

Assurance Argument - Criterion 2
Missouri State University - MO
4/7/2015

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

2.A - Core Component 2.A

The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

Argument

Acting ethically and responsibly is a deep and full-time commitment. The promise of transparency must be a core value, not implemented sporadically. Acting appropriately in all situations must be part of the culture that begins at the top and permeates the entire organization. It includes not only the occasional sensational situations – which are obvious and, therefore, require relatively clear responses – but also the multitude of individual decisions that occur daily and tend to be more subtle and, thus, more difficult. There are ethical considerations in everything from determining fair use for copyright, to the relatively new issues of guaranteeing honesty and integrity in online courses, and everything in-between.

Missouri State University understands the goal and complexity of acting ethically and with integrity. That is why the University has worked to create a culture where ethical and responsible behavior are expected and celebrated. These goals are central to the University's [Declaration of University Community Principles](#), fundamental to the public affairs mission, and highlighted in the long-range plan. Simply stated, acting ethically and responsibly is expected of all who are associated with Missouri State.

Institutional policies provide a basis for ensuring that the institution operates with integrity. Missouri State has effective procedures for the approval and promulgation of both governing and operating policies through a comprehensive online policy library. Governing policies must be submitted to and approved by the Board of Governors; operating policies must be approved by the President in consultation with Administrative Council. Faculty Senate and Staff Senate organization and actions also are included in the library. The Office of the General Counsel is responsible for maintaining the policy library and the Office of Web and New Media is responsible for maintaining the policies on the web in a format that can be easily accessed by the University community and the public.

The [policy library](#) includes the [Board of Governors By-Laws](#), [Faculty Handbook](#), and [Employee Handbook](#) and [The Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities](#). The library includes details about academic responsibility. Other policies, including the fiscal responsibility policy, specifically address financial integrity. Missouri's Open Meetings, Open Records Law (Sunshine Law) ensures transparency for the public in the decision-making process.

A review of the policy library reveals there are many other policies designed to ensure the institution operates with integrity, and follows fair and ethical practices. These include policies on conflict of interest, hiring, equal opportunity and affirmative action, prohibition of discrimination and

harassment, faculty workload, research, and computer usage. The policies are inclusive and apply to the Board of Governors, administrators, faculty, staff and students.

Unlike many institutions and organizations, Missouri State has had and benefited from an [Internal Auditor](#) for more than 40 years. The policy library makes it clear that the Director of Internal Audit and Compliance and the Office of Internal Audit and Compliance operate with appropriate autonomy: “To achieve the highest degree of independence, the Internal Auditing Department reports to the Board of Governors. In carrying out its duties and responsibilities, the Internal Auditing Department shall have unrestricted and timely access to all organizational activities, records, property, and personnel. All internal auditing endeavors are to be conducted in compliance with University policies as well as the Code of Ethics and the Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing which are promulgated by the Institute of Internal Auditors, Inc.” Besides the President, the Director of Internal Audit and Compliance is the only other employee who reports directly to the Board of Governors.

Another way in which the University ensures ethical behavior is through complying with all federal and state reporting requirements. There are many reports that cover a range of topics, from research compliance to the recently revised Title IX policy, including training for Campus Security Authorities (CSAs) and the Haven online program that introduces incoming freshmen and transfer students to sexual assault prevention and allows students to share their knowledge on sexual assault and bystander intervention. The significant attention to and changes in Title IX, have focused national attention on a variety of issues, including how claims of sexual assault are handled on higher education campuses.

The Director of Internal Audit and Compliance leads a campus-wide group to ensure the reports are completed and submitted by the deadline. The Office of Internal Audit and Compliance also provides support as needed for the completion of the reports.

The Ethics Hotline (“Whistleblower”) Policy provides an avenue for individuals to report perceived unethical practices, including violations of University policy, issues of integrity. Reports to the Ethics Hotline are monitored by the Internal Audit Office, which ensures they are confidential and appropriately addressed in a timely manner. Since 2007, there have been 76 separate reports to the hotline. Each report has been analyzed and distributed to the proper administrator for review. The individual who made the claim also received a report.

