3.3.1 The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in each of the following areas (**Institutional Effectiveness**):
3.3.1.4 research within its educational mission, if appropriate

Off-Site Committee Comments

Troy University states that research by both students and faculty is valued, and that fact is stated in its Mission Statement. Furthermore, in the Faculty Handbook, Section 3.4.5 it states that the faculty are expected to be actively involved in intellectual and scholarly activities. However, there was no evidence provided that indicated that there were any stated outcomes for either faculty or student research. The faculty does list their accomplishments in their annual reports, but, again, there are no specific outcomes or assessment of the research function of the university as a whole.   Additionally, there was not sufficient documentation to indicate that the results of the assessments were used to improve either student or faculty research.

NARRATIVE

Troy University complies with this standard in a manner that is consistent with its mission. Troy University has considered it appropriate to set and assess research, creative work and other scholarly goals at individual faculty, student and college levels. The institution has approached the assessment of research as an individual faculty requirement that is assessed through annual evaluations, tenure and promotion reviews, reported through annual plans for development, and tenure and promotion decisions. Research has not been considered core to the mission of Troy University, but rather a tool by which Troy University faculty and students promote discovery and exploration of knowledge and its application to lifelong success. Troy University encourages and expects both faculty and students to be actively engaged in research, creative work and other scholarly pursuits. Although Troy University does not state or assess research outcomes at the university level, this narrative will provide evidence that faculty and student research outcomes are stated and assessed, with feedback from research assessments leading to improved outcomes, which is seen as appropriate to meet the University's mission.
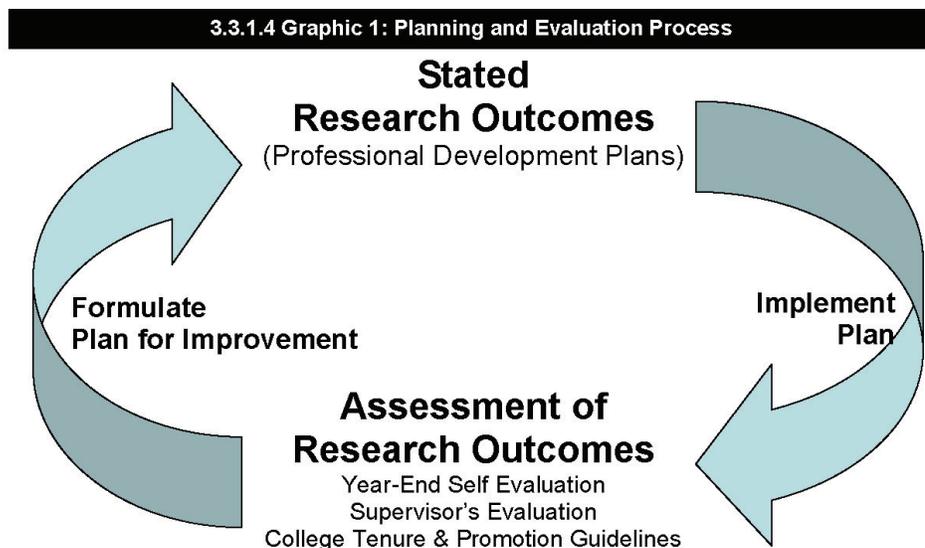
Faculty Research

Teaching effectiveness is recognized as the most important attribute of a Troy University faculty member, as stated in Section 3.4.2 of the Troy University Faculty Handbook. Troy University recognizes a requisite for effective teaching is active involvement in the intellectual and scholarly developments within an individual's (faculty member's) field. The University further defines the need for professional development of its faculty in Section

3.9.6 of the Faculty Handbook. Included in this section are specific materials on the need for ongoing research as a faculty member of the University.

Faculty research, creative work and scholarly activities, as shown in the Section 3.4.5 of the Faculty Handbook, are evaluated as part of the tenure and promotion process. Troy University offers diverse program offerings across multiple locations and delivery modes reaching a diverse student population. Research, creative work and scholarly activities considered appropriate in one's discipline/program may not be recognized as appropriate in another. Therefore, faculty committees in each of the five colleges have developed college-level guidelines for tenure and promotion. The college guidelines serve to clearly communicate expectations required for tenure or promotion within the college's disciplines. Within this context, Troy University has found it appropriate to annually evaluate faculty research, creative work and scholarly activities. Faculty members are required to submit accumulated annual evaluations as part of the documentation required for the tenure and promotion review. An explanation of the University's annual faculty evaluation procedure is provided.

Annual evaluation of faculty research, creative work and scholarly activities is repeated through a systematic process as shown in graphic 1.

3.3.1.4 Graphic 1: Planning and Evaluation Process

Stated
Research Outcomes
(Professional Development Plans)

Implement Plan

Formulate Plan for Improvement

Assessment of
Research Outcomes
Year-End Self Evaluation
Supervisor's Evaluation
College Tenure & Promotion Guidelines

Research, creative work and scholarly activity outcomes expected of each faculty member are stated in professional development plans (PDPs) submitted to the supervisor/department chair/dean each August. The professional development plan provides full-time faculty members with the opportunity to state specific objectives related to teaching, research and creative work, service, and professional competence and activities based upon written expectations, and to receive constructive and documented feedback from supervisors. The professional development plan requires the faculty member to prioritize goals for research and creative work, as well as goals for teaching, service and professional competence and activities. Research outcomes are reported by the faculty member in the year-end evaluation. This self-evaluation is completed and submitted in May to the faculty member's supervisor/department chair/dean. Faculty supervisors review the extent to which research outcomes were achieved and identify areas needing improvement or attention. Supervisors' suggestions for improvement, driven by research expectations within the college's guidelines for tenure and promotion are incorporated in the next year's Professional Development Plan. Summaries of how individual faculty member's Professional Development Plans and Annual Evaluations have resulted in improved research outcomes may be found in "Samples of Individual Faculty Member's Assessment of Research Through Annual Evaluations, Professional Development Plans and Year End Self Evaluations" provided.
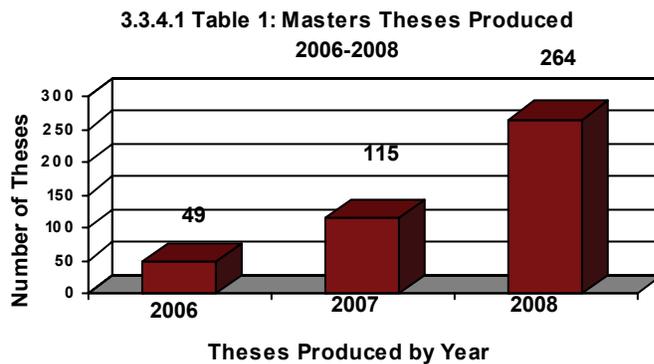
Student Research

As research, creative work and scholarly inquiry are considered necessary for effective teaching; likewise, student research is valued as a means to promote discovery and exploration of knowledge and its application to life-long success. Students are required to successfully fulfill the requirements of research assignments embedded throughout their courses of study. All graduate students are expected to perform stated outcomes that reflect the ability to do research in a specialization. As stated in the Graduate Catalog, p.17, each graduate program requires a dedicated research course in which students must earn a grade a "B" or better in order to meet degree requirements. Each of the following programs has stated program outcomes related to student research:

- Elementary Education - Education Specialist
- Master's in Adult Education
- Master's in Post-Secondary Education
- Master's in Public Administration

Data from academic year 2007-2008 reflects that 82% of students enrolled in graduate research methods courses earned a "B" or better. Data indicates that not all

graduate students meet the stated University expectations in the first attempt, but they must achieve the program grade expectation in order to graduate.

In additional to research methods classes, most graduate programs have a thesis option. The Graduate Thesis Guidelines, established by graduate faculty across disciplines and coordinated through the Graduate School, clearly provide expectations for all submitted theses. Faculty members serving on a student's thesis committee provide necessary guidance and assurance that the submitted thesis meets stated and professional standards of research. Continuous feedback among faculty, students and the Graduate School helps to clarify the expectations and improve the quality of student research at Troy University. Evidence of increased student interest in research may be found in the increased number of students submitting theses (3.3.1.4 Table 1). The number of Troy University theses approved by the University has grown from 49 in 2006 to 264 in 2008.

3.3.4.1 Table 1: Masters Theses Produced 2006-2008

Student research is a requisite for most graduate programs. Graduate students must demonstrate their ability to conduct a research study through the successful completion of the research methods course. In additional to the completion of a research methods course, increasing numbers of students are self selecting to conduct research through a thesis. The numbers of successfully completed theses provides evidence of students' ability to conduct research. Each program's stated student learning outcomes, outcome measures, data analysis and program adjustments further evidence the assessment conducted in support of student research. The continued refinement of the Graduate Thesis Guidelines through annual faculty feedback is believed to also contribute to the ease of thesis preparation for students and faculty, thesis chairs and committees.

Just as it is appropriate to assess student learning at the program level and not at the level of the institution as a whole, it seems appropriate for research to be assessed at the faculty level and not at the institutional level.

Summary

Troy University recognizes the role of research, creative work and scholarly inquiry in effective teaching and enhanced learning in the delivery of its mission. The University assesses research, creative work and scholarly activity among its faculty and students through individual faculty and student assessment goals. A systematic and ongoing method of identifying individual faculty and student research expectations, assessing achievement of those expectations, and using annual assessment to improve individual-specific research expectations is used across the University to appropriately meet its mission.

Troy University respectfully finds that it is in compliance with this comprehensive standard.

3.3.1.4 Supporting Documentation Available Online	Location
Faculty Evaluation Process	http://sacs.troy.edu/reference/03-07-03/Pilot-Template-Annual-Faculty-Eval-Plan.pdf
Faculty Handbook, 2008 Edition	http://sacs.troy.edu/reference/Faculty-Handbook-2008-Edition.pdf
Graduate Catalog, 2008-2009	http://www.troy.edu/catalogs/0809grad_pdf/
Graduate Thesis Guidelines	http://sacs.troy.edu/reference/thesisguidelines.pdf
Promotion and Tenure Criteria	http://sacs.troy.edu/reference/03-03-01/college-criteria_scholarship/
Program Effectiveness Report - Elementary Education - Education Specialist	http://sacs.troy.edu/reference/03-03-01/academic_programs/Elementary-Education-EdS-PER.pdf
Program Effectiveness Report - Master's in Adult Education	http://sacs.troy.edu/reference/03-03-01/academic_programs/Master-in-Adult-Education-PER.pdf
Program Effectiveness Report - Master's in Post-Secondary Education	http://sacs.troy.edu/reference/03-03-01/academic_programs/MS-in-Post-Secondary-Education-PER.pdf
Program Effectiveness Report - Master's in Public Administration	http://sacs.troy.edu/reference/03-03-01/academic_programs/Master-of-Public-Admin-PER.pdf
Samples of Individual Faculty Member's Assessment of Research Through Annual Evaluations, Professional Development Plans and Year End Self Evaluations	http://sacs.troy.edu/reference/fr03-03-01-04/Samples-of-Fac-Assessment-of-Research.pdf