Criterion 2

Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct
2 – Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

2.A. – Core Component

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

The University of Cincinnati is serious in its focus on integrity for all university functions.

The University

As a public institution, the University of Cincinnati is governed by the rules of the Ohio Department of Higher Education, the Ohio Ethics Commission and UC’s Board of Trustees. For example, Board of Trustees Rule 3361:10-17-03 states, “As members of the university of Cincinnati (“university” or “UC”) community, all faculty, staff, students, members of the board of trustees, university officers and affiliates are responsible for maintaining the highest ethical standards of this institution, and of the broader community in which we function. The university values integrity, honesty and fairness and strives to integrate these values into its teaching, research, service and business practices”.

Faculty

The full time faculty are represented by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), thus rules and policies conform to the AAUP/UC Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) regarding a variety of faculty issues. These rules protect the bargaining unit in areas of academic freedom, non-discrimination, reappointment, promotion, tenure and other faculty work-life issues. Thus, unit rules are implemented in accordance with the CBA to ensure that all faculty are treated in a fair and equitable manner by the various individual units that implement the rules.
The University of Cincinnati operates a shared governance process outlined in the CBA and is present at the department level (governed by departmental operating procedures), the unit level (governed by college bylaws), and the university level (governed by Faculty Senate, Undergraduate Student Government Association, and Graduate Student Governance Association).

Faculty are expected to engage in fair grading practices. If a student believes that a grade has been improperly assigned, the student may employ the student grade grievance policy, which is overseen by the University Ombuds and the College Grievance Review Committee (CGRC). The grievance process starts with an informal resolution stage where the student attempts to resolve the situation through discussion with the faculty, department head, and/or the college dean’s office. If the informal process is unsuccessful, voluntary mediation or formal hearing can be pursued by the student. The process is detailed in flowchart on the University Ombuds website (add chart to source).

Faculty are also expected to engage in ethical practices regarding their research. Please refer to 2.E for more details.

**Students**
We apply high ethical standards to the student learning environment. The University’s Student Code of Conduct sets forth expected behaviors of all students and outlines the process for grievances, adjudication, and corrective measures. These processes are managed by the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards. This provides a roadmap to all student disciplinary and grievance procedures.

**Research**
The university is committed to producing ethical and relevant research. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviews all research protocols that include human subjects to ensure that researchers take appropriate steps to protect the rights and welfare of human participants in research. To protect the integrity of the researcher, the institution, and the research enterprise, the university has a conflict of interest committee (COIC) that reviews individual conflicts of interest (COI) in research. The COIC works with the researcher to implement
measures that mitigate the COI, allowing the research to move forward in a responsible and ethical manner. The IRB has a separate subcommittee on COI that reviews and manages investigator financial relationships related to the sponsor by creating protocol specific safeguards.

To protect the university from risks resulting from institutional conflicts of interest (ICOI) where the financial interests of the institution or an institutional official, acting within his or her authority on behalf of the institution, may affect or appear to affect research activities, policies, procedures and an institutional conflict of interest committee (ICOIC) are in place. The safety and welfare of human subjects will not be compromised by the existence or even the reasonable appearance of ICOI.

The Human Research Protection Program and the Office for Ethics in Industry Engagement, within the university Office of Research, oversee the policies and procedures related to the IRB, COI, and ICOI.

**Sources**
- [Ohio Department of Higher Education Program Guidelines and Requirements](http://www.uc.edu/content/dam/uc/ombuds/docs/Undergraduate%20Student%20Grievance%20Policy.pdf)
- [2016-2019 AAUP CBA](http://researchcompliance.uc.edu/HRPP/IRB/IRBOversview.aspx)
- Sample College level bi-laws
- [http://www.uc.edu/titleix.html](http://www.uc.edu/titleix.html)
2.B. – Core Component

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

Presenting UC to the public

The University of Cincinnati has an extensive set of resources for students, parents, families, alumni, staff, faculty and members of the general public. The home page provides access to extensive information and resources. These include links offering guidance for future and current students, faculty, staff and alumni.

Via a number of pathways, audiences can access the following information:

- **Campus visits**: This information is readily accessible from the home page. A button overlaying the main photo on the home page invites students to make a “Campus Visit,” leading to a page regarding visiting or taking a virtual tour. At the bottom of the home page is an icon labeled “Maps” that takes future students to “visit” information – just another of numerous digital paths to this information.

- The “Apply Today” button at the center of the home page and other digital pathways lead to a top-level Admit page. This Admit page contains links for visiting campus, undergraduate programs, graduate programs, transfers, tuition and fees, scholarships and other financial aid, student job opportunities and more.

