

# UT MARTIN ASSESSMENT NEWSLETTER

## JANUARY 2023

*Our most important job is to help our students succeed!*

### ***SACSCOC Update – New VP assigned to work with UT Martin***

Within the last few months, SACSCOC has had several Vice Presidents retire and has hired some new replacements. This has resulted in some shuffling of which schools are assigned to which Vice Presidents.

Our current Vice President, Crystal Baird, has been asked to mentor candidate institutions applying to membership in SACSCOC. As a result, UT Martin has been reassigned to one of the new SACSCOC Vice Presidents, Dr. J. Matthew Melton, effective February 1, 2023.

Before joining SACSCOC, Dr. Melton served as the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences at Lee University in Cleveland, TN. He has served on and chaired several On-Site Committees for SACSCOC, so he is familiar with the Site Visit process.

We thank Dr. Baird for her tenure as our assigned Vice President. We are looking forward to working with Dr. Melton.

### ***SACSCOC Site Visit, February 28 – March 2***

The SACSCOC On-Site Visiting Committee will be on campus February 28-March 2, 2023. The Committee is made up of 9 members

chosen from other SACSCOC institutions that are similar to ours, plus our new SACSCOC Vice President.

Here is what we know about the Committee Visit at this point:

- At least 2 Committee members will arrive on February 26 and will tour the Somerville Center and the Parsons Center on February 27; their stops will likely include brief interviews with students, faculty, and staff at the Centers.
- Committee interviews will be conducted on Tuesday, February 28 and Wednesday, March 1. We do not have all of the details on who will be involved with those interviews right now, but at a minimum, those will include:
  - UTM Leadership Team;
  - UTM QEP Leadership Team;
  - UTM QEP campus constituents;
  - Members of the Board of Trustees;
  - A group of UTM students; and
  - A group of UTM faculty.

This list will be expanded as the Committee determines what questions they still have

regarding the Compliance Standards.

- There will be an Exit Conference with the Chancellor and others on the morning of Thursday, March 2. The Committee will be on their way back to their respective homes by 10:00 that morning.

Between now and the end of February, we will be identifying groups of faculty, staff, and students to meet with the On-Site Committee. Prior to the Site Visit, we will have question and answer sessions with those asked to meet with the Committee so that they will know why they were chosen to meet with the Committee and what topics are likely to be addressed during that session.

### *Speaking of the QEP...*

UT Martin's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), required for reaffirmation by SACSCOC, is focused on increasing retention rates and progression rates of students, particularly those subpopulations that historically have achieved lower success rates than their counterparts. (By progression, we mean meeting benchmarks of 30-credit hours, 60-

credit hours, 90-credit hours, and graduation.) Over the next five years, UT Martin plans to increase retention rates for these subgroups by 5% and progression rates by 6% (using 2020 cohort data as the baseline).

Recommendations for ways to improve these rates came from UT Martin's work with the Strategic Plan and its Refresh, the Strategic Enrollment Management work, and the Foundations of Excellence work. Action goals focus on systemic processes that have a significant impact on student success.

Dr. Brad Baumgardner is the QEP Director, and Co-Directors include Jamie Mantooth, Anderson Starling, Patty Flowers, and Stephanie Kolitsch. Four teams of faculty and staff are already working on four different QEP areas; a fifth team will be named soon to address a fifth area of opportunity.

We are sharing a copy of our QEP with everyone on the UTM Information listserv. If you don't want to read the entire document, we have included below early drafts of some of the slides we are preparing for the On-Site Visit as well as a summary table from the QEP document. These will give you an overview of the UT Martin QEP plan.

# Accelerating Takeoff: The UT Martin Retention and Progression Plan

UT Martin's QEP



## Five Goals to Increase Retention and Progression

Remove Barriers	Identify and eliminate administrative barriers to registration and to retention.
Advising	Develop a research-based, topflight, effective advising program.
GENS 101	Revise the first-year experience course, GENS 101.
DFWI Rates	Increase student success in classes with high enrollments and high DFWI rates.
Sense of Belonging	Increase "sense of belonging" among students.

Goal	Objective
<b>Overarching Goal: Improve student success through increased retention and progression of students.</b>	
<b>1. Identify and eliminate administrative barriers to registration and to retention.</b>	a. Improve the transparency of administrative holds on registration.
	b. Review processes and forms associated with advising and identify opportunities for improvement.
	c. Streamline and standardize initial student placement (Math, Reading, English).
	d. Create and publish 4-, 5-, and 6-year plans of study, and integrate these plans into the advising structure.
<b>2. Develop a research-based, topflight, effective advising program.</b>	a. Develop a university-wide advising guide.
	b. Develop program-, department-, and college-specific portions to add to advising guide.
	c. Train advisors on new advising guide.
	d. Implement and track advising effectiveness using new guides.
<b>3. Revise the first-year experience course, GENS 101.</b>	a. Identify purpose/philosophy for GENS 101.
	b. Set agreed-upon learning objectives and experiences that <u>everyone</u> will promote in the class.
	c. Solidify the responsibilities of the instructor and the student PEP (peer-enabled program) leader.
	d. Train current and potential GENS 101 instructors on revised GENS 101 approaches.
<b>4. Increase student success in classes with high enrollments and high DFWI rates.</b>	a. Examine placement in and success rates of subpopulations in high DFWI courses.
	b. On the department level, examine the content and level of student academic support in high enrollment courses with high DFWI rates, and identify and implement possible improvements and/or additional supports.
<b>5. Increase “sense of belonging” among students.</b>	a. Streamline tools and resources used to improve students’ accessibility to information; provide frequently sought information in one location.
	b. Help student organizations coordinate and share events in purposeful ways.
	c. Create an incentive program to encourage students to attend events.
	d. Expand HIP opportunities and expand student support for participation in those opportunities (e.g., internships, service learning, undergraduate research, travel study).
	e. Develop a way to track student involvement in co-curricular activities. This could include developing a co-curricular transcript.
	f. Identify gaps in student involvement in co-curricular activities by subpopulation. Find ways to address those gaps.