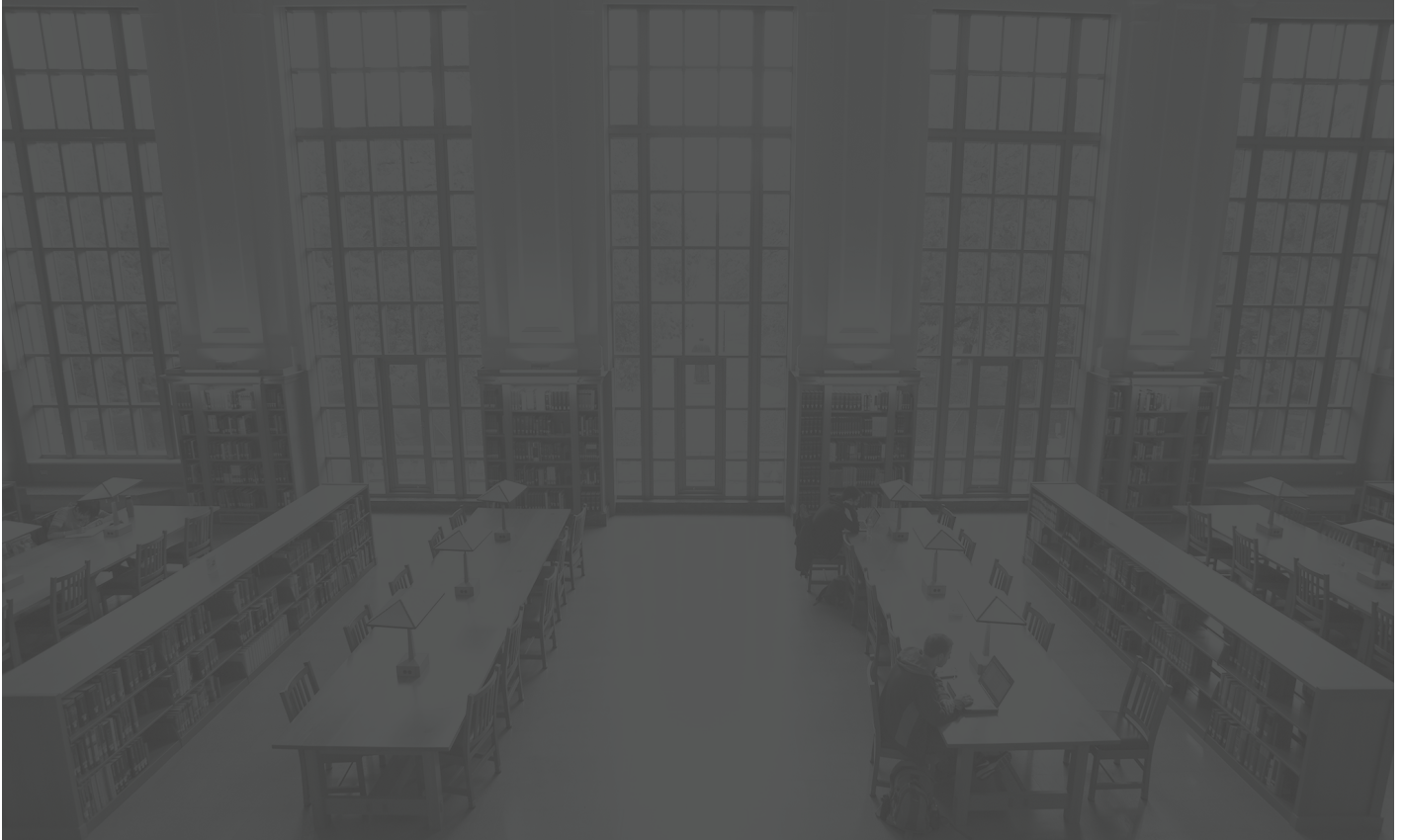


THE OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

An Introduction and Guide to Academic Unit Review

FOR COLLEGES THAT ARE SINGLE TENURE INITIATING UNITS

Revised: September 2019



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

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Preface

Academic unit review can be among the most meaningful experiences departments, schools and colleges have at The Ohio State University. These periodic studies of a unit's progress and potential are profoundly important to developing a shared future vision as colleagues come together to chart their unit's next strategic milestones. Through academic unit review, those colleagues also develop a richer understanding of how their unit's activities contribute to Ohio State's core goals of teaching and learning, research and innovation, outreach and engagement, and resource stewardship. And with that understanding, they can more effectively help their unit and the university forward.

