in the aforementioned sections of WEAVEonline software, division vice presidents/supervisors documented detailed annual reports that were available for review by their reporting units [175] [176] [177] [178] [179] [180].

Starting with the 2007-08 cycle, 83 academic programs and 77 non-academic programs were assessed using the newest version, 4.0 of WEAVEonline [181]. Version 4.0 has been refined to accommodate the documentation process driven by the accountability concept of continuous-improvement assessment implemented by the institution. Effective in the 2007-08 cycle, each annual report now includes two sections- a section for "closing the loop" so that each program can identify what, if any, planned actions are anticipated for continuous unit improvement, and a separate section for identifying additional resources needed so that the assessment process can be better aligned with the budgeting process. The 2007-2008 detailed annual reports have been included in the supporting documentation [182] [183] [184] [185] [186] [187].

Academic personnel and administrative support services personnel received training in the use of WEAVEonline and departmental workshops were provided to assist personnel in the development of "closing the loop" assessment plans [188] [189] [190] [191] [192] [193]. The Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness at A&M-Corpus Christi has worked with university personnel to share best practices and to disseminate assessment-related information to the various units. In summer 2009, the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness provided a software update training to provide WEAVEonline users with a navigational review of the minor modifications made to software [194] [195] [196].

Academic program assessment relies on input from designated assessment writers, usually academic department chairs, who, in consultation with local faculty, develop the assessment plan and gather the data to analyze the program's efficacy in achieving the program's objectives (to analyze student success at achieving the department or program's student learning outcomes). The objectives that relate to the strategic plan or other institutional priorities are identified and included in annual report summaries provided by each of the colleges [197] [198] [199] [200] [201]. Similarly, the assessment process for non-academic programs provides an analogous opportunity for a unit to identify operational objectives, measure their success, and identify strategies for improvement. The Networking Department within the division of Computing and Media Services 2006-07 Detailed Assessment Report, with objectives focused on operational indicators, illustrates this process well and is included in the supporting documentation as an example [202].

**Examples of Improvements for Ongoing Assessments**

A good example of a unit undergoing continuous assessment is the department of University
Housing. The department of University Housing at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi strives to provide quality student housing through on-campus and off-campus programs. The department endeavors to facilitate the educational mission of the University by creating living environments that foster the growth and development of all students participating in the on-campus housing program [203] [204] [205]. The department extracts data from a variety of assessments including the Camden Miramar Residents’ Life Survey [206] [207] [208] and the National Survey on Student Engagement [209] [210]. Recognizing the challenge of existing and competing in a market over-built in apartments, the department of University Housing is currently collaborating with Camden Miramar properties to enhance the on-campus housing facilities. Additionally, the department is reviewing lease and community policies and comparing those policies to other campuses to assure fairness of rules and regulations. As a result of data collected on the Camden Miramar Residents’ Life Survey, customer service and crisis skill development training opportunities have increased to better prepare the staff to handle difficult and threatening situations in a safe but compassionate manner.

Academic support service programs often engage in assessment in relation to their support of academic programs on campus. A clear example of an academic support program that engages in its own assessment program is CASA - Center for Academic Student Achievement, formerly known as the Tutoring and Learning Center. CASA is committed to supporting the University's mission by providing academic support services to help improve the retention and graduation rates of Texas A&M-Corpus Christi students. The center's goal is to help under-prepared students to prepare, prepared students to advance, and advanced students to excel. In achieving this goal CASA conducts formative research-based evaluations at regular intervals throughout the academic year to help improve, validate, generate support, and lastly, demonstrate accountability for the program. The Retention Office within CASA addresses retention issues and historical educational gap issues, identifying the most at-risk first year students by utilizing the Noel-Levitz College Student Inventory (CSI) [211]. From its assessment of how the CSI was administered (email invitation only), the Retention Office recognized a mediocre response rate pattern of the instrument. To improve response rate patterns the Retention Office implemented a new survey administration protocol, mandating the completion of the inventory by all first-time incoming students during summer orientation. The new protocol made the instrument readily available to all students, while streamlining the data collection process for personnel [212].

