3.A - Core Component 3.A

The institution’s degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.
3. The institution’s program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

Argument

The content and quality of all of CWRU's undergraduate, graduate, and professional degree programs, as well as the level of performance expected from students, are appropriate for those offered by an institution of higher learning.

1. The CWRU General Bulletin lists all current courses, degree programs and degree requirements at the university. It is updated on an annual basis and available online and as a downloadable document. New courses that have been recently approved are uploaded to the General Bulletin by the University Registrar’s office from the Student Information System (SIS). Courses that have not been taught in the past 5 years are flagged by the Registrar and removed unless the department offering the course verifies that the course will be taught soon and requests that it remain within SIS.

The responsibility for the content and quality of CWRU's academic programs as well as the expectations for student performance rests with the faculty operating through faculty governance processes. The Faculty Senate Committee on Graduate Studies is responsible for reviewing and recommending to the Faculty Senate with respect to the academic standards and degree requirements of all degree programs offered by more than a single constituent faculty (e.g., the Ph.D. and Master of Arts programs), and ad hoc and special programs under the administration of the Dean of Graduate Studies. The Curriculum Subcommittee of the Faculty Senate Committee on Undergraduate Education reviews all new curricular programs, majors, and changes in the undergraduate general education requirements, particularly those that affect students from more than one of CWRU's schools.

Reviews that take place within the Faculty Senate are preceded by reviews that take place within the schools and individual departments. Each academic unit has a curriculum committee responsible for ongoing and periodic assessments of the curriculum and for establishing criteria for the review of programs and proposals as dictated by the school's bylaws. Examples are provided from the College of Arts and Sciences and the Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences.

Many programs maintain disciplinary accreditation by nationally recognized professional associations. Accreditation status with some of these organizations dates back several decades.

CWRU receives its authorization to operate and award degrees within the State of Ohio through the Ohio Board of Regents (BOR). Such authorization signifies the BOR's assessment that CWRU's academic programs are appropriate to the degrees being awarded. The BOR's Office of Program
Development and Approval reviews and makes recommendations to the Chancellor regarding the approval of new programs and changes to previously approved programs at private higher education institutions, among others. The Regent’s Advisory Committee on Graduate Studies (RACGS) reviews all graduate degree programs offered by public universities and several Ohio private institutions including Case Western Reserve University. See the [RACGS](http://www.cswe.org/) guidelines for additional information.

Appropriate levels of student performance for courses and degrees at CWRU are also evidenced by the fact that licensing bodies accept a CWRU degree as fulfilling part of the requirement for licensure. Examples include: the Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (http://ncees.org/); Ohio Board of Nursing (http://www.nursing.ohio.gov/); and, the Association of Social Work Boards (http://www.cswe.org/). Starting with the graduating class of 2006 to the present, 38-48% of students who responded to the university’s First Destination Survey indicated that they had been accepted into programs of advanced study (see the First Destination Survey reports for 2013 and 2014, for example). Other statistics show that CWRU undergraduates are successful in gaining entry into medical schools. This suggests that other institutions of higher education find that a CWRU undergraduate education is of suitable content and quality and CWRU degrees require an appropriate level of student performance.

2) The requirements for undergraduate, graduate and professional school programs are contained within the University’s [General Bulletin](http://www.cswe.org/). In schools with both undergraduate and graduate programs, the requirements are clearly differentiated for each degree level. See examples from the [Weatherhead School of Management](http://www.cswe.org/) and the [Case School of Engineering](http://www.cswe.org/).

All of the university’s academic programs have identified explicit learning goals for students pursuing these programs. For instance, the Francis Payne Bolton School of Nursing has developed [Characteristics of the Graduate](http://www.cswe.org/) for each one of its programs. The Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences (MSASS) provides students with a foundation designed to build core social work competencies with its [Ability-Based Learning Environment](http://www.cswe.org/). The Engineering Accreditation Commissions under ABET (the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology), which accredits programs in the Case School of Engineering, requires programs to articulate student outcomes. The School of Engineering articulates both student outcomes and educational objectives for each of its undergraduate programs. See, for example, the [listing](http://www.cswe.org/) in the General Bulletin for the Biomedical Engineering program.

CWRU’s Office of Outcome Assessment collects, and archives on an internal website, lists of student learning outcomes and assessment plans for each of the university’s academic programs. Differentiated learning goals for each program are evident.

The approval processes for new courses and course modifications require descriptions of expected learning outcomes. See the sample [Course-Action form](http://www.cswe.org/) that is used throughout the various stages of the faculty-governance review processes. Courses that are intended to be cross-listed at the undergraduate and graduate levels must specify the different expectations and requirements for undergraduate and graduate students before the course can be approved by the appropriate committee at the school and university levels.

