

UT MARTIN ASSESSMENT NEWSLETTER

MAY – JUNE – JULY 2025

Our most important job is to help our students succeed!

SACSCOC names new President as Dr. Belle Wheelan steps down

Stephen L. Pruitt has been named the next president of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). Pruitt comes to the role with more than 30 years of professional experience in the field of education. With skills and experience ranging from leading classroom instruction to, most recently, serving as the president of the Southern Regional Education Board, Pruitt's knowledge of all aspects of education makes him highly qualified to lead SACSCOC as it enters this new chapter. Pruitt will be officially installed as president of SACSCOC on August 1, 2025, following the retirement of Belle S. Wheelan, who served in the role for 20 years.

Five Year Program Reviews

During the 2025 Spring semester, Five Year Program Reviews were completed for five academic programs: **Interdisciplinary Studies, English, Spanish, Mass Media and Strategic Communications, and Agricultural Business**. All programs on campus that are not otherwise externally accredited are required to complete a program review every five years, as mandated by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. The outline for the self-study, the Quality Assurance Funding rubrics, and all other information related to the review is included on the Accreditation and Assessment website [https://www.utm.edu/offices-and-services/accreditation-and-assessment/institutional-](https://www.utm.edu/offices-and-services/accreditation-and-assessment/institutional-assessment/assessment-forms.php)

[assessment/assessment-forms.php](https://www.utm.edu/offices-and-services/accreditation-and-assessment/assessment-forms.php) The review requires an external evaluator with experience as a department chair or dean from outside the state of Tennessee and a group of three faculty from our colleges outside the college in which the program resides.

We would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to the various faculty members who served on these review teams: **Ronne Cox, Shalmali Bandyopadhyay, Adnan Rasool, Caren Nichter, Conrad Pegues, Lori Littleton, Danny Morris, Mary Giles, Brian Johnson, Angie MacKewn, Joseph Ostenson, Amber Moore, Steve Elliott, Brian Carroll, and Harriette Spiegel**. I believe they will all tell you that serving as a reviewer is an interesting learning experience and a great way to learn more about other programs on our campus.

Follow-up

Each program identified in its self-study the strengths and weaknesses it perceived and formulated its own recommendations for responding to them. The Quality Assurance Funding Rubric and the written report submitted by the Program Review Committee serve both as an external validation of the unit's self-assessment and as a source for insights which the academic unit might not perceive. Upon completion of the Five-Year Program Review, programs are expected to submit an Improvement Plan. This plan delineates how the program plans to address the weaknesses that were identified in the program review. For the programs that were reviewed in 2024 (**Honors, Psychology, Philosophy, and International Programs**), your Improvement Plans and One-Year Follow-

up are due asap if you have not already submitted them.

Next up

The programs scheduled for review in 2026 are **Biological Science, Chemistry, and Political Science**. If you are interested in serving on one of these review teams, please contact Patty Flowers at pflowers@utm.edu to get your name on the list of potential reviewers.

General Education Reviews

The Committee on Instruction will be conducting a Five-Year Review of the courses in the Communication category of UT Martin's General Education Core beginning in late Fall semester. This five-year review is designed to ensure that these courses continue to achieve the curricular goals of the General Education Core and the stated purpose of the category in which the course resides.

From Data to Decisions

The Mathematics Learning Center employs 10-12 tutors, usually Mathematics or Engineering majors, to provide in-person and online tutoring. These tutors are proficient in all freshman and sophomore mathematics and statistics courses. In Fall 2023, the average number of sign-in for tutoring was 61.2 per week, exceeding the benchmark of 50. Spring 2024 saw this average number drop, likely due to weather-related closings. The MLC also provides access to and assistance in the use of the various tools, textbooks, calculators, and software for all mathematics and statistics courses at UT Martin. The MLC rents graphing calculators for use in classes, averaging 87.2 per week in Fall 023 and 89.3 per week in Spring 2024. Additionally, the MLC provides test proctoring for the Mathematics and Statistics department for

students making up a test, taking a test early, or for students taking self-paced mathematics courses offered at night.

The STEM Center for Teaching and Learning has as one of its goals to inspire and motivate students across all levels of PK-16 to study, learn, and apply the concepts of mathematics and science. To achieve this goal, the STEM Center provides workshops for area teachers. The director follows up over the follow academic year to ask participants to self-report on the number of students they teach, the strategies / activities they implement, and whether these strategies / activities were successful. Teachers attending the summer 2024 workshops teach approximately 3874 students annually and successfully implemented at least one strategy / activity.

In the Reading Center, students enrolled in Reading 100 are asked to identify and apply specific skills and study strategies associated with a variety of texts in order to improve their reading skills. They achieve this through the development of a Reading Strategies Portfolio. In Fall 2023, 74 students completed the Reading Strategies Portfolio, with an average score of 76.0%. In Spring 2024, 43 students completed the Reading Strategies Portfolio with an average score of 80.0%. A score of 70% is considered passing.

High Impact Practices

If you are utilizing high impact practices in your coursework, please make certain that you are assessing and reporting on those practices. High impact practices include first year seminars and experiences, capstone courses and projects, collaborative assignments and projects, common intellectual experiences, diversity/global learning, internships, learning communities, service/community-based learning, undergraduate research, writing intensive courses, and e-portfolios. We are very interested in your experiences with these practices.