The University’s active Academic Integrity Council deals with ethical issues. The faculty and students on the Council work to raise awareness about potential ethical issues, highlighted by a week each year focused on ethical academic behavior.

Yet another policy outlines the grievance procedure to address complaints and disputes between employees and the University regarding working relationships, working conditions, employment practices, or differences in interpretation of policies.

As a test of the integrity of its financial proceedings, the University is audited annually by an independent external accounting firm. For more than 25 years, Missouri State has received an “unqualified opinion” on that [external audit](#). Another example of the institution’s culture of integrity is that Missouri State has not had any NCAA violations that have resulted in sanctions.

Each auxiliary enterprise system has established its own procedures to ensure integrity in its operations. For example, Taylor Health and Wellness Center’s accreditation with the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care demonstrates the quality of the Center’s operation with

respect to the rights of patients, governance, administration, and the quality of care provided.

The University also has an information security policy within the policy library. Per the policy, the Information Security Unit of the Computer Services Department provides guidance and oversight of all information-security related activities. A full-time Information Security Officer chairs the Information Security Executive Committee with campus-wide representation.

The high-profile Missouri State Bookstore theft was initially uncovered and investigated by the University's Office of Internal Audit beginning in early August 2012. The incident was handled professionally, first internally in fairness to the employee, before promptly being made public. The University then cooperated with law enforcement officials, which filed federal charges and ultimately gained a guilty plea agreement on March 26, 2013, in what local and federal authorities described as "record time." Sentencing of five years in jail and payment of restitution was made August 29, 2013. Since the occurrence, new procedures have been established and a cash collection audit has been completed. Even a year later, the University continues to receive high praise for the forthright way in which it handled this situation.

A key ingredient in ethical and responsible behavior is clear, complete, and timely information. Missouri State benefits from its robust website that includes appropriate documents: financial documents (including salaries of all employees), internal audit reports, comprehensive policy library, agendas and minutes of most meetings, and more. In addition, both the [President](#) and Provost have regular communications that provide updates as well as links to additional documents on the topics.

Sources

- Audit - external financial audit 2A
- Audit Reports - internal audit 2A
- Clif's Notes 1A
- Declaration of University Community Principles 1A, 2A
- Employee Handbook Feb 2014 1B
- FacultyHandbook_2014-06-20 1B, 2D, 2E
- MissouriStatePolicyLibrary_2014-01-29 2A, 2C, 2D, 2E, 5B
- MissouriStatePolicyLibrary_2014-01-29 2A, 2C, 2D, 2E, 5B (page number 3)
- MissouriStatePolicyLibrary_2014-01-29 2A, 2C, 2D, 2E, 5B (page number 438)

2.B - Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

Argument

The University's robust website contains clear and complete information about Missouri State programs and requirements for the public, faculty, staff, and students. Two examples are the [graduate](#) and [undergraduate](#) catalogs. The long-range plan is the result of an 18-month campus-wide process that included a large steering committee, expanded working subcommittees, postings of multiple drafts on the website, open forums, and individual comments and recommendations. As is the University's practice, students, as well as faculty, staff and administrators, were included on all of the long-range plan committees and work groups. An executive summary of the long-range plan was included in the printed document, while the entire long-range plan, complete with objectives, tactics and timelines, is on the University's website.

Likewise, the documents leading to the Higher Learning Commission [accreditation](#), and other more specialized accreditations, are also included on the website. All working documents, meeting minutes, and then the final documents are posted to the website and publicized for maximum input.