An academic example of continuous improvement can be seen from the university's core curriculum program. Previous assessment was documented by the core curriculum director, Dr. Juan C. Huerta, with assessment focused primarily on the program's mission to develop general education skills while promoting a sense of academic community [213]. Starting with the 2008-09 assessment cycle, members from the University Core Curriculum Program Resource Group have begun assessing their assigned academic areas of the core curriculum and documenting their measures and findings using WEAVEonline [214]. The WEAVEonline software has been formatted to accommodate the documentation needs of the program by establishing sub-academic departments, by subject, into the core curriculum unit plan [215]. To implement a standardized assessment process for the core curriculum the program's director established the University Core Curriculum Resource Group in fall 2006 [216] [217] [218]. The University Core Curriculum Resource Group meets regularly to determine the best modes of assessment to improve the delivery of the core curriculum while meeting the assessment demands of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board [219] [220]. The core curriculum has been collectively mapped to identify the types of
student learning outcomes that can be achieved through participation in the program
[221]. Additionally, the framework of the core curriculum has been reviewed, with outcomes
reported to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board [222].

Another component of local assessment includes the use of nationally-normed data sets for
comparison of local achievement. The University has used the National Survey of Student
Engagement (NSSE) data since 2001 to validate the results of local surveys regarding student
perceptions of local services, including student support services, advising, student life, and
instruction. Results from the last two administrations are included in the supporting documentation
[223] [224].

Compliance Reviews and Training
In 2006, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi underwent a major effort to comply with The Texas
A&M University System’s required online training program to ensure that all employees were
adequately trained on four key areas that align with personnel related- principles of the strategic
plan:

1. Creating a Discrimination Free Workplace, (Objectives 4 and 8);
2. Ethics (Objectives 7 and 8);
3. Information Security Awareness (Objective 10); and
4. Reporting Fraud, Waste and Abuse (Objective 10) [225].

This plan continues to require ongoing training for all employees, and at the local level the training
modules include issues mandated by the state as well as by local needs. Verification of training
compliance is done through a campus completion status audit and is provided to each vice president
for review [226]. The monitoring of system required training is coordinated by the Texas A&M-
Corpus Christi Equal Employment Opportunity Office (EEO) using the HR Connect System software.
Compliance training remains a high priority and calls for annual training of all employees.
Employees receive a formal notice from the President regarding the requirement of completing
required training as well as an e-mail from the EEO office detailing which training modules are to be
completed each year [227].

In addition to The Texas A&M University System required training, A&M-Corpus Christi added the
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) training (Objective 10) [228] within the last two
years to provide needed training in support of A&M-Corpus Christi policy regarding the protection of
social security numbers [229] [230] [231] and other confidential information. The Office of
Admissions and Records is responsible for the coordination and monitoring of the training.

Texas A&M-Corpus Christi’s purpose for monitoring compliance is three-fold: 1) to ensure the
University is effectively accomplishing its mission; 2) to ensure the University makes improvements
based upon such monitoring; and 3) to ensure that all employees are aware of their responsibilities
and that processes are monitored on a continuous basis to ensure compliance with federal, state,
and local regulations. Examples of compliance monitoring departments include:

- The department of Environmental, Health and Safety develops, implements, and oversees
  safety programs to prevent staff, faculty, students, and visitors from any recognized hazards
that they may encounter at the University. The department offers both online and in-person trainings to properly inform employees of their role in maintaining a safe and healthy environment. The department also is responsible for assuring the University’s compliance with federal, state, and local regulations regarding environment, health and safety issues.

- The Institutional Review Board ensures that all activities involving research with live human subjects in all fields of University activity will come under their purview. This committee has the primary responsibility for maintaining regulated and mandated ethical standards of research involving human subjects at the University [232] [233].

Examples of program coordinators include:

- Public information coordinator is responsible for ensuring open records compliance as set forth by the Texas Public Information Act [234] [235] [236].
- Lab facilities supervisory coordinator ensures lab facility compliance with university procedures and pertinent laws [237].
- Athletics scholarship compliance coordinator is responsible for ensuring compliance with academic standards set by the University and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) as they pertain to athletic scholarships [238].
- University Web coordinators are responsible for monitoring university web sites to ensure compliance with university, system, state, and federal laws and regulations [239].

Conclusion
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has in place an integrated and ongoing institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation process designed to continuously improve the University as well as to demonstrate where the University has been successful in achieving its goals and objectives and fulfilling its mission. The institution systematically reviews its programs and services. These reviews include but are not limited to annual reporting, annual budgeting, semi-annual compliance reviews of high-risk areas, strategic planning and compact programming, ongoing program assessment, personnel evaluation, student services evaluation, and curriculum review. The results of these review processes are shared with multiple stakeholders within the university and across divisional lines. Changes made to programs and operations as a result of the review processes are monitored by multiple offices to ensure effectiveness and process improvement.