Reviews are aligned with college strategic planning and dean appointments. Patterns of Administration, Appointments, Promotion and Tenure documents, and college strategic plans are revised or reaffirmed within one year of a dean's five-year appointment or reappointment. Academic unit reviews are scheduled every ten years. The results of the external reviews thus inform our units' strategic documents.

PURPOSE OF AN ACADEMIC UNIT REVIEW

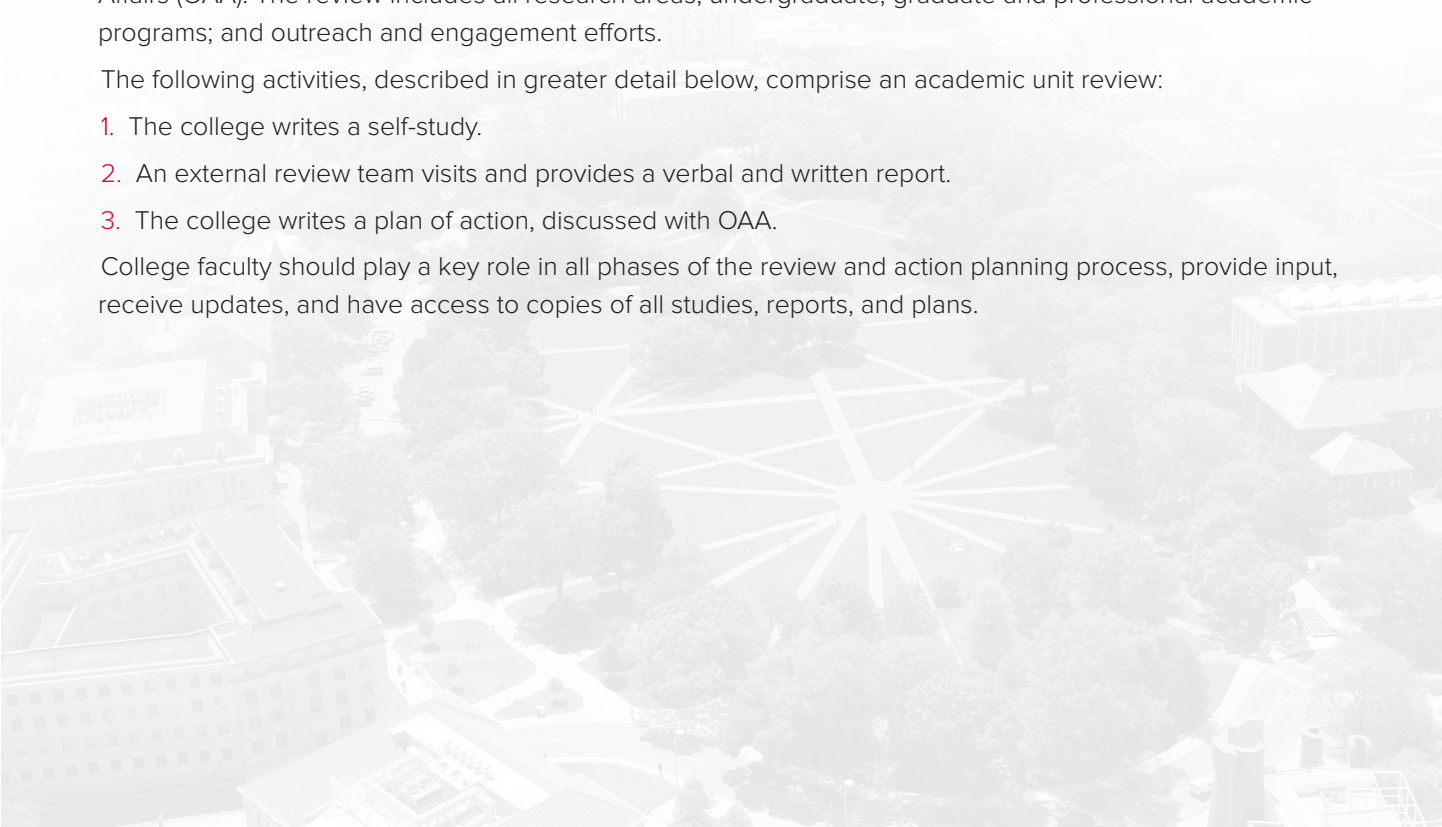
The review of an academic unit (a department or college) is an evidence-based, improvement-oriented effort to identify unit-level strengths, issues, and steps to advance its strategic goals.