Missouri State presents clearly its purpose of "developing educated persons." The University, from the Board of Governors to the faculty and staff, is focused on students' learning outcomes and their commitment to lifelong learning. The University strives to keep the best interests of students at the forefront of all decisions. Toward that end, Missouri State prides itself on providing information openly and transparently, especially on the University's website. The policy library, Board of Governors agendas and minutes, financial documents, and comprehensive calendars of events are posted on the website for all to see. Information is provided in a straightforward, uncomplicated form, all easily located with a well-structured and comprehensive search engine.

Missouri State was an early adopter of the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA), a national program designed to add transparency to higher education for students and families. But that is not all.

In the "Net Price Calculator," students have a nationally-normed tool to calculate the cost of their education. Even though Missouri State has taken steps over the years to simplify the calculation of [fees](#), it can, admittedly, be complicated. Partially in response to reduced state funding and partially in response to the market, several academic colleges at Missouri State have instituted program fees in recent years. In addition, online courses typically incur a slightly higher fee. However, with the ever-increasing costs of traveling to and from campus, most students do not complain about this additional charge.

Finally, Missouri State takes seriously its responsibility to expend designated student fees for their approved purposes. Toward that end, the University has worked diligently to document and publicize how individual student fees have been, and are being, used. One example is the Student Computer Usage Fee (SCUF), which is monitored by a campus committee consisting of faculty, staff and students. Over the past decade, students on the committee have played a stronger role in ensuring that SCUF funds are used for the highest priorities within their designated purpose.

Because programs and requirements for graduation change, Missouri State treats these as “living documents” by regularly reviewing, evaluating, and revising as appropriate. It is all part of the goal of providing clear and accurate information to students, faculty, staff, and the public.

Sources

- Accreditations - list with certifying body 3A
- Graduate Catalog 2013-2014 1B, 2B, 3A
- Tuitions, Costs and Fees 1A, 2B
- Undergraduate catalog 2014-2015 1B, 2B, 3A

2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

1. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
2. The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
3. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.
4. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

Argument

2.C.1.

Missouri State's Board of Governors is actively involved in setting the agenda for the University, especially through the long-range plan. For the [current plan covering 2011-16](#), the Board reviewed various key elements and then two full drafts of the plan, provided input, and [ultimately unanimously approved it](#). The Board's priorities and involvement in establishing the agenda are not only articulated in the long-range plan, but also the President's highlights and the Board of Governor's official minutes. The priorities are organized in six sections in the plan: [Access to Success](#), [Public Affairs Integration](#), [Engaged Inquiry](#), [Partners for Progress](#), [Valuing and Supporting People](#) and [Responsible Stewardship](#).

"Access to Success" expands access to educational opportunities and prepares students for successful citizenship and careers in a globally competitive world. [One initiative](#) includes increasing enrollment in targeted fields of study such as science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), as well as health fields. Several programs support this initiative: a new master's degree program in Occupational Therapy, a new Associate of Applied Science in Allied Health-Certified Nursing Assistant program on the West Plains campus, and the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree. Several new facilities also reinforce Access to Success: Bill R. Foster and Family Recreation Center, McQueary Family Health Sciences Hall, the O'Reilly Clinical Health Science Center, the four-building Brick City complex, the facilities in IDEA Commons, the Science Scholars' Laboratory at Greenwood Lab School, and multiple facilities to support the School of Agriculture: Bond Learning Center at the Darr Agricultural Center, the Journagan Ranch, the Shealy Farm, and the Woodlands.

[Increasing diversity is an emphasis of Access to Success](#). In 2011, the first Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion was hired. The Division of Diversity and Inclusion exists to promote, achieve, advance, and sustain Missouri State's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion by enhancing employee capabilities and competencies through diversity research, professional development, collaboration, and integrative activities and practices. The annual Statewide Collaborative Diversity Conference, initiated in 2013, has been a resounding success and further put the University at the forefront of the diversity conversation. In recognition of its progress with diversity, in September 2014 Missouri State was awarded the 2014 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award by *INSIGHT into Diversity* magazine, the oldest and largest diversity-focused publication in higher

education. Missouri State, along with 82 other recipients, were featured in the November 2014 issue of the magazine.