Evidence

- SD 001 TEC 87-401 Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Establishment-Scope
- SD 079 HB275_62 Legislature
- SD 080 HB 944 65 Legislature
- SD 081 THECB Institutional Profile for TAMUCC
- CO 025 Educational Leadership Degree Approval Letter
- UD 523 Texas A&M - Corpus Christi History
- UD 277 TAMUCC Old Mission Statement
- CO 008 2003 Mission Statement THECB Approval
- UD 042 3.10.5-05 TAMUCC New Mission Statement
CD 184 TAMUCC Sponsored Projects Annual Report 2008- full
UD 571 TAMUCC Research Revenue
SD 086 RP 31 policy1117 thecb governing
CD 170 PIE website
SD 087 2004 THECB Accountability Report
SD 088 2005 THECB Accountability Report
SD 089 2006 THECB Accountability Report
SD 0902007 THECB Accountability Report
SACS CCR 3.3.1.3
SD 0912008 THECB Accountability Report
UD 062 AcademicProgramReviewGuidelines
SACS CCR 2.7.2
SACS CCR 3.3.1.1
SACS CCR 3.3.1.2
SACS CCR 3.3.1.4
SACS CCR 3.3.1.5
UD 173 2008 PR Guidelines
UD 064 Guidelines for Preparation of Self Study Report Graduate
CD 089 Undergrad Criminal Justice Review Self Study
CD 091 Graduate English Review Self Study
UD 572 External Reviewer Program Review Template
CD 090 UG CJ Review External Reviewers Report
CD 092 GradEnglishReview ExternalReviewersReport
UD 573 Freshman to Sophomore Retention Program Review Rqrmt
UD 574 PIE Academic Program Review Data
UD 575 2006 PR Guidelines
UD 171 Program Review Schedule
CD 447 ABET Self Study Computer Science
CD 151 COB AASCB Maintenance REPORT
UD 172 2008 Undergraduate Review Table
UD 576 Base Budget Worksheet
UD 577 Analysis Report Example
UD 578 Budget Priority Report Example
UD 204 FY 2009 Budget Instructions
UD 579 Revenue and Enrollment Model
UD 580 Hearings and Referendum Notices
SD 092 TEC 54-503 Student Services Fees
BD 138 Board of Regents May 2009 Agenda
SD 148 TEC 54.053
UD 581 2008 Designated Tuition Hearing
UD 582 2007 Designated Tuition Hearing
UD 583 2006 Designated Tuition Hearing
UD 584 2005 Fee Hearing Release 032405
UD 585 Budget Department Formal Report to President FY 09
UD 586 FY09 Budget Process with timeline
UD 587 2010 Budget Planning Process
SACS CCR 3.3.1.3
UD 588 WEAVEOnline 3.5 homepage
UD 589 WEAVEOnline Analysis Page Screenshots
UD 590 Comm Outrch 0607 DAR
UD 441 2006-07 WEAVE Academic Advising and Transition Center
UD 591 Finance_and_admin_DAR 0607
UD 592 Institutional Advancement WEAVEonline Annual Report DAR 0607
UD 217 Planning and Institutional Effectiveness Annual Report DAR 0607
UD 375 2006-07 WEAVE Division of Student Affairs
UD 593 WEAVEOnline Homepage 4.0
UD 594 Community Outreach 2008 Detailed Assessment Report
UD 415 2007-08 WEAVE Enrollment Management
UD 595 Finance & Admin Divisional 2008 Annual Report
UD 596 Weave Annual Report File Institutional Advancement
UD 597 Planning & Effectiveness 2008 Detailed Annual Report
UD 384 Student Affairs Division Detailed Assessment Report
UD 052 WEAVEOnline User's Guide
UD 197 Student Learning Assessment
UD 198 Academic Assessment Tip Sheet
UD 199 Administrative Assessment Tip Sheet
UD 598 Assessment Links
UD 070 WEAVE Administrative Assessment Tips
UD 599 WEAVEonline 4.5 User Guide
UD 600 TAMUCC Quick Start Guide
CD 448 WEAVEonline 4.5 Training Agenda 2009
UD 601 College of Business 2008 Annual Report
UD 602 College of Education 2008 Annual Report
UD 603 College of Liberal Arts 2008 Annual Report
UD 604 College of Nursing & Health Sciences 2008 Annual Report
UD 605 College of Science & Tech 2008 Annual Report
UD 606 WEAVEonline Networking 2006-07 DAR
UD 607 Department of Housing 0708 Annual Report