Reviews are conducted on a 10-year cycle and are a collaboration of the college and the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA). The review includes all research areas; undergraduate, graduate and professional academic programs; and outreach and engagement efforts.

The following activities, described in greater detail below, comprise an academic unit review:

1. The college writes a self-study.
2. An external review team visits and provides a verbal and written report.
3. The college writes a plan of action, discussed with OAA.

College faculty should play a key role in all phases of the review and action planning process, provide input, receive updates, and have access to copies of all studies, reports, and plans.



THE SELF-STUDY

The self-study is not a description of the college. Rather, it is an evidence-based and constituent-informed analysis that leads to the identification of core strengths, key issues and potential steps to address them. A college may elect to emphasize some areas over others, guided by—for example—resource challenges or strategic plan goals. Specific questions for the self-study are provided in appendix B.

The self-study, typically 30 to 40 pages in length, will include the following sections:

Executive summary

- University Mission/Vision Statement
- Overview of the unit
- Mission and purpose
- External reputation

Faculty

- Recruitment, mentoring, and retention
- Diversity
- Intellectual life of the unit
- Trends in academic appointments

Research and Creative Expression

- How and how well is new knowledge being created
- Funding patterns and trends
- Interdisciplinary research

Educational programs and students (graduate/professional/undergraduate)

- Student academic preparation and engagement in learning
- Graduate student recruitment, time to degree, and placement
- Recent and planned curricular and programmatic changes
- Undergraduate enrollment and degree completion patterns and trends, time to degree, job placement
- Majors and minors since last review
- Instruction and student satisfaction
- Role of technology in instruction
- Use of student outcomes assessment
- Structure of advising and academic support. Optional undergraduate activities

Outreach and engagement

- Current pattern and potential activity

Infrastructure and resources

- Finances, staffing, and academic support
- Status of technology needs
- Space issues

Governance

- Recent leadership succession and impact
- Effectiveness of internal governance: Pattern of Administration and Appointments, Tenure and Promotion processes

THE EXTERNAL REVIEW TEAM VISIT

The external review team members should be considered experts in the field whose opinions will carry weight with the entire college. The team members should not have any ties to The Ohio State University. Their names and a short biographical sketch should be provided to, and approved by, the college and senior vice provost.

The external review schedule will include the following:

- An opening orientation session with the dean and a vice provost.
- Meetings with:
 - The vice president for research, senior vice provost and dean of the graduate school, vice provost and dean of undergraduate education
 - The college dean and college senior staff/leadership team
 - Tenure track faculty at varying ranks
 - Clinical/teaching/practice faculty
 - Lecturers/senior lecturers or other associated faculty
 - Representative groups of undergraduate and graduate students
 - Representatives from units or centers with collaborative research interests
- An exit session at which the external team reports findings to the dean
- A separate exit session at which the external team reports its findings to the senior vice provost, the provost's leadership team, and the associate director of institutional research

The team will have morning and afternoon breaks on the first full day, and open time in the evenings for the team to work (no social events). Please see the sample schedule in appendix C.

THE PLAN OF ACTION

The plan of action should outline both short-term and long-term steps the college will take in response to the external team's recommendations.

A plan of action document is written by the college dean and shared with the provost, senior vice provost and associate director of institutional research one week before the formal meeting. This group then meets to discuss overall reactions to the external team's report and review the plan in light of that feedback.

TIMELINE AND ACTIVITIES

APPROXIMATE TIME FRAME	RESPONSIBILITIES	COMMENTS
8-12 months prior to external review team visit	Hold one-hour kickoff meeting	Dean, senior vice provost and associate director of institutional research meet to discuss the review.
8-12 months prior	Choose date for review	OAA works with the college to select the review date.
8-11 months prior	Nominate candidates for the external review team	College nominates 8 to 10 reviewers from top programs and provides their contact and bio information as well as brief justification for nomination; list must be approved by the senior vice provost.
8-11 months prior	Invite review team	Senior vice provost extends invitations, sends instructions and selects a <i>team lead</i> . College makes travel arrangements and reserves accommodations at the Blackwell Inn
8-11 months prior	Hold logistics and data meeting	Dean meets with the associate director of institutional research and planning to discuss logistics and data for the self-study.
8-11 months prior	Launch self-study	The dean organizes and initiates the self-study. The process should be transparent to the college.
2 months prior	Develop itinerary	The college sets the visit itinerary and schedules meetings for external team (see Appendix C - Sample Schedule for External Review Team).
1-2 months prior	Distribute final materials	The senior vice provost sends the college strategic plan, self-study, data for review, and visit itinerary to the external review team.
2 weeks prior	Do final check	The senior vice provost verifies that the team has the self-study and answers any questions from the team.
Host external review team		See Appendix C - Sample Schedule for External Review Team
Within 4 weeks of visit	Receive external review team report	The external review team sends the senior vice provost a 5-10 page report on its findings. The senior vice provost shares the report with the dean.
Within 10 weeks of visit	Develop Plan of Action	See Plan of Action on page 5
1 week prior to Plan of Action	Distribute Plan of Action Document	See Plan of Action on page 5
3 months after visit	Meet to discuss Plan of Action	See Plan of Action on page 5
After Plan of Action meeting with provost	Integrate Plan of Action into college strategic plan	The dean, in consultation with the college faculty, modifies the college's strategic plan to incorporate the Plan of Action.

APPENDIX A: PRIMARY ROLES: COLLEGE AND OAA

College

- Identify external reviewers; honoraria (discipline/college norms have ranged from \$1,000-\$1,500, plus hotel and meal expenses)
- Establish strategy, process, and emphases for the self-study based on the outline and questions provided by OAA in appendix B
- Compose a brief, analytic self-study (approximately 30-40 pages, plus data and appendix)
- Secure accommodations for the team at the Blackwell Inn
 - Ensure one of the guest rooms has work space for the team, if possible
- Schedule, identify, and reserve meeting spaces for the team visit
- Arrange for transportation of the team to and from the airport and the Blackwell Inn
- Send self-study (with supporting materials) to OAA with finalized team visit schedule
- Write the first draft and final version of the plan of action document

Office of Academic Affairs

- Provide policy coordination and oversight
- Provide data and logistical support to college
- Schedule the opening meeting and exit session with external team
- Assist with review of self-study drafts, verify and approve review team and visit schedule
- Ensure appropriate sessions are on the calendars of provost's leadership team
- Serve as the primary point of contact for correspondence with team members
 - Send self-study and supporting materials (including team visit schedule) and college/institutional context and "charge" to external review team at least three weeks prior to the team visit
 - Follow up with external review team
- Schedule the plan of action meeting with the dean and embed action plan progress in annual interactions with the provost and OAA

APPENDIX B: DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR SELF-STUDY

Executive summary

- Overview of the unit and background
- What is our unifying and overarching goal (mission)?
 - What is the college mission and purpose?
 - To what degree/in what ways are the college's activities linked to the mission of the college and university?
 - When was the mission last reviewed and discussed? Is there a process for reviewing the mission and purposes of the college?
 - Does the mission effectively link college strengths in research and teaching with societal needs and opportunities for the future?
 - How deep and extensive is knowledge of the college's mission, vision, goals among its faculty members, staff, and stakeholders?
- External reputation
 - How do others see the college and how does the college want to be viewed?
 - What is the college's sense of its reputation among other institutions and peers? What are the gaps between where the college is now and where it wants to be?
 - What are the emerging trends in the discipline? What is being done and can be done to move forward and seize emerging opportunities? Do these changes in the discipline suggest a need to refocus or adjust priorities?
 - What are the college's strengths and weaknesses? How have these changed over time? What should be done?

Faculty

- Recruitment, mentoring, and retention
 - How are faculty working together to help colleagues be successful and valued members of the college?
 - What initiatives have been developed or are in place to provide mentoring and support for new faculty members, those working toward successful transition from associate to professor, and throughout the career cycle? How effective have these efforts been?
 - How has the college enhanced and addressed work-life issues for faculty (and staff)?
 - How clear is the P&T process with regard to communication and implementation?
 - What has been the impact of new hires/departures over last 3-5 years on quality (research productivity, teaching quality) and diversity? Is there a trend?
 - How do the salaries compare against benchmarks? What planning is in place to address salary compression, if it exists?
 - How does the college assess its ability to recruit and retain faculty members?
 - What does the future look like with regard to attracting and retaining top scholars?
 - How is hiring linked with program planning, research priorities, and future directions?

- Diversity
 - What is the status of efforts to enhance representation, involvement, and the climate to create a truly diverse intellectual community?
 - What are the trends in minority and gender representation among faculty members?
 - How does the college rate its ability to attract and retain a diverse faculty? What should be done to continue and/or enhance progress?
 - What is the impact of these developments on curricula, academic support, or research for the college and on student or college development?

- Intellectual life of the college
 - How well do college faculty engage and interact with each other as scholars and lifelong learners?
 - What is the degree and quality of scholarly interaction among faculty and students?
 - What special opportunities are there for sharing research and information among individuals and groups?
 - Is there a sense of community, openness to new ideas, opportunity to participate, and actual involvement at all levels of faculty rank? If not, what might be done to enhance such involvement?

- Trends in academic appointments
 - How has the proportion of classes taught by T/TT faculty changed?
 - How has the proportion of the faculty FTE changed by track?

Research and Creative Expression

- How and how well is new knowledge being created
 - What are the focal points of the research agenda?
 - What are the current strengths and weaknesses of the research program?
 - Is research increasing in quality? quantity? impact?
 - What steps must be taken and how should the college move forward over the next 5 years?

- Funding patterns and trends
 - What implications do changes/trends in levels, areas, and sources of research funding have for research quality and productivity in the college?

- Interdisciplinary activity
 - What is the current pattern and amount of interdisciplinary activity?
 - What potential activity and opportunities should be explored?
 - What are the obstacles to developing collaboration in teaching, research, and service with other programs? How can these be addressed?

Educational program and students

- Student academic preparation and engagement in learning
 - What are the trends and impacts of changes in student quality? How does the unit seek to enhance its ability to attract and retain high-quality students?
 - In what ways has the unit improved recruiting for undergraduate and graduate students? How involved are students in the academic life of the unit (research, planning, curriculum)?
 - In what ways should the unit seek to enhance interdisciplinary and international opportunities for its students?
- Graduate student recruitment, time to degree and placement
 - What is the status and track record of PhD placements in recent years? Are graduates seeking and obtaining quality positions? What are the economic/market issues?
 - What are the strengths and weaknesses of graduate student support, mentoring, and training for careers (faculty and non-faculty)?
 - Is the unit aware of career trends in its fields for graduate students? Is it taking steps to prepare them for new and different careers?
 - Is the size of the graduate program appropriate?
- Recent and planned curricular and programmatic changes
 - How have programs changed or planned to change in response to broader trends in the discipline? In what areas might the unit be a leader or innovator in moving the discipline forward?
 - To what extent are programs aligned with college and university goals? How is the unit identifying and enhancing opportunities for collaboration with other disciplines as shaped by these goals?
- Undergraduate enrollment and degree completion patterns and trends, time to degree, job placement
 - How do enrollment plans align with university/college plans?
 - Is the time to degree typical for these programs? What are the “sticking points” in undergraduate and graduate student academic performance and timely degree completion? What has been/is being/should be done to address these issues?
 - What types of employment or graduate programs are recent graduates seeking and obtaining?
- Instruction and student satisfaction
 - How are teaching loads borne across the unit? What strategies might enhance instructional quality and impact?
 - What is the distribution of regular faculty across course levels and areas? Does this distribution maximize student and faculty productivity? If not, what might be done to address this?
 - How are Student Evaluations of Instruction used?
- Role of technology in instruction
 - What progress has been made to effectively integrate technology to enhance student learning, faculty performance, and the quality of programs and services?
 - What are the unit’s goals and plans to enhance the benefits of integrated technology use?
- Student outcomes assessment
 - How does the unit gauge student performance, achievement, and satisfaction within the unit?
 - What is the current status of student outcomes assessment?
- Structure of advising and academic support. Optional undergraduate activities
 - How does the unit support and enhance the quality of advising?
 - How does the unit engage students outside of the classroom (clubs, honor societies, internships)?

Outreach and engagement

- Current pattern and potential activity
 - How well is the college connecting learning and new knowledge with the needs of external groups and society?
 - What opportunities and threats have been identified?
 - What role do alumni have in the college and its efforts to enhance its value to society?
 - How is outreach integrated into research and learning experiences to create a coherent system of knowledge dissemination and creation?

Infrastructure and resources

- Finances, staffing, and academic support
 - How do financial resources align with future college needs (human resources and infrastructure)?
- Status of technology needs
 - What are the college's current and future technology needs for instruction, research and office support?
 - What is the current and desired role of technology as a means to improve student learning and enhance overall support and productivity?
- Space issues
 - What kinds of space and facility issues does the college face?
 - What are the projections for future needs?

Governance

- Recent leadership succession and impact
 - What leadership changes have occurred in recent years? What has been the impact of these changes? What are the rules/norms that govern succession and leadership within the college?
 - What is the status of training/professional development in the college to foster effective leadership and governance? What is planned?
 - What is the process for how “service assignment” appointments are made? How are “service” appointments allocated?
- Effectiveness of internal governance: POA and AP&T
 - What findings emerge from consideration of internal governance (POA) processes? What changes or issues might be pursued and addressed?
 - Do leaders communicate and cultivate a clear vision and collaboration within the college?

APPENDIX C: SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR EXTERNAL REVIEW TEAM

Day 1

- Arrive at Port Columbus (late afternoon); transportation to the Blackwell Inn arranged by the college
- Dinner with team and team charge by a vice provost (usually starts at 6:30 p.m. at the Blackwell Bistro)

Day 2

- Meeting of dean and team
- Meeting of team and vice president for research, vice provost and dean of the graduate school, vice provost and dean of undergraduate education
- Meeting with deans of health sciences colleges (for health sciences colleges only)
- Separate meetings with faculty by sub-fields/interests as appropriate
- Meeting with junior faculty only
- Meeting with support staff
- Lunch (could be working brown bag lunch with undergraduate and then graduate students)
- Meeting with undergraduate majors (representative group)
- Meeting with graduate students (master's and doctoral separately, if appropriate)
- Meetings with other unit committees (curriculum, graduate studies, etc.)
- Facilities/program area tour
- Dinner (team only)
- Evening open – team members draft observations, conclusions, recommendations

Day 3

- Breakfast for team
- Meetings with other colleagues, centers, programs connected with the college
- Time for additional follow-up activities or requests
- Working lunch (catered or at Faculty Club near exit session location)
- Session with dean alone to give brief review of findings
- Reporting out session: senior vice provost, provost's leadership team, and associate director of institutional research
- Team departure

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Mission/Vision Statement

AUTUMN 2016

VISION

The Ohio State University is the model 21st-century public, land grant, research, urban, community engaged institution.

MISSION

The University is dedicated to:

- Creating and discovering knowledge to improve the well-being of our state, regional, national and global communities;
- Educating students through a comprehensive array of distinguished academic programs;
- Preparing a diverse student body to be leaders and engaged citizens;
- Fostering a culture of engagement and service.

We understand that diversity and inclusion are essential components of our excellence.

VALUES

Shared values are the commitments made by the University community in how we conduct our work.

At The Ohio State University we value:

- Excellence
- Diversity in people and of ideas
- Inclusion
- Access and affordability
- Innovation
- Collaboration and multidisciplinary endeavor
- Integrity, transparency, and trust

CORE GOALS

Four institution-wide goals are fundamental to the University's vision, mission and future success:

Teaching and Learning: to provide an unsurpassed, student-centered learning experience led by engaged world-class faculty and staff, and enhanced by a globally diverse student body.

Research and Innovation: to create distinctive and internationally recognized contributions to the advancement of fundamental knowledge and scholarship and toward solutions of the world's most pressing problems.

Outreach and Engagement: to advance a culture of engagement and collaboration involving the exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of reciprocity with the citizens and institutions of Ohio, the nation, and the world.

Resource Stewardship: to be an affordable public university, recognized for financial sustainability, unparalleled management of human and physical resources, and operational efficiency and effectiveness.

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