- The home page, most second-level pages off the home page, and other digital pathways lead to information on majors and programs on the undergraduate and graduate level.

- Accreditation information is available via a path from the home page to the About page. The Governance and Policies subhead leads to accreditation information. Both HLC accreditation information and specialty accreditation is available via this and other pathways.
Among the three icons at the top right of the home page is one leading to the UC Directory Page and the ability to search for contacts, offices, units and colleges, etc. Another pathway to this universal directory is found via an icon near the home page footer. Another icon located near the home page footer leads to the university’s events calendar.

The home page also contains news information highlighting recent student, alumni, staff and faculty achievements. In addition, the news link from the home page leads to all recent headlines, recent university magazine issues, contacts, social media stream and more. The UC Fact Sheet also contains general information about the university. Further, the university has a strong social media presence, using a range of tools, all of which are accessible from the university’s as well as the colleges’ and units’ sites and pages.

Specific information augments the materials available to the public, specifically information for proprietary to/from current students as well as for faculty and staff. Since the last accreditation, the university has established new systems and tools and added resources dedicated to enrollment management/services for students. Enrollment Management encompasses undergraduate Admissions, Advising, College Credit Plus, Orientation, Registrar, Research and Assessment, and Student Financial Aid. The online presence related to Admissions provides access to the requirements for admission both to the university and particular programs. The website also describes the admissions process and requirements for high school students, transfer students, international students and admitted students. Information on student costs, including tuition and fees as well as financial aid are easily accessible via a number of digital pathways. Available information includes the net price calculator. This student financial aid page includes information on types of aid, fees and billing, maintaining eligibility, student employment, loans, financial planning and much more. The Office of the Bursar page address bill paying and more.

The OneStop Student Services has both a physical locale as well as a virtual one, providing students centralized support from the offices of the Registrar, Bursar and Student Financial Aid. Virtually (and in person), students can find information on enrollment, academic records, billing and
financial aid all in one place.

The Division of Student Affairs has a Parents and Families page that provides links to resources related to academics, student life, public safety, admissions, commuter services, residence halls and more. The Parents and Families page also links to a guide to billing and financial aid information. The Division of Student Affairs web site also includes information on university ombuds, accessibility resources, counseling and psychological services, student conduct and community standards, which includes both academic and non-academic misconduct, Title IX and more. On the footer of this page and all other UC pages is a link to the notice of non discrimination.

A Students page contains links accessing similar information, as well as a link to University Health Services.

UC’s Right to Know page is distributed to the campus community annually and contains information related to safety, student outcomes, resources, policies and conflict resolution.

Board rules are also found online: http://www.uc.edu/trustees/rules.html and addresses policies and university rules specific to students, faculty and staff.

Links to the university’s mission statement, vision, strategic direction are available on the About UC page. Information on mission and general facts are also available via the Fact Sheet and information on the university’s strategic direction is also available via the president’s site.

Information related to instructors/researchers and their credentials are available on academic departmental pages in the respective colleges. The research directory allows any member of the public to search a faculty researcher’s expertise and background by name or by area of specialty. Through the Provost’s Academic Personnel office, the university provides information on resources; reappointment, promotion and tenure; Board rules; university policy and procedures; collective bargaining agreement and more, including academic planning and decision making.
Through the Office of General Counsel, the university actively complies with the Ohio Public Records Act. This law enables any member of the public to receive, upon request, any public record maintained by the university. This site includes a link to the public records policy and the manner to make such a request.

**Sources**
- BOT_Rules
- EM_Admissions
- EM_Financial Aid
- EM_OneStop
- GC_Public Records
- Provost_Academic Personnel
- Provost_Accreditation
- SA_Conduct
- SA_Counseling
- SA_Parents and Families
- SA_Ombuds
- UC_Non-Desrimination
- UC_President
- UC_Research
- UC_RightToKnow
- UC_Title IX
- UComm_Social Media
2.C. – Core Component
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.

Prompt: The governing board’s deliberations reflect priorities to
preserve and enhance the institution.

Response: An 11-member Board of Trustees (the Board) governs the
University of Cincinnati. Comprised of nine voting members and two non-
voting student members, the Board is appointed by the Governor of Ohio
with the advice and consent of the State Senate pursuant to Ohio Revised
Code 3361.01. Trustees are appointed to a nine-year term of office, with
the exception of student trustees who are appointed to a two-year term.
The Board also consists of representatives from several constituent groups:
faculty, alumni and foundation. These representatives are not entitled to
attend executive sessions of the Board.

The Board is responsible for selecting and appointing the president; setting
the operating budget; approving personnel appointments’ granting all
degrees awarded by the university, including honorary degrees;
establishing tuition and fee rates; approving contracts; and approving all
rules, regulations, curriculum changes, new programs and degrees of the
The Board holds six regular meetings per year in addition to any special meetings and complies with all provisions of the Ohio open meeting law set forth in section 121.22 of the Revised Code. In order to govern the university as effectively as possible, the Board has seven committees: Academic and Student Affairs, Health Affairs, Finance and Administration, Audit and Risk Management, Governance and Internal Affairs, Government Relations, and Investment. These committees meet prior to each of the regularly scheduled meetings and present recommendations and resolutions to the full board for consideration.

2.C.2.

**Prompt:** The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution’s internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.

**Response:** Minutes from the Board of Trustees’ meetings reflect the deliberation processes of matters pertinent to the interests of internal and external constituents. The university uses an integrated decision making process, better known as a shared governance model, to ensure multiple well-established governance committees are able to provide input. These all-university governance committees include: Athletics Advisory Council, Council of Deans, Diversity Council, Executive Committee, Faculty Senate, Fiscal Coordinating Committee, General Education Coordinating Committee, Graduate Council, Graduate Student Governance Association, President’s Advisory Council on Environment and Sustainability, President’s Cabinet, Strategic Enrollment Management Policy Council, Undergraduate Academic Affairs Committee, Undergraduate Student Government, University Academic Committee, University Budget Committee, University Honors Committee, University IT Council and the University Naming Committee.

2.C.3.

**Prompt:** 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.

Response: Members of the Board of Trustees adhere to the university’s code of conduct and conflict of interest policy. As such, board members do not vote on issues where they may have an interest. Each year, Board members submit financial disclosure statements to the Ohio Ethics Commission, which tracks business dealings with the university. Additionally, the Board receives ethics training from the Ohio Attorney General’s Office.

As a public institution supported by public resources, even the appearance of misconduct or impropriety can be very damaging to the university. Members of the University of Cincinnati strive to maintain the highest standards of quality and integrity. This involves more than merely complying with the law. Sometimes, specific laws or regulations do not govern the university’s business activities and conduct of its members. In these instances, principles of fairness, honesty, and respect for the rights of others govern our conduct. In addition, each individual is required to conduct university business transactions with the utmost honesty, accuracy and fairness. Each situation is examined in accordance with this standard.

2.C.4.

Prompt: The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

Response: Although the Board of Trustees may deliberate and make certain institutional decisions, the day-to-day operations are deemed the responsibility of university administrators. Similarly, academic matters are under the purview of the faculty. For example, in the appointment of college deans, the Board invests them with daily management authority of their colleges. A central tenet of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between the UC Chapter of the AAUP and the university administration is a clearly defined policy of shared governance, which articulates in Article 27, “Governance of the University.” The Board approves the CBA and respects the policy laid out within it. And, on occasion, the Board may issue a resolution in support of administrative
decisions.

**Sources**
- Ohio Revised Code 3361.01
- Section 121.22 of the Revised Code
  3361:10-1-04 Board of Trustees bylaws: meetings
  3361:10-1-05 Board of Trustees bylaws: committees
  3361:10-17-03 Conduct and ethics: code of conduct
- Board Minutes
- Board Standing Committees
- CBA Article 27
- October 24 Board Resolution
2.D. – Core Component

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

Argument

The University of Cincinnati has a long tradition of commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning for its faculty, staff, and students. As stated in the Board of Trustees Rules, “all members of the university community shall honor the freedom of each individual within that community in matters of speech, learning, inquiry, hearing, and peaceful assembly; and no one may interfere with the rights of others to pursue teaching, study, class attendance, research, learning, administrative duties, and the like.”

In addition to this university-wide policy declaration, the University of Cincinnati has reinforced and supported this commitment in many ways, including, but not limited to, the following:

For Faculty – UC provides an atmosphere for free expression of academic ideas.

- Through extensive provisions guaranteeing academic freedom for its faculty as set forth in its collective bargaining agreement with its AAUP-represented faculty;

For Students – UC supports students’ exercise of their right of free speech on campus.

- Through robust policies regarding student rights and expected conduct, which establishes that “[s]tudents are members of society as well as members of the academic community. As members of society, students have the same responsibilities as other members of society and enjoy the same freedom of speech and peaceful assembly and the right of petition that other members of society enjoy”;
For Staff, Campus and Community – UC provides resources to assist our campus and community partners in ensuring freedom of expression and access to support when such expression is controversial.

- Through the establishment of a standing Bias Incident Response Team;
- Through the UC Faculty Senate’s Human Relations Committee, which is charged with serving as a source for a just university community.
- Through the creation of a dedicated website to free speech with content on the law, statements from community members and leaders of the University, a frequently asked questions document regarding a controversial and unsolicited speaker, general free speech information, and links to numerous related resources.

In addition, the University of Cincinnati has policies and procedures in place that provide guidance for various kinds of speech, including guest speakers and political campaigns.

The University of Cincinnati’s commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning is unwavering and serves as a bedrock foundation of our work.

**Sources**
- 2016-2019 UC/AAUP Collective Bargaining Agreement
- Board of Trustees Rules:
  - 3361:10-17-01 Conduct and ethics: statement on political policy.
  - 3361:40-05-01 Conduct, rights and responsibilities: charter of student rights and responsibilities.
  - 3361:40-5-05: Conduct, rights and responsibilities: Student code of conduct.
  - 3361:50-7-01: Academic freedom: board of trustees policy statement.
- Bias Incident Response Team
- Use of Facilities Policy Manual
- #UCWeChooseLove (Video – need transcript)
2.E. – Core Component

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.

*Prompt: The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.*

*Response: UC is committed to ensuring that students, postdoctoral fellows, faculty, and staff conduct research and scholarship in an ethical manner. Research conduct and ethics are covered and enforced under University Rules 10-17-03, 10-17-05, 10-17-08, 10-17-09, 10-17-10 and 40-5-05 (see Sources for individual rules). A university policy (HRPP policy III.01) requires that all work with human subjects be reviewed and approved by our accredited Institutional Review Board (IRB) or by an external IRB with which the university has an established reliance agreement. Further, research and educational activities using vertebrate animals must have approval from our accredited Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). Approval to work on IRB and/or IACUC regulated research requires training. UC uses online training provided by the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) supplemented with in person training. Training is centrally tracked to ensure compliance.

To enhance appropriate attribution, the Office of Research partnered with the Graduate School to purchase a license for the iThenticate plagiarism detection tool. Access to the software is available to UC faculty, students, and staff to evaluate works on which they are an author or being generated
within programs, which they manage. All students and postdoctoral fellows working in National Science Foundation-funded laboratories are required to receive training in the responsible conduct of research (RCR). At the present time, this requirement is fulfilled by completion of the CITI RCR training course with certification of supplemental training from their primary mentor. Students and postdoctoral fellows funded by grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) are required to receive more extensive RCR training that includes face-to-face interaction. Colleges have developed RCR courses that meet the discipline-specific mandate of NIH, and more are currently under development. The College of Medicine mandates that all first and fifth year graduate students complete an RCR course that meets the NIH mandate. For example, the “Responsible Conduct of Research Refresher” is an informal course mandated by the College of Medicine for all 5th year graduate students.

In addition to specific RCR requirements, courses focused on research conduct and ethics are available throughout the university. Examples include a new course on foundations in bioethics that was introduced in the Fall semester (FS2017) to undergraduates in the Medical Sciences degree program within the College of Medicine (26MEDS4035). This is a required yearlong course offered to seniors and focuses on clinical ethics, research ethics, and public health ethics. Students develop ethical sensitivity and decision-making skills to resolve clinical and research ethics issues. Other courses have included:

- (GNTD 7003-001): Scientific Integrity
- (BE-7067-002) Scientific Integrity and Ethics
- 26PH 704-001: Legal and Ethical Issues
- PHIL 247: Ethics of Scientific Research
- PHIL 308: Philosophy of Science
- PHIL 4050 (3cr) / PHIL 6050 (2cr): Ethical Foundations for Researchers
- PHIL 475: Philosophy of Medicine

The Office of Research in conjunction with the Graduate School and the College Conservatory of Music recently developed 16 video vignettes that promote research and scholarly integrity. Videos were created by undergraduate students in CCM and are designed to be entertaining and
provocative. Video topics include workplace safety, professionalism, bias, and reproducible research (http://researchcompliance.uc.edu/Home/LightsCameraResearch.aspx).

The university promoted the videos in 2 public ‘premiers’ and by screening select vignettes on the Jumbotron at half time during a football game. We will continue to develop and facilitate the use of these videos and associated study guides as part of promoting an ethical culture.