Requirements and objectives for certificate programs offered by the schools are included in the General Bulletin and/or are published online. See examples from the [Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences](http://www.cswe.org/), the [Case School of Engineering](http://www.cswe.org/), and the [School of Medicine](http://www.cswe.org/).

3. CWRU holds all its degree programs to the same high educational standards wherever or however the program is offered. If an existing on-campus degree program is planned to be offered at an off-
campus location or by distance or online delivery, the degree or program receives the same (if not greater) level of scrutiny by internal committees at the school as well as the university level. Such changes must be reviewed and approved up through the Faculty Senate, the CWRU Board of Trustees, and in many cases, the Ohio Board of Regents. See the program approval matrix for details on the sequence of approvals required.

The Master of Science in Social Administration (MSSA) program is one of the programs at CWRU approved for full online delivery. This program was opened in 2013, and currently is the only fully online degree program at CWRU to enroll students. This degree program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (www.cswe.org). Since the program is relatively new, collection and analysis of data to examine the success of these students after program completion is not yet available. However the student and faculty manual for this program illustrates the ways in which this online degree program meets the same level of rigor as the other MSSA degree options. Note that the section of field education notes that for an online program, identification of a field placement early in the program is important. This is an example of how instructional format is taken into consideration in setting and maintaining standards for the program.

Other online degree programs (such as several masters programs from the Case School of Engineering) will be opened for the next academic year.

The university recently created the position of Director of Online and Innovative Learning to ensure the quality of education delivered by non-traditional means. As of this writing, the Director position is not yet filled, but it will report directly to the university's Chief Information Officer. In addition, the University Director of Outcome Assessment works with the various programs throughout the university so that learning objectives and assessment plans ensure program quality.

The university offers degree programs at three additional U.S. locations outside of Cleveland and two in foreign countries. The School of Medicine offers an MS in Anesthesia in Houston, Texas and Washington, DC, and the Case School of Engineering offers an MS degree in Biomedical Engineering or Electrical Engineering (with an emphasis on Wireless Health) as well as certificates in wearable computing in San Diego. The Weatherhead School of Management offers two international programs: the Master of Science in Management-Finance in China; and, the Master of Science in Positive Organization Development and Change in India. All coursework and assessments of students in these degree programs match those required in the analogous on-campus programs.

With respect to dual- or joint-degree programs, students are expected to meet the learning outcomes for both programs. Requirements for the individual programs are listed in the relevant sections of the General Bulletin.

CWRU does not have any contract or consortial arrangements for delivery of its academic programs. The university does not participate in dual-credit programs.

Sources

- Academic Program Approval Requirements - Ohio Board of Regents
- Bylaws - College of Arts and Sciences (rev. 3/20/13)
- Bylaws - College of Arts and Sciences (rev. 3/20/13) (page number 11)
- Bylaws - Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences (rev. 3/20/13)
- Bylaws - Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences (rev. 3/20/13) (page number 8)
- Certificate of Authorization (Ohio Board of Regents) with programs listing
- Charge to Curriculum subcommittee of the Faculty Senate Committee on Undergraduate Education (FSCUE)
- Charge to Faculty Senate Committee on Graduate Studies
- Compilation of student learning outcomes by program (March 2015)
- CSE Certificate Programs - listing from website
- Data on School of Nursing students performance on the NCLEXS licensing exam
- First Destination Survey report (2013)
- First Destination Survey report (2014)
- First Destination Survey report (2014) (page number 8)
- General Bulletin - main website
- List of accredited programs with dates and details (March 2015)
- Listing of Ability Based Learning Environment, Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences - from website
- Listing of program outcomes and assessment plans (March 2015) - from website
- Listing of student information system user guides - from Registrars website
- Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences special focus and certificate programs - listing from website
- Master of Science in Social Administration online program - description from website
- Master of Science in Social Administration online program - description from website (page number 3)
- Masters of Engineering online programs - description from website
- Medical school acceptance rate data for CWRU undergrads (2010-2014)
- MS in Anesthesia programs, off-site locations in Houston and Washington DC - description from website
- Ohio Board of Regents Advisory Committee on Graduate Study (RACGS) guidelines for program approval (2013)
- Organizational Structure Chart - Information Technology Services
- Outcome assessment workspace website with examples of student learning outcomes and assessment plans
- Overview of the characteristics of graduates from the School of Nursing programs - from website
- Program approval matrix - showing requirements for internal and external levels of approval
- Sample course-action form - SYBB 321
- Sample course-action form - SYBB 321 (page number 3)
- School of Engineering additional location in San Diego - description from website
- School of Medicine certificate programs - listing from website Sciences
- Specialized accreditations - list from Institutional Research website
- Student Handbook - Master of Science in Social Administration online program