[Integrating the Public Affairs Mission](#) more deeply into the academic experience of the students, from the curriculum to research, equips and inspires graduates to engage in global policy issues and creatively apply their educations to identify solutions to pressing worldwide challenges. The 2013 Public Affairs Conference, with its theme of “Inclusive Excellence,” attracted more than 3,000 participants. The conference explored the relationship between public affairs and diversity and inclusion.

Engaged Inquiry – the pursuit of research and scholarly activities – enriches the learning experience of students and is responsive to the needs of the region and state. [These initiatives continue to develop](#). For example, researchers at the Center for Grapevine Biotechnology in the William H. Darr School of Agriculture announced two major breakthroughs that will impact grape and wine industries in Missouri and the Midwest. The College of Humanities and Public Affairs (CHPA) was awarded a five-year, \$2.5 million contract from the U. S. Department of Defense (DOD). And a new publication, *Mind’s Eye*, and its companion website highlight research, service, and scholarly activities by faculty members.

[Partners for Progress](#) expresses Missouri State’s commitment to serve as a catalyst for positive change in improving the quality of life for Missourians and enhancing the economic vitality of the region and state.

Based on the foundation established by the long-range plan, the Board approves 8-10 annual goals proposed by the administration. The Board then uses its five regular meetings and two retreats to focus on specific aspects of the four areas identified by the long-range plan and the annual goals for the year.

The Board has two committees, Finance and Facilities, and Programs and Planning, which meet in conjunction with the full Board meetings. In 75-90 minutes, both committees work through an agenda that is published in advance. The Programs and Planning Committee always includes an in-depth discussion of a topic, which has ranged from the Study Away Program to individual academic colleges and schools.

Beginning in December 2012, the Board of Governors reinvented its agenda to make the Board’s time more substantive. The major addition was scheduling an in-depth discussion as part of its regular meetings. Board members have found this addition a more meaningful use of their time, and the administration has benefited from the Board’s input and the open dialogue. Some of the topics have included: Diversity in the Student Body, First Generation Students, HLC Accreditation (for both the West Plains and Springfield campuses), and Partnership Opportunities Among Missouri State’s Campuses.

In preparation for the next two long-range plans for 2016-21 and 2021-26, the Board of Governors asked the administration to complete a “visioning” process during 2014-15. The resulting vision statement from this work, titled “Missouri State Vision: Our Passion for Excellence,” will serve as the foundation for the next two plans. The detailed plan will then be developed during the 2015-16 year and be implemented beginning July 1, 2016.

2.C.2.

Missouri State officials often tell people that “the University’s middle name is ‘Partner.’”

For more than two decades, the University has sought meaningful partnerships to better serve its students, broaden its services, and expand research opportunities. These partnerships have come at the local, state, regional, national and international levels. The Board of Governors approves many of the agreements and is informed of all of them in accordance with University policy. A few examples include:

- **Local** – Missouri State has positive and productive relationships with the City of Springfield, City Utilities, Greene County, Ozarks Technical Community College (OTC), Drury University, Evangel University, Southwest Baptist University, the Community Foundation of the Ozarks, the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce, Urban Districts Alliance, and other local agencies and organizations. These have helped pave the way for several collaborative projects, the major one of which is [IDEA Commons](#) and its component parts: the Roy Blunt Jordan Valley Innovation Center, Brick City, and the Robert W. Plaster Center for Free Enterprise and Business Development, which includes The eFactory. Other non-university entities located in IDEA Commons include the Missouri Crime Lab, the Jordan Valley Community Health Center, the Taylor-Martin Companies, the Marlin Company, and several residential structures. Another example of collaboration is the new campus entrance on National Avenue, the renaming of Monroe Street to “Bear Boulevard,” and the improvement of the intersection at National Avenue and Bear Boulevard. Missouri State has enjoyed a strong partnership with OTC since it opened in 1991. The two institutions have articulation agreements; dually enroll students and manage their financial aid across both campus; and even provide a special residence hall experience for OTC students on the Missouri State campus. Missouri State offers accelerated master’s degree programs with the other four-year institutions in the area, and all of the higher education institutions partner in the Foreign Language Institute hosted by Missouri State. The Board approved all of these initiatives as they were developed.
- **State** – Missouri State has developed partnerships with many higher education institutions across Missouri. The University has co-located in the OTC Education Center in Lebanon, has a presence at Crowder Community College in Neosho, and offers graduate programs in Joplin, home of Missouri Southern State University. [Missouri State has joint degree programs](#) with three of the four University of Missouri campuses: an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership with the University of Missouri-Columbia, a cooperative Engineering degree with the Missouri University of Science and Technology, and the cooperative Doctor of Pharmacy degree with the University of Missouri-Kansas City. Missouri State has an extensive and growing Dual Credit program with high schools located in southwest Missouri and around the state. Several University-sponsored programs involve other Missouri institutions, both two-year and four-year. In addition, many Missouri State researchers collaborate with colleagues at other Missouri institutions. The Board of Governors has encouraged these partnerships, is aware of all, and has approved many.
- **Regional** – One of the most recent regional partnerships is with the University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff, a Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) member. The partnership is designed to increase diversity experiences for students on both campuses. The Board of Governors approved this agreement.
- **National** – Missouri State’s Defense and Strategic Studies (DDS) Program is located in the Washington, D.C., area for greater accessibility to professionals who seek a graduate degree in this area. The DSS program is recognized as one of the premier programs of its kind in the country. The Board of Governors decided to locate the program there and approves such things as leases and tuition. The University also has partnerships with the National Park Service.
- **International** – Over the past 20 years, Missouri State has developed academic and research partnerships internationally. [Missouri State has 52 agreements](#) with 17 countries: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, China, Colombia, Czech Republic, England, France, India,

Japan, Mexico, Mongolia, Slovenia, South Korea, and Turkey. The greatest concentration are in China with 15 agreements in nine cities/provinces. The Board is made aware of all agreements and approves most since there is a financial commitment involved.

2.C.3.

The Board of Governors' regular meetings, meetings of the two committees (Finance/Facilities and Programs/Planning), and the monthly Executive Committee meetings (conducted by conference call) are open to the public. Agendas for all meetings are posted to the web in advance, as are minutes and major actions of the meetings. Audio recordings of the regular meetings are made and maintained. The minutes of all open meetings are public record and available under the Missouri Open Meetings, Open Records Law ([Sunshine Law](#)). Some portions of the minutes from closed sessions of the Board are protected for certain periods of time or permanently under the Sunshine Law.

Missouri State University is governed by a [nine-member statewide Board of Governors](#), with at least one, but no more than two, from each of Missouri's eight congressional districts. All members are appointed by the Governor of the State, with the advice and consent of the State Senate, to serve six-year terms. Once appointed by the Governor and approved by the Senate, Board members are sworn to act in the best interests of the University. The Board also includes a non-voting student member, who is appointed by the Governor from three nominations submitted by the Student Government Association, and then confirmed by the Missouri Senate.

The Board meets seven times per year with regular meetings, with the standing committees meeting each time in advance of the full meeting. In addition, the Board has two retreats – in the late July/early August where the goals for the year are finalized and in early March where progression the goals are discussed. Agenda/minutes for [February](#), [March](#), [May](#), [June](#), July, October and December of 2014.

The Board of Governors By-Laws, first enacted in 1936, have gone through numerous amendments. The latest major revision was completed in 2009, although amendments have been since then and are still made periodically. The By-Laws cover, among other policies, selection and removal of members, conflict of interests, board organization and committees, board authority, and functioning.

A review of the By-Laws, Sunshine Law, the policy library, and other University and procedural information is included in a day-long orientation conducted for all new Board members after they have been appointed and before they attend their first meeting.

These policies, practices and orientation all help promote and safeguard the Board of Governors' ability to be an independent decision-making body that serves in the best interest of the University and is immune from inappropriate influences.

2.C.4.

The Board of Governors By-Laws are an important part of Missouri State's administrative policies. The By-Laws state in Article II, Section 3.a, "Governors shall avoid involvements in the administration of the University except in an emergency or when exceptional circumstances occur," and in Article X, Section 2, "the President of the University is delegated the general authority to act for and on behalf of the Board of Governors of the University, as its agent, to administer the University's affairs pursuant to policies established by the Board."

The Board of Governors had a special challenge in the summer of 2011 to which it responded appropriately, effectively, and in a timely manner. Within a two-month period, both the Provost and

11-month President resigned and returned to the faculty. The Board named an Interim President who identified the Interim Provost within hours. The changes were accomplished quickly and seamlessly, and then made public in a timely manner, thus avoiding the chaos that is possible in such situations.

The Board of Governors has a strong record of valuing the principle of shared governance with the faculty and fostering the faculty's right to academic freedom. As a result, the University has benefitted from active and enthusiastic faculty participation and involvement in academic matters, and the University, therefore, has a comprehensive and time-tested body of academic policies. The Provost is the chief academic officer of the University, the Faculty Senate oversees undergraduate curricular matters, and the Graduate Council oversees graduate programs. The President and Provost both emphasize and support the concept of shared governance and the faculty's responsibility for curriculum during the orientation for new Board members.

As is the case in many situations, communication and collaboration are key. This was never more apparent than at the [June 2014 Board of Governors meeting](#) where revisions to the Faculty Handbook were proposed by the Faculty Senate. Thanks to the leadership of Faculty Senate and the Provost, and the communication among all parties, the Faculty Senate recommendations were supported by the Provost and President and unanimously approved by the Board without any amendments.

Sources

- BOG appointed CHAPTER 174 Section 174.450 2C
- BOG approve LRP 1B (plans and mission)
- BOG approve LRP 1B (plans and mission) (page number 6)
- BOG minutes June 2014 approving revisions to faculty handbook 2C
- February 2014 Agendas and Minutes
- Graduate Catalog 2013-2014 1B, 2B, 3A
- IDEA Commons 1D, 2C, 3D
- International Agreements 2C
- Joint Degree Programs 1D, 2C
- June 2014 Agendas and Minutes
- Long Range Plan 2011-2016 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A, 2C, 4C
- Long Range Plan 2011-2016 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A, 2C, 4C (page number 7)
- Long Range Plan 2011-2016 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A, 2C, 4C (page number 8)
- Long Range Plan 2011-2016 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A, 2C, 4C (page number 9)
- Long Range Plan 2011-2016 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A, 2C, 4C (page number 10)
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- Long Range Plan 2011-2016 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A, 2C, 4C (page number 12)
- Long Range Plan 2011-2016 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A, 2C, 4C (page number 16)
- Long Range Plan 2011-2016 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A, 2C, 4C (page number 27)
- Long Range Plan 2011-2016 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A, 2C, 4C (page number 34)
- Long Range Plan 2011-2016 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A, 2C, 4C (page number 42)
- Long Range Plan 2011-2016 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A, 2C, 4C (page number 49)
- Long Range Plan 2011-2016 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 2A, 2C, 4C (page number 62)
- March 2014 Agendas and Minutes
- May 2014 Agendas and Minutes
- Sunshine Law 2A
- Undergraduate catalog 2014-2015 1B, 2B, 3A

2.D - Core Component 2.D

The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

Argument

Missouri State University values [freedom of expression](#) and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning. Over the years, the University has embraced these values as part of its mission. This commitment is specifically expressed in the [Declaration of University Community Principles](#), which was adopted in the late 1990s by the Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and the Student Government Association. The Declaration expresses the belief that educated persons will accept responsibility to act in accordance with the following principles: 1) Being open-minded to embrace the benefits and richness that diversity and inclusiveness bring to the community of scholars and to recognize them as catalysts for educational excellence; 2) Practicing personal and academic integrity. Being a full participant in the educational process, and respecting the right of all to contribute to the "Marketplace of Ideas"; and 3) Treating all persons with civility, while understanding that tolerating an idea is not the same as supporting it. Being a steward of the shared resources of the community of scholars.

Choosing to accept these principles suggests that each participant of the community refrains from and discourages behavior that threatens the freedom and respect each member deserves.

Indeed, the University is committed not only to developing educated persons, but also to embracing ethical conduct in teaching and learning on a daily basis. Examples of such emphases include:

- Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Expressive Activity Policy
- Prohibition of Discrimination and Harassment Policy
- Student Policy Handbook for English Language Institute (ELI)
- Grade Appeal and Academic Grievances Policy

Additionally, several programs have their own set of academic policies that govern freedom of expression and pursuit of truth.

Sources

- Declaration of University Community Principles 1A, 2A
- FacultyHandbook_2014-06-20 1B, 2D, 2E, 3C

2.E - Core Component 2.E

The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, students and staff.

1. The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.
2. Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.
3. The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Argument

2.E.1

Missouri State ensures – through appropriate support, training, and policies – that faculty, staff, and students acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly. The Faculty Handbook provides guidance for faculty regarding scholarship, research, and creative activity; responsibilities and ethics; academic freedom; regulatory guidelines for research; and conflict of interest.

Responsible scholarship is specifically supported through the University's Office of Research Administration (ORA). The ORA provides coordination, oversight, and education in the areas of animal care and use, biosafety, conflict of interest, export control, human subject research, intellectual property, radiation safety, responsible conduct of research, and technology transfer. Appropriate policies and procedures exist related to academic freedom, intellectual property that emerge from scholarship, sponsored research (grants), misconduct in science, and whistleblower protections. ORA also supports faculty and staff in the acquisition, performance and administration of projects and programs funded from sources outside the University.

The Graduate College provides grants and other resources to help faculty and graduate students acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly. The annual Interdisciplinary Forum provides an outlet for student scholarship, practical experience in preparation for professional research outlets, and an opportunity to honor excellence through research awards.

Furthermore, faculty gain clear, updated guidance regarding scholarship expectations per the Provost's triennial review of department reappointment, tenure, and promotion plans.

2.E.2

Missouri State University provides students with timely, effective guidance regarding the ethical use of information resources. The first pillar of the University's public affairs mission is "Ethical Leadership" – a shared commitment that permeates the University's learning community. The annual Public Affairs Conference features campus events that educate and inspire. The [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) and the Student Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures establish clear expectations and provide guidance for students. Even so, the University proactively seeks to deliver the guidance in a variety of settings.

- Through orientation, new students encounter information regarding their rights and responsibilities.

- In every course, standards of academic integrity are expected to be on the syllabus.
- The first required course for first-time, first-year students is GEP101, and one of the first subjects is tied to information literacy, academic integrity, and ethical behavior.
- Ethical behavior and responsibility are topics included in the orientation sessions specifically targeted to entering freshmen, transfer students, non-traditional students, international students, and graduate students.
- The University avails faculty of plagiarism-detection/integrity-promoting software – Safeassign.
- The Bear CLAW (Center for Learning and Writing) provides individualized assistance for students at all stages of information use and project development.
- The Academic Integrity Tutorial is available online to enrich students' understanding and guide their choices.

With the opportunities technology creates come special challenges, and Missouri State University arms the entire learning community with firm principles and recommendations for responsible, ethical and safe computer usage. Students at Missouri State are active partners in promoting ethical use of information resources. Students serve on and are active members of the Information Technology (IT) Council. Students organized the campus Society of Academic Integrity Leaders (SAIL) which has now evolved into a campus Academic Integrity Matters Student Organization (AIMSO). Each year, [Academic Integrity Days](#) features presentations and workshops for students, student organizations, and faculty.

Another tool the University provides [Searchpath](#), an online tutorial available through the library website. Searchpath promises to help students “learn to find and critically evaluate information sources.”

Like other colleges and universities, Missouri State continues to identify best approaches to promoting academic integrity in online courses. Missouri State is now developing new standards which should be ready to implement no later than fall 2015. The [Center for Faculty Teaching and Learning](#) has provided guidance for faculty through the University's innovative training program and [Digital Professor Academy](#). Missouri State remains vigilant in seeking opportunities to ensure academic integrity in distance education.

2.E.3

Missouri State University firmly and fairly enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity, guided by the Student Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures. Those policies and procedures were revised in 2014, partly to enhance readability (i.e., maximize student access to this guidance).

By administering an [Academic Integrity Survey](#) to faculty and students, the Academic Integrity Council maintains awareness of the scope and nature of challenges to integrity. As noted in describing compliance with 2.E.2, standards of academic integrity are expected to be included in the syllabus of every course at Missouri State.

The [University's Test Proctoring Center](#) is augmented by an agreement with Ozarks Technical Community College that provides online students even more options for taking tests in secure environments. A new Testing Center in Meyer Library is scheduled for completion as of August 2015.

Expectations, policies, and resources are made salient for members of the learning community, and the Academic Integrity Council (AIC) – which includes student members and faculty members in

equal measure – adjudicates concerns in a manner consistent with those expectations and policies.

Sources

- Academic Integrity at MSU 2E
- Academic Integrity Survey 2E
- Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities 2E
- Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning 3C, 3D
- Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning 3C, 3D (page number 43)
- FacultyHandbook_2014-06-20 1B, 2D, 2E, 3C
- Searchpath - Library tutorial 2E
- Test Proctoring 2E

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Summary

With its public affairs mission, Declaration of University Community Principles, online policy library, and Office of Internal Audit and Compliance, Missouri State possesses the ingredients to meet the criterion on ethical and responsible conduct. Expectations for behavior are clearly outlined for all members of the campus community: Board of Governors, faculty, staff, administrators, and students.

Beyond that, the University has demonstrated its commitment to these ideals, most notably in the Missouri State Bookstore theft in August 2012 that received national attention and for which the University continues to receive accolades from media and others. The University dealt with that incident promptly, openly, and effectively. Even so, Missouri State is well aware that it must be ever diligent in maintaining the high standard it has set.

The University has a strong commitment to shared governance and includes all constituents, including students, in developing the long-range plan and other important documents and in reaching strategic decisions.

Missouri State also serves its constituents by its continuing commitment to partnerships. The University has a long history of focusing on the needs of the citizenry rather than sole ownership and credit. What that means has evolved as the mission of the University has changed but it has always worked to the benefit of all.

Strengths

1. The institution operates with integrity as evidenced by its commitment to an up-to-date online policy library and annual external audits. In addition, Missouri State has an active Office of Internal Audit and Compliance and a full-time information security officer in support of this commitment.
2. The public affairs mission provides a strong philosophical foundation for ethical and responsible behavior, including the celebration of freedom of thought and speech, and diversity and inclusion.
3. Codes of conduct are clear for all members of the campus community, from the Board of Governors to faculty and staff, to administrators, and to students.

Strategic Opportunities

1. Given the importance of cost to its students, Missouri State strives to find the clearest ways in which to list the price and value of the education it offers.
2. The University remains diligent in its goal of responsible conduct in research as it continues to support scholarly activity across all disciplines.

3. In this rapidly changing technological environment, Missouri State continues to build on current policies and practices to address new challenges.

Sources

There are no sources.