There are multiple seminars, rounds, and forums across the university each year with an ethics or research integrity theme (e.g. the annual Hutton Ethics Lecture in the College of Medicine).

UC researchers are subject to both federal regulations and provisions of Ohio law regarding conflict of interest. UC requires that faculty, staff, and trainees involved in research complete an annual outside activity reporting system disclosure. This document requires researchers to provide information on any possible activities or connections that might generate a real or perceived conflict of interest in pursuing a research endeavor. When a potential conflict of interest is disclosed, it is evaluated to determine whether a management plan can be put in place to allow the research effort to go forward. A standing Conflict of Interest Committee (COIC) works with the faculty member to develop a management plan and the Vice President for Research must approve the plan. The Conflict of Interest Officer facilitates the review, management, and oversight of any identified conflicts of interest as they relate to research in accordance with federal and state rules and regulations.

2.E.2.

**Prompt: Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.**

**Response:** The university’s efforts to promote academic integrity are incorporated into university-wide efforts and begin at orientation. All incoming undergraduate students complete a survey, which includes questions on their experience with citing sources and their understanding of plagiarism. At the graduate student's international orientation conference,
plagiarism is addressed in the sessions on libraries and classroom differences. All new international students receive a handout, which includes the university’s plagiarism definition and prevention tips. Plagiarism prevention sessions are offered to students taking courses at English Language Services (ELS) as part of the “University Bound” track.

Attribution of sources is generally addressed in library instruction at all levels, both face-to-face and online. The university created the Cite Your Sources video and a number of online guides: Using Information Sources Ethically and Legally, Avoiding Plagiarism (copy of the previous, but password-protected for tracking purposes; assigned to at risk students along with the test), and Citing Your Sources. The university is currently working with the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards and College of Allied Health Sciences (CAHS) instructional designers to modify the CAHS plagiarism tutorial for university-wide use. In terms of providing faculty with the tools for plagiarism prevention and detection, the university offers the online guide Preventing Student Plagiarism: A Guide for Faculty.

In addition to plagiarism, online guides address issues related to value of information and responsible use of information sources (see, for example, “Ethics and Copyright” in the Digital Literacy Guide. “Information Has Value” in Introducing Students to Library Research points faculty to relevant resources as well as assignments and assessment techniques.

The university library system and the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards are the key partners in the implementation of the above policy and practices.

2.E.3.

Prompt: The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Response: In pursuit of its mission to develop educated and engaged citizens to enrich the global community, the University of Cincinnati aspires for its students to demonstrate high standards of integrity and conduct. As a guide to community members to obtain this objective, in spring of 2012, the
Bearcat bond was endorsed by faculty senate, graduate student governance association, and student government. The Bearcat bond identifies community values essential to fostering a safe and scholarly environment. The Bearcat bond states the following: “As a member of the University of Cincinnati, I will uphold the principles of a Just Community and the values of respect, responsibility, and inclusiveness. I will promote the highest levels of personal and academic honesty and aspire continuously to better myself, the Bearcat community, and the world.” Although there is no policy that expressly states that students are bound to the Bearcat bond, the spirit of the Bearcat bond is incorporated in university policy, and most especially, in the student code of conduct (SCOC, University policy 40-5-05).

The authority for the SCOC is found in section 3345.21 of the Revised Code. The university disciplinary system is separate and independent of any criminal or civil investigation or process. If a student is undergoing civil or criminal action for the same behavior, which forms the basis of disciplinary action at the university, the university may still continue the disciplinary process as outlined in the SCOC. The division of student affairs will regularly circulate the SCOC along with other rules, regulations, and policies, which directly affect students at the University of Cincinnati. The SCOC will be available for review in the following locations: the Office of the University Ombuds, the Office of Student Conduct and Community standards, and the university webpage.

As part of its mission, the University of Cincinnati Libraries (UCL) has also been involved in university-wide efforts to promote academic integrity with a focus on cheating, plagiarism, copyright, technology and social media. In 2011-12 four librarians served on the Task Force on Academic Integrity in the 21st Century formed by the University of Cincinnati (UC) Faculty Senate with the charge of investigating the prevalence of academic misconduct at UC and recommending a detailed action plan for strengthening Academic Integrity at UC. Selected recommendations of the Task Force have been implemented since 2012.

**Sources**
(Sources for 2.E.2 and 2.E.3 are in Box)
- University Rules:
The Human Research Protection Program (IRB, etc.) received its 3rd consecutive (5 year) full (re-) accreditation in 2015.
2.S. – Criterion 2 - Summary
The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Summary

Sources