



**Minot State**  
**UNIVERSITY**

# Introduction

**HLC Report**  
*October 3, 2017*



Minot State University is a public university dedicated to excellence in education, scholarship, and community engagement achieved through rigorous academic experiences, active learning environments, commitment to public service, and a vibrant campus life. Minot State is committed to its recently developed strategic plan, *Empowering Generations*, and its mission (stated directly above) and vision (stated directly below).

Minot State University will:

- Deliver high-quality education where, when, and how it is needed to a diverse, multi-generational student population.
- Prepare students and the institution for the evolving social and technological challenges of the world.
- Inspire scholarship and creative activity among students, faculty, and staff.
- Empower graduates with a distinctive combination of professional expertise and broad-based education to support varied careers and productive lives.

Since its founding in 1913 as a two-year normal school, Minot State University has evolved steadily in fulfilling its commitment to serving North Dakota and creating opportunities for its citizens. Today, Minot State University offers a wide array of high-quality undergraduate and graduate programs, including communication disorders, information systems, nursing, sports management, accounting, fine arts, criminal justice, the sciences, education, addiction studies, computer science, and so much more. Minot State University also offers numerous opportunities

for students to engage in academic research, service learning, civic activities, performances, clubs and organizations, volunteerism, internships, and more.

In addition, Minot State University's tree-lined campus provides students a friendly and personal atmosphere. Students find many of the cultural advantages usually associated with larger cities, including a symphony orchestra, an opera company, three art galleries, summer theatre and mainstage productions, numerous choral groups, and a city band. Students can also stay fit in the Wellness Center, study and learn in the Gordon B. Olson Library, hang out in the Student Center, and attend athletic events on campus at the Dome or Herb Parker Stadium, or off campus at Maysa Arena, Corbett Field, South Hill Softball Complex, or area golf courses.

This year's freshmen class has an average ACT score of 22 and an average high school GPA of 3.37. They are currently participating in our First-Year Learning Communities. In August, they took part in our new Welcome Week activities as well as our first ever Student Convocation. We are excited to see what they accomplish during their time at Minot State University while they work with our outstanding and supportive faculty and staff. We also anticipate their accomplishments after graduation as they return to tell their stories as Minot State University alumni.

At Minot State University, we are proud of the success of our faculty, staff, and students, and we are eager to share our story with you as a part of the Higher Learning Commission's comprehensive evaluation.



# Assurance Argument

*October 3, 2017*

**Assurance Argument**  
**Minot State University - ND**

10/2/2017

## 1 - Mission

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The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

### 1.A - Core Component 1.A

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The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

1. The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.
2. The institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
3. The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission.  
(This sub-component may be addressed by reference to the response to Criterion 5.C.1.)

### Argument

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Minot State University (MSU) developed a new strategic mission and vision during the 2015-17 academic years. New mission and vision statements require approval by the North Dakota University System (NDUS) State Board of Higher Education (SBHE); MSU's new mission and vision were approved at the [September 29, 2016 meeting](#).

***Mission:*** *Minot State University is a public university dedicated to excellence in education, scholarship, and community engagement achieved through rigorous academic experiences, active learning environments, commitment to public service, and a vibrant campus life.*

***Vision:*** *Minot State University will:*

1. *Deliver high-quality education where, when, and how it is needed to a diverse, multi-generational student population.*
2. *Prepare students and the institution for the evolving social and technological challenges of the world.*
3. *Inspire scholarship and creative activity among students, faculty, and staff.*
4. *Empower graduates with a distinctive combination of professional expertise and broad-based education to support varied careers and productive lives.*

In fall 2015, under the direction of the President's Staff and led by College of Business Dean Dr. Jacek Mrozik, faculty, staff, students, and community leaders participated throughout the development process, engaging in the [project council](#), [subcommittees](#), and [focus groups](#). In addition to focus groups, [surveys](#) were conducted to gather information from various stakeholders. Throughout the process, [open forums](#) were held with the campus to share information and gather feedback. [Students](#) were encouraged to attend as well. Additionally, the [MSU Board of Regents](#) discussed the draft and provided input. MSU's Office of Public Information distributed [Strategic Planning newsletters](#) to the campus. Various committees,

including University Cabinet, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and Student Government Association, were provided regular updates on the process during their meetings. MSU presented its new mission, vision, and goals, called *Empowering Generations*, to the MSU community at the August 2016 Convocation.

In late September and early October of 2016, Dr. Mrozik attended meetings of Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and Student Government Association to discuss next steps and to seek volunteers to develop action items for each of the six goals. Nearly 90 faculty, staff, and students volunteered to serve on the six goal [committees](#). Beginning in November 2016, the campus developed implementation plans with milestones, actionable items, deadlines, people responsible, and resources. In January 2017, the implementation plans were presented to the campus in an open forum. In February and March 2017, the plans were refined and [announced to campus](#). The new strategic plan, [Empowering Generations](#), was finalized and released on the MSU website in May 2017.

Consistent with the new mission, MSU strives for educational excellence by seeking external [accreditation](#) for ten academic programs or areas. Departments/divisions assess their programs each year and make adjustments based on results. A new General Education program was implemented in 2014 and is being refined and improved over time. [Faculty are highly qualified](#) in their educational or professional experience, scholarship, and service. New faculty participate in a [nine-month orientation program](#) to help acclimate them to their new roles at MSU. Faculty can apply for [small research grants](#) to conduct research, and both faculty and staff are eligible for advanced study grants to pursue professional development. More detailed information about faculty professional opportunities is available in Criterion 3C.

In 2010, MSU launched the Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning (CETL) to provide opportunities and support for students, faculty, and staff to enhance the higher education experience and to increase student success. Successful programs supported by [CETL](#) include first-year experience learning communities, engaged teaching support for faculty and staff, campus and community engagement opportunities for students, and peer mentoring and peer tutoring services. Recently, CETL, in coordination with Enrollment Services and a team of faculty and staff representatives, formed a committee to revise New Student Orientation. The directors of CETL and of Enrollment Services began overseeing orientation during the fall semester of 2016. An improved [New Student Orientation](#) and [Welcome Week](#) is in place for 2017-18 new students.

Excellence in student advising is a priority at MSU. The College of Business (CoB) employs a full-time [academic advisor](#) for all CoB students, and CoB faculty advise students on additional academic support needs and career options. Students are highly [satisfied](#) with their advising experience in the CoB. In the College of Education and Health Sciences (CEHS) and the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), faculty provide the majority of advising for their students.

In 2014-15, the [Academic Advising Council](#) (AAC) was established to investigate best practices in student advising. Consultants from the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) visited MSU to assess current advising practices. They provided an [Academic Advising Program Review Report](#) with recommendations for improving MSU's advising. Following the visit, the

AAC formed three subcommittees: Professional Training, Advisory Syllabus, and Recognition. During 2016-17, the [Professional Training subcommittee](#) offered a seminar on the use of the Academic Planner, a tool in Campus Connection that allows students and advisors to work together in sequencing courses towards degree completion. They also offered a session for advisors on topics related to student financial aid. The Advisory Syllabus subcommittee developed advisor cards to inform students of advisor contact information, office hours, special interests, etc. The Recognition group is responsible for finding sponsorship for the two advising awards given annually, starting in 2015-16. The AAC is developing their own strategic plan that will align with *Empowering Generations*, and they will be proposing a new or revised model of advising for campus.

MSU offers students rigorous academic experiences including a robust [Honors program](#), a growing program for [study abroad](#), and preparation for advanced degrees through [pre-professional programs](#). The institution supports state, regional, and national [student competitions](#) and [faculty/student research collaborations](#). Students participate in active learning experiences through [student teaching](#), [clinical practice](#), and [internships](#). [Student organizations and clubs](#) offer additional variety and opportunity for students to actively apply their new knowledge and skills.

MSU faculty, staff, and students are committed to public service. Current public service activities include first-year experience projects with the Upper Souris Wildlife Refuge, YWCA, Roosevelt Park Zoo, ReStore, and Habitat for Humanity. The [CoB Leadership Program](#) completes team [projects](#) each year. Additionally, HON 391H Community Problem-Solving and HON 395H Citizenship and Service include [various service-based projects](#). The MSU Athletic department and [student athletes engage](#) in several public service activities such as Night of Dream Catchers, Read in the Classrooms, and elementary school fun nights. The Social Work department annually participates in [Freezin' for a Reason](#), while the Sociology Department sponsors a monthly [Democracy Café](#) for the community. [MSU Student organizations](#) are also involved in a variety of public services activities. MSU encourages and supports faculty, staff, and students' annual participation in the [National Day of Service](#). The [Engagement Honor Roll](#) is an opportunity for MSU students to receive recognition through distinction on their transcripts for participating in [engagement activities](#).

MSU enjoys a vibrant campus with activities and events for a variety of interests. For example, the [Residence Hall staff](#) provides multiple activities for new and returning students throughout the semester. Students can attend athletic events, theater productions, music concerts and recitals, and special events such as Homecoming and [NOTSTOCK](#).

[MSU's enrollment profile](#) is consistent with its mission. MSU's [marketing](#) targets area high school graduates, community college transfers, and Minot Air Force Base personnel as well as national and international students interested in quality education at an affordable price. Scholarships are available for students with high academic achievement, and graduate assistantships are granted to select [graduate students](#). MSU has multiple [articulation agreements](#) and memoranda of understanding and participates in [dual credit](#) with area schools and the [NDUS Collaborate Student Program](#).



MSU's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission statement. Because MSU was in the process of developing a new strategic plan during 2015-17, the planning and budgeting process aligned with the previous strategic plan, *Vision 2013*. However, because of an unexpected drastic decline in the North Dakota economy caused by reduced tax revenue due to the drop in oil and commodity prices, the [NDUS faced continuous budget reductions](#) beginning in spring 2016. MSU addressed these continued reductions as proactively as possible, supporting the new mission statement by creating a broad plan to prioritize sustaining the high quality student experience. Budgets of academic programs and student services were maintained by making required reductions through faculty/staff attrition, retirements, and limited layoffs. The entire campus worked together to streamline internal budgets. The process was inclusive, and President Shirley kept the campus informed about reductions through [campus email](#) and multiple campus forums. More detailed information about this process is available in Criterion 5C.

Now that the strategic plan is in place, the former Planning and Budget Council is being reimagined as the [Strategic Planning and Budget Council](#). The Council will begin meeting fall 2017 so the campus can plan and budget together to meet the goals of *Empowering Generations*.

## Sources

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- Academic Advising Committee Workshops
- Academic Advising Council
- Accreditation
- Articulation Agreements
- Board of Regents Minutes Strategic Planning
- Budget Cuts Media Clips
- CETL Engagement Experiences by Major
- CETL FYE final report 2015
- CoB Advising
- CoB Leadership Program
- CoB Leadership Program Projects
- CoB Undergraduate Exit Survey
- Collaborative Student Program
- Communication Disorders Clinic
- Copy of Residence Hall Educational Program Report from 2014-15
- Democracy Cafe
- Dual Credit
- Email from President Shirley on Budget Reductions
- Empowering Generations
- Engagement Honor Roll
- Enrollment Services Marketing Piece
- Faculty Credentials 2017-18
- Faculty Small Research Grant Awards
- Faculty Staff Announcements Regarding Strategic Planning
- Freezin' for a Reason

- Graduate School Graduate Assistantships
- Honors Program
- Implementation Teams for Strategic Planning Goals
- MSU NOTSTOCK.2016
- MSU Poster Session Abstracts
- MSU Preprofessional programs
- NACADA Academic Advising Program Review Report
- National Day of Service
- NDUS Approval of MSU New Mission
- New Faculty Orientation Fall 2016
- New Student Orientation Program
- Public Service in Student Organizations
- Recruiting Calendar
- Serviced Based Honors Courses
- Strategic Planning and Budget Council
- Strategic Planning Focus Group Sessions
- Strategic Planning Newsletters
- Strategic Planning Project Council
- Strategic Planning Survey Results
- Strategic Planning Trifold
- Student Athlete Engagement
- Student Competitions
- Student Enrollment Profile Fall 2016
- Student Internships Clinicals
- Student Notifications Regarding Strategic Planning
- Student Organizations and Clubs Provide Active Learning Opportunities
- Student Teaching Placements Spring 2017
- Study Abroad and Study Tour Opportunities
- Welcome Week

## 1.B - Core Component 1.B

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The mission is articulated publicly.

1. The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.
2. The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development, and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.

### Argument

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Minot State University's (MSU) new strategic plan, [Empowering Generations](#), is supported by four vision statements and six goals; each goal includes objectives and action items. Subcommittees comprised of faculty, staff, and students developed these specific objectives and action plans. Action plans include steps for completion, responsibility, timeline, and resources. During 2017-18, the Strategic Planning and Budget Council will be formed to address recommendations, establish priorities, and implement the plan.

*Empowering Generations* is shared publicly through the MSU website, the current [2017-18 academic catalogs](#), and the [Faculty Handbook](#). Additionally, the mission and vision are [displayed](#) in campus buildings. At the fall 2016 Convocation, and the fall meeting of the MSU Board of Regents, President Steven Shirley and Dean Jacek Mrozik shared a presentation, video, and [trifold publication](#) of the mission and vision.

*Empowering Generations* will guide MSU for the next several years. The plan emphasizes the institutional mission, identifying the campus-wide priority of excellence in education, scholarship, and community engagement. As identified in the mission, the constituents of MSU are the public, which includes current and future students and their parents (locally, statewide, regionally, nationally, and internationally); area businesses, government, and organizations; and special populations such as Native Americans, veterans, active military and families, and first-generation students. Goals and objectives set forth articulate specific direction for the institution:

Goal 1: Meet the educational needs of the local, regional, national, and global communities.

- Objective 1: Provide and promote high-quality academic programs that empower students through engagement in relevant, meaningful hands-on learning experiences.
- Objective 2: Determine the educational needs of future students and allocate resources accordingly.
- Objective 3: Develop and offer curricular and co-curricular programs supporting diverse, multi-generational learners.

Goal 2: Recruit, retain, and value well-qualified students, faculty, and staff.

- Objective 1: Support and increase student enrollment and retention.
- Objective 2: Support and value commitment to teaching, scholarship, and service.
- Objective 3: Offer professional development support to encourage commitment to the mission and vision.

Goal 3: Create an institutional environment that supports students, faculty, and staff success.

- Objective 1: Provide support and institutional resources to accommodate all learners.
- Objective 2: Improve student retention and graduation rates.
- Objective 3: Design, implement, and support technology resources to ensure security of data and the physical plant.
- Objective 4: Empower students, faculty, and staff to seek and secure external funding.
- Objective 5: Expand an environment that values and supports diversity.

Goal 4: Promote and support the well-being of students, faculty, and staff, enabling them to address challenges across generations.

- Objective 1: Provide the necessary resources to enrich the campus experience and enhance campus life.
- Objective 2: Promote campus opportunities that encourage balance in academics, work, and social life.
- Objective 3: Meet the health, nutrition, physical environment, and safety needs of the campus community.

Goal 5: Foster and grow collaborative partnerships locally, regionally, nationally, and globally.

- Objective 1: Orchestrate collaborative efforts with P-12 partners and other institutions of higher education.
- Objective 2: Cultivate and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with local, regional, national, global communities, organizations, and partners.
- Objective 3: Leverage the expertise of individuals, groups, and organizations within the community to enhance learning and to strengthen university operations.

Goal 6: Promote and recognize commitment to public service.

- Objective 1: Build vibrant university and community relationships through meaningful service and volunteer projects.
- Objective 2: Engage the community by offering and hosting activities and events in athletics, performing arts, culture, and academics.
- Objective 3: Acknowledge the service achievements of the campus community.

MSU established specific attainable action items for each objective. For example, to support and increase student enrollment and retention, MSU will offer multi-year scholarship packages to recruit and retain quality students. MSU will also prioritize resources to create more

opportunities for student on-campus work, internships, and research. First-year student retention and six-year graduation rate goals have been established for 2023 as 80% and 50%, respectively. MSU will expand its 'grow your own' program to entice faculty to pursue advanced degrees and reevaluate the role of full-time vs. part-time faculty in stabilizing academic program delivery. To encourage professional development, MSU will reevaluate guidelines for staff professional growth.

## Sources

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- Empowering Generations
- Mission Signage for Buildings
- Strategic Plan 2017-18 Catalog
- Strategic Planning Trifold

## 1.C - Core Component 1.C

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The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

1. The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.
2. The institution's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

### Argument

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Minot State University's (MSU) mission and vision state, *Minot State University will deliver high-quality education where, when, and how it is needed to a diverse, multi-generational student population*. MSU will meet the needs of a wide range of communities through curricular and co-curricular programs supporting diverse and multi-generational learners (Goal 1, Objective 3). Also, MSU pledges to create an institutional environment that supports students, faculty, and staff success by providing support and institutional resources to accommodate all learners (Goal 3, Objective 1).

Most relevant to this criterion, however, is MSU's continued effort to *expand* an environment that values and supports diversity (Goal 3, Objective 5). MSU embraces an inclusive environment. The Faculty Senate website includes a diversity statement, crafted and approved in 2006:

*Minot State University embraces a broad concept of diversity, which can be seen as variances in ethnicity, age, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and geographic area. MSU also believes that diversity is an evolving concept that engages viewpoints, perspectives, values, religious beliefs, and backgrounds of the global community. The MSU community values a spirit of inclusivity.*

Two campus committees are dedicated to diversity, and General Education coursework focusing on diversity is required of all undergraduate students. In addition, other campus processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within the mission and for the constituencies MSU serves.

The [University Diversity Committee](#) supports the MSU strategic objective *to create an environment that values and supports diversity*. The committee hosts an [Advocacy Network](#), a team of MSU employees dedicated to developing and supporting a diverse, multicultural, and inclusive campus community. They also support the [Safe Zone](#) team; this team fosters a welcoming and supportive campus for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, and intersex (LGBTQI) students, staff, and faculty. The University Diversity Committee also hosts the annual [International Cultural Celebration](#).

The [Faculty Senate Curricular Diversity and Campus Climate Committee](#) (CDCCC) monitors *curricular and co-curricular programs supporting diverse, multi-generational learners*. The duties of the CDCCC include:

- To attend to diversity on campus, which includes approval of Diversity Requirement courses (prior to 2014-15) and examination of course offerings and experiences.
- To review information submitted by transfer students and make decisions regarding whether a transfer course can be used to meet a Diversity Requirement (applies only to students pursuing a degree prior to 2014-15 catalog).
- To assess the overall effectiveness of the university's curricular-based diversity initiatives.
- To work with the University Diversity Committee to create a more visible, coherent variety of campus programs in diversity awareness and inclusivity.

Beginning in 2014-15, diversity coursework was included in the Interconnecting Perspectives (IP) section of General Education. The goal of Interconnecting Perspectives is to understand diversity, both globally and within the United States, through applied educational experience and coursework.

MSU offers [Multicultural Support Services](#) in both the Native American Cultural Center and the Office of International Programs. Both offices provide support services to diverse student populations and international students; and promote multicultural awareness through student groups, such as the Native American Culture Club. These offices host special events including the annual [Pow Wow](#); [Tastes, Sights, and Sounds of Religious Celebrations around the World](#); and [Global Photo Contest](#).

MSU students, faculty, and staff are involved in community activities such as the [Norsk Hostfest](#) and the [Minot Area Council for International Visitors](#) (MACIV). The MACIV is a joint effort between the greater Minot community and Minot State University to create professional development and cultural enrichment opportunities for international visitors and for the peoples of the upper western plains region of the United States and Canada.

With close proximity to the Minot Air Force Base (MAFB), MSU supports active military and veterans of all armed forces branches, as well as their families. Courses are offered on the [MAFB](#), and MSU retains an academic advisor onsite to assist students. On campus, MSU is proud to host [Veterans Services](#). With a full-time director, Veterans Services provides guidance for active duty, transitioning active duty, veterans, dependents, and spouses into the university education system.

MSU's [POWER Center](#) offers opportunities and services designed for students who are first-generation college bound, from low-income families, or who have disabilities. POWER strives to optimize individual growth with campus engagement, community involvement, and enriched cultural experiences. POWER students work with a dedicated advising team to address their individual academic needs for succeeding at MSU.

MSU's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves. Hiring and educational practices adhere to the [EEO/AA](#) and Title IX regulations as well as the North Dakota Century Code for the rights of North Dakota Veterans.

Students admitted to MSU are acclimated to college life through New Student Orientation and Welcome Week. Once enrolled, freshmen and transfer students with fewer than 24 credits continue their transition to college in required [first-year learning communities](#), which promote connectivity among academic courses. The Office of International Programs provides international students a [supplemental orientation session](#) designed specifically for their needs, and they have the option to take a learning community just for first-year international students called "Explore, Expand, Express Yourself." This learning community is designed to help international students have a positive transition to Minot State University.

MSU's inclusive approach to diversity focuses on awareness, education, and involvement. Student and campus organizations sponsor activities, social events, and lectures. The [Democracy Café](#), [POWER's Diversity Series](#) monthly panel discussions, and the annual [Pow Wow](#) are a few examples. Additionally, the MSU Wellness Center advocates and supports [spiritual wellness](#) through various venues.

## Sources

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- 65+ Tuition Waiver
- About MACIV
- Advocacy Network
- CEL MAFB
- CETL First-Year Experience Course Offerings 2015-16 and 2016-17
- Collaborative Student Program
- Democracy Cafe
- Faculty Senate Bylaws Appendix B Article III Curricular Diversity and Campus Climate Committee
- Global Sights Photo Contest
- Inside Newsletter MC Taste
- International Cultural Celebration
- MSU Diversity Committee
- Multicultural Support Services
- Native American Club Annual Pow Wow and Honor Dance
- Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Policy Statement
- Norsk Hostfest
- Office of International Programs Mandatory Orientation
- Power Center PIOs
- POWER Center Programs
- Safe Zones
- Spiritual Wellness
- Veterans Services



## 1.D - Core Component 1.D

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The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

1. Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

### Argument

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As articulated in its mission statement, *Minot State University is a public university dedicated to excellence in education, scholarship, and community engagement achieved through rigorous academic experiences, active learning environments, commitment to public service, and a vibrant campus life.* In adhering to this mission, MSU's actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public and entails a public obligation.

MSU students gain experience and enhanced educational opportunities through hands-on work experience. [Internships](#), [clinical experiences](#), and [student teaching](#) integrate students' knowledge learned in the classroom with the application of knowledge and skills learned in the professional setting. Experiential learning benefits both students and employers. Students gain real-world learning and networking opportunities, while employers observe up-to-date knowledge and practices.

Also discussed in Criterion 1A, MSU students, faculty, and staff engage in a wealth of activities to serve the public. MSU hosts campus and community constituents in several annual activities and ceremonies to honor groups and individuals. Such events include [Earth Day](#), [Poppy Day](#), [Flag Day](#), [Martin Luther King Jr. Day](#), [Pow Wow](#), and [Veterans Day service](#). Campus groups collaborate with community agencies and groups in various [service learning](#) experiences. First-year students, together with MSU faculty and staff, service the Minot community through volunteer projects at Roosevelt Park Zoo, Lostwood Wildlife Refuge, Habitat for Humanity, YWCA, and other locations. Similarly, student teams, led by faculty, participate annually in the College of Business Leadership Academy engaging in community service [projects](#). As noted in Criterion 1A, student athletes, student organizations, and students in Honors courses also provide service to the community; all participants are listed on the Engagement Honor Roll. These experiences help introduce students to MSU's culture of engagement and service while contributing to the Minot community.

MSU avails its facilities to the community for a variety of events. The MSU Dome hosts the annual [Pow Wow](#), [Special Olympics Basketball](#), various [athletic camps](#), [Futurepalooza](#),

[Marketplace for Kids](#), and [regional and state high school basketball tournaments](#) among other events. The Dome is open to the public for walking, and the athletic department often hosts public relations events in the Dome atrium.

MSU is home to two art galleries, the Gordon B. Olson Library Gallery and the Hartnett Hall Gallery, managed by the [Northwest Art Center](#). Best known for its diverse contemporary and traditional art, The Northwest Art Center hosts exhibitions by local, regional, national, and international artists. [Flat Tail Press](#) manages a gallery space located in the administration building on the Minot State University campus. The Flat Tail Press Gallery hosts three to four exhibitions a year focusing primarily on works on paper. On Tuesday, June 6, 2017, a groundbreaking ceremony was held for the [new Northwest Art Center](#) located in the lower level of the MSU Gordon B. Olson Library. This new center will include the Walter Piehl Gallery and provide permanent space for MSU's premier Native American collection.

The MSU swimming pool holds a family swim time on Friday evenings, hosts the [Minot Swim Club](#) swimming lessons, and provides training space for the Minot Fire Department and Minot Divers. Minot community members are also welcome to use the Barnes and Noble Bookstore and to take advantage of MSU's food services, including Beaver Creek Café, Buckshot's, and Starbucks.

Several campus buildings are used for local and state meetings and community events. The College of Business Slaaten Boardroom regularly hosts community groups including Integrity Viking, Strengthen ND, Minot Area Development Corporation, and Burdick Job Corps. Ann Nicole Nelson Hall is home to the Minot Symphony Orchestra, the Brass Band of Minot, the Western Plains Opera Company, and several area dance recitals. Additionally, [MSU's Music Division](#) annually hosts the Northwest Music Festival, State Music Competition, and the fall Jazz Festival throughout Old Main.

[Hartnett Hall](#) is home to the Region 8 One-Act Play Contest each November and the Region 8 Speech Contest each April. Aleshire Theatre hosts theatrical performances during fall and spring, while the MSU Amphitheater hosts Summer Theatre productions every year (52 years in 2017). The Art and Biology Departments host campus events, [NOTSTOCK](#) and [Darwin Day](#), to provide access and exposure to the arts and sciences to the region. [College for Kids](#) provides over 300 area children each summer with educational opportunities on the MSU campus.

MSU is a public, not-for-profit, state-assisted institution; as such MSU does not generate financial returns for its investors, contribute to a related or parent organization, or support external interests.

## Sources

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- CoB Leadership Program Projects
- College for Kids
- Darwin Day
- Earth Day 2017

- Events Ann Nicole Nelson Hall
- Events in Hartnett Hall
- Flat Tail Press
- Future Palooza
- Marketplace for Kids 2017
- Martin Luther King, Jr
- Minot Swim Club
- MSU Dome Events for Regional Activities
- MSU Flag Day Event
- MSU NOTSTOCK.2016
- Native American Club Annual Pow Wow and Honor Dance
- New Northwest Art Center
- Northwest Art Center
- Poppy Day 2017
- Service Projects of Students
- Special Olympics Basketball in Dome
- Student Internships Clinicals
- Student Teaching Placements Spring 2017
- Summer Athletic Camps
- Veterans Week 2016 Poster

## 1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

### Summary

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Minot State University (MSU) recently finalized its mission, vision, and goals as part of the institution's strategic plan, *Empowering Generations*. This plan guides the institution's operations and is articulated publicly on the MSU website, in academic catalogs, the Faculty Handbook, and on the walls of all campus buildings.

MSU Mission Statement: *Minot State University is a public university dedicated to excellence in education, scholarship, and community engagement achieved through rigorous academic experiences, active learning environments, commitment to public service, and a vibrant campus life.*

The six goals of the strategic plan focus on 1) educational needs; 2) recruiting, retaining, and valuing faculty, staff, and students; 3) institutional environment; 4) well-being; 5) partnerships, and 6) public service. The objectives and action plans to meet these goals provide additional detail.

Minot State University strives for educational excellence through external accreditation and program review, annual internal program assessment, and excellent faculty members who have opportunity for professional development. These faculty provide rigorous academic experiences in small classes that often include opportunities for faculty-student research, clinical experiences, and internships.

MSU's student body is composed of area high school graduates, community college transfers, Minot Air Force Base personnel and dependents, as well as students from throughout the U.S., Canada, and many international locations. Student support services are widespread and meet a variety of student needs. In addition, a recently revised and improved New Student Orientation and Welcome Week, as well as first-year learning communities, support first-year students' transition to campus.

Minot State University provides engagement with diversity in and out of class. Diversity coursework is included in MSU's General Education program. Two university committees focus on diversity; one committee addresses diversity primarily through campus activities and support groups, while the other committee monitors diversity in curricular and co-curricular programs. The Native American Cultural Center and the Office of International Programs provide support services and promote multicultural awareness, often with special events.

Public service is integral to the mission of MSU and has been a cornerstone of MSU since its founding. All first-year students participate in a community service project, and other service opportunities occur in courses, leaderships programs, student clubs and organizations, and athletics. Service can be documented on the Engagement Honor Roll and noted on student transcripts.

MSU's campus is vibrant with activities and events year-round, including summer theater, athletic events and camps, mainstage theater performances, NOTSTOCK (signature arts event), Darwin Day, and musical concerts, recitals, ensembles, and operas. MSU often opens its doors to the community for celebrations, athletic events, musical performances, youth swimming lessons, and more, which further increases its community involvement.

Minot State University is committed to its new mission and strategic plan. Moving forward, the Strategic Planning and Budget Council will facilitate implementation of the strategic plan and communicate progress, results, and investments in the plan.

## **Sources**

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*There are no sources.*

## 2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

### 2.A - Core Component 2.A

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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

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Minot State University's (MSU) policies are based on the principles of integrity, accountability, and good stewardship of public resources. These principles derive from [North Dakota University System \(NDUS\) Procedures and State Board of Higher Education \(SBHE\) Policies](#) that govern all of North Dakota's public universities and colleges and are also articulated in the [MSU Faculty and Staff Code of Conduct](#).

#### Financial

MSU is transparent about its financial affairs and follows systematic practices to ensure ethical and responsible use of state resources. Established practices govern typical financial activities. [NDUS](#) requires [annual fraud and internal control training](#) for all employees. Completion of this training is monitored by MSU's Assistant Vice President for Business Services/Controller and the NDUS Compliance Officer through an electronic system. Expenditures follow clear processes that require review and multiple signatures. For major purchases, MSU follows the [state mandated procurement process](#). MSU submits a [Bi-Annual Financial Report](#) to the NDUS on the status of university finances and reserves. The NDUS and State Auditor follow a regular schedule of external audits of all MSU business activities, revenues, and expenditures. The university's budget, including faculty and staff salaries, is published yearly and publicly available in the Gordon B. Olson Library. The university presents costs to students carefully on the [Financial Aid Office](#), [Business Office](#), and [Enrollment Services](#) website pages. [Housing and meal plans](#) offer a variety of options, and costs are clearly presented on the website.

During calendar year 2016, NDUS institutions were charged with two reduction "allotments," totaling 6.55% or approximately \$3.22 million from the 2015-17 biennial budget. In addition, during the course of fiscal year 2016-17, revenue projections resulted in the State Legislature preparing higher education spending bills for the 2017-19 biennium with reduced appropriations of approximately 18%. Institutions in the ND system were directed to prepare their 2017-19 budgets accordingly. Information about the reductions and the process MSU used to respond was shared with the campus community through [emails from President Steven Shirley](#) and [open campus forums](#). At the conclusion of the ND Legislative Session, the [final MSU general fund](#)

[and tuition budget for the 2017-19 biennium](#) was \$36.3 million. The budget for all funds was \$54.9 million.

MSU's ad hoc [Budget Recommendation Committee](#) (BRC) was established in April 2016 as an advisory group to the President and President's Staff. The BRC's responsibility was to review financial and university data in order to provide recommendations for comprehensive reductions due to the above-mentioned statewide budget cuts. The committee met regularly and included broad campus representation. [Recommendations were made in spring 2016](#), and many of those BRC recommendations were implemented at various times over the period between spring 2016 and spring 2017. In spring 2017 the committee's composition was expanded to include two additional faculty elected by the Faculty Senate. During spring 2017, the committee met weekly. Committee members shared documentation with their respective units, keeping campus apprised of the process. Committee meetings were open and well attended. The BRC concluded its work in March 2017 and shared a list of [recommendations](#) with the campus and President's Staff.

Final budget reductions were determined and implemented by the President's Staff beginning in May 2017. The final list of campus-wide budget reductions included position eliminations or freezes and reallocations, as well as reduced operating expenses. The most important consideration when making the reductions was to avoid affecting student support and activities, and to retain employees. Open positions were not filled as long as the unit could continue to operate with limited interruption. MSU offered an early retirement program for faculty and staff and a "voluntary reduction in hours" program for staff. Proposals received were evaluated to determine whether they benefited the strategic direction of the university. The President's Staff chose to begin organizational restructuring by eliminating 4.5 academic dean positions. All five employees were reassigned to other positions on campus. To ensure coverage of responsibilities previously performed by deans, two new assistant vice president positions were created to assist the Vice President for Academic Affairs; and department/division chairs were assigned additional duties.

## **Academics**

Beginning with the Registrar's Office, MSU seeks fair and systematic application of policies on [graduate](#) and [undergraduate](#) transfer credit, [academic credit](#), and [graduation requirements](#). These policies are articulated in the MSU online catalogs. [Graduate Student Appeals](#) and undergraduate [Student Rights](#) committees meet regularly and follow specific guidelines for addressing [student requests](#). Degree requirements are set by the faculty, implemented through the Registrar's Office, and managed through Campus Connection software. Students and advisors can check student progress through the [Academic Advisement Report](#) (also known as Degree Audit or Academic Requirements Report). To ensure integrity of student data, faculty and staff who require access to student records are required to undergo [FERPA training](#); employees are not allowed access to Campus Connection or Starfish until they complete this training. To ensure continuity, transparency, and accurate record keeping of course and program requirements, the Faculty Senate [Curriculum Committee](#) includes a representative from the Registrar's Office. New [curriculum software](#) tracks course and program proposals and changes and ensures review at each level, from initial proposal to final Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) approval.

## **Data Integrity**

The North Dakota University System and MSU's IT Central systematically [audit](#) MSU's computer servers to ensure security of confidential data. This audit report is not open for public review other than through a public record request process. All NDUS employees are responsible for reviewing the [NDUS Computer and Network Usage Policy](#); and MSU students, faculty, and staff are responsible for reviewing [IT Policies](#) available on the MSU website. As noted above, all university employees undergo mandatory training on FERPA.

## **Personnel**

University hiring and personnel policies and practices also reflect the institution's commitment to integrity. Overall, the university operates under the auspices of the NDUS and follows [SBHE policy](#) in all matters, including those related to personnel. Guided by the MSU Director of Human Resources, MSU administrators and supervisors adhere to the [NDUS Human Resource Policy Manual](#) and the [MSU Policies/Procedures for Managing Human Resources and Risk Management Issues](#). In addition to the manual, MSU's Office of Human Resources (HR) provides assistance in faculty and staff searches. Recently, HR added [Frontline-ApplicantTrack](#), an online applicant tracking tool to streamline MSU's application and review process. The HR office conducts various training sessions for Veterans Preference, position advertisements, EEO wording and process, formal and clear employee grievance procedures, and Title IX procedures.

The VPAA manages faculty affairs and evaluations, including publishing a clear [evaluation schedule and timeline](#). The VPAA works with the Faculty Senate in overseeing [faculty evaluation, tenure, and promotion policies](#).

## **Auxiliary Functions**

MSU's auxiliary services include the bookstore (Barnes & Noble), food services (Sodexo), and student housing. The bookstore reports to the Vice President for Administration and Finance (VPAF) and meets regularly with him to review contract status and to ensure that MSU's academic needs are being served. Additionally, the bookstore surveys students and explores emerging resources, including open educational resources materials. Food services and student housing report to the Vice President for Student Affairs (VPSA). Food services regularly surveys students, faculty, and staff to assess needs and dining interests. Student Housing regularly surveys students and meets with students via the Residence Hall Association to assess needs and interests of students living on campus. Student Housing is also engaged in professional associations to help identify emerging trends in Residence Life and housing.

## **Processes for Fair and Ethical Behavior**

Policy and processes for fair and ethical behavior are governed by SBHE policy, which outlines the appointment of board members and the autonomy of the governing board. MSU prepares a biennial budget request in accordance with NDUS and state requirements. Following legislative decisions each session, the NDUS and MSU allocate resources accordingly. Per SBHE policy, MSU is required to keep a minimum in [financial reserves](#). MSU's administration has achieved a



reserve of 5% of the previous year 2016-17 general fund and tuition budget. The reserve is required to mitigate future large unexpected downturns in tuition revenues and/or state funding. MSU documents its budget, reserves, and financial status in regular reports to the NDUS office as noted in the Annual Financial Report above.

MSU employs a full-time [Title IX Coordinator](#) who oversees campus Title IX policy and procedure. Additionally, MSU has appointed four Deputy Title IX Coordinators in the areas of human resources, security, student affairs, and athletics. An extensive [Title IX Policy Manual](#) is available on the MSU website. This policy manual seeks to combine and implement the legal, regulatory, and policy requirements regarding sexual discrimination contained within both federal and state legislation and the NDUS policies. Steps for reporting cases of harassment are outlined in the policy.

The Title IX Coordinator also oversees MSU's [Keep U Safe Program](#). Keep U Safe's mission is to foster a safe and inclusive campus community by eradicating all forms of oppression, harassment, and bias. The program provides students with the necessary resources detailing the behaviors that affect them and the entire campus community. To better the campus community, the Keep U Safe Program offers students the opportunity to become strong advocates.

## Sources

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- Academic Advisement Report
- Academic Affairs Calendars 2016-17, 2017-18
- Academic Credit
- Annual Financial Reports June 2016
- BRC Recommendations June 2016
- BRC Recommendations March 2017
- Business Office Internal Controls
- Business Office Services
- Cost of Attendance
- Curriculum Committee Membership
- Curriculum Software
- Email from President Shirley on Budget Reductions
- Email from President Shirley on Final Budget Forum
- Email from President Shirley to form BRC
- Enrollment Services Marketing Piece
- Enrollment Services Tuition Information
- Faculty Senate Bylaws Appendix B Article IV Faculty Evaluation
- Faculty Senate Bylaws Appendix B Article V-VI Tenure and Promotion
- Financial Reserve
- Fraud and Conduct Training for all NDUS Institutions
- Frontline Appli-Track
- Graduate Grade Appeal Procedures
- Graduate School Transfer Credit Policy
- Graduation Requirements

- Human Resource Policy Manual
- IT Central Policies
- Keep U Safe Program
- Minot NASM
- MSU Employee Code of Conduct
- NDUS Human Resource Policy Manual
- NDUS Procedures and SBHE Policies
- NDUS Procurement Process
- Position Budget Changes
- Residence Halls
- SBHE 600 Personnel Policies
- SBHE Policies Beliefs and Values
- SBHE Policy 1202.1 Acceptable Use of IT Resources
- SBHE Policy 611.10 Employee Responsibility and Activities Theft Fraud Abuse Waste
- Student Rights Minutes Examples
- Student Rights to Privacy (FERPA)
- Summary of Estimated 2017-18 Annual Budget
- Title IX
- Title IX Policy Manual
- Transfer Student Guidelines
- Undergraduate Grade Appeal Procedures

## 2.B - Core Component 2.B

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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

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Minot State University (MSU) clearly and completely discloses information to multiple audiences through its comprehensive website, print media, and social media. MSU's website is managed by a Web Graphic Designer in IT Central (ITC). The web design software, Cascade CMS, was recently upgraded, and ITC is training administrative assistants and other support staff to maintain some sites. Additionally, ITC purchased a program to locate misspellings and broken links within webpages. Print and social media are managed by the Director of Marketing. The Director of Marketing works closely with ITC, Publication and Design Services, and the Public Information Office to ensure message and brand consistency. MSU uses social media tools such as email, Facebook, and Twitter to share MSU's achievements, announcements, and activities with students, staff, faculty, and community members. Marketing employs a Social Media Specialist to maintain MSU's main [Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram feeds](#).

[MSU's website home page](#) provides direction to constituents depending on their relationship to MSU and their informational needs. [About Us](#) directs constituents to websites for Enrollment Services, Faculty and Staff Directory, the Fact Book, Student Consumer Information, Strategic Plan, and Accreditation. [Academics and Departments](#) provides information about academic programs, academic advising, General Education, and links to distance education offerings, for example. Most links from the home page are connected to the [Graduate and Undergraduate Online Catalogs](#) as well. Additionally, the MSU home page provides constituents quick access to [Student Services](#), including campus resources such as housing, bookstore, Business Office, and academic services. Athletics also has a link on the home page. The site is searchable via Google.

Prospective students and parents can view the [Enrollment Services website](#) and the [Enrollment Services marketing brochure](#) to access admissions requirements, degree offerings, residence hall information, costs, and other student resources. The graduate and undergraduate online catalogs outline institutional requirements, including General Education, and detailed academic program information and requirements. [Catalogs from previous years](#) are also archived for easy access. [Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs](#) provide an overview for each department/division, including its mission and vision, and the academic programs housed within the department/division. Each academic program lists student learning goals and outcomes, curriculum requirements, and external discipline specific accreditation, if applicable. Course descriptions and faculty credentials are also provided in each catalog.

Faculty and staff offices, emails, and phone numbers are listed in the [MSU directory](#), which is printed yearly and available on the website. In addition, departments maintain [profiles of](#)

[faculty](#) on their web pages. As noted above, academic credentials of MSU faculty are listed in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs. The [MSU Fact Book](#) provides a comprehensive look at majors and degrees, faculty and staff, information resources, and retention and graduation statistics.

Current MSU tuition and fees, housing, and board costs are provided on the [Financial Aid](#), [Business Office](#), [Enrollment Services](#), and [Residence Life](#) web pages. Costs for graduate students are also explained in the [Graduate Catalog](#).

On the website, a link to [Student Consumer Information](#) provides constituents a wealth of information including reference to student financial assistance, intercollegiate athletic programs, campus security, student outcomes, and general information. As noted in the strategic plan, MSU's mission statement clearly identifies MSU as a comprehensive public university in the North Dakota University System (NDUS). Externally, the [NDUS also identifies MSU](#) as part of the state system of public universities, while the North Dakota Century Code recognizes MSU as one of four normal schools serving the state. The [Vice President for Academic Affairs \(VPAA\) maintains a website](#) relaying to the public a wealth of MSU information including academic policies and institutional committees. The [Vice President for Student Affairs \(VPSA\) website](#) describes the variety of services and resources provided through the student affairs arm of MSU. All MSU students are directed to the [MSU Student Handbook](#) for guidance on MSU policies, student conduct code, and various academic and support services.

MSU's regional accreditation with the [Higher Learning Commission](#) and discipline-specific national accreditations are documented on the [MSU website](#), in the [Undergraduate catalog](#), and in a [published brochure](#).

MSU's Advancement publishes a semiannual magazine, [Connections](#), which presents current activities, campus events, program initiatives, alumni accomplishments and profiles of student work and achievements. Students, faculty, staff, and alumni are featured monthly on the MSU homepage for their community engagement, teaching, and research activities. The MSU Alumni Office and MSU Beaver Boosters organize events for in-state and out-of-state alumni to profile current MSU initiatives, activities, and athletic successes. Events include annual [homecoming reunions](#), the [athletic luncheon series](#), alumni gatherings in [other towns](#) and [states](#), and alumni highlighted in media.

The Public Information Office publicizes program activities through short news releases ("newsbytes"), the [Inside newsletter](#), and daily announcements. These news items are sent to the campus community, public officials, and legislators. Press releases are sent to the multiple media outlets, Minot Area Chamber of Commerce and the Minot Community Development Corporation. The Inside newsletter is sent electronically to all faculty and staff at both MSU and Dakota College of Bottineau, our campus affiliate. Student Government Association (SGA) members, state universities and governmental leaders, and major MSU donors also receive the Inside newsletter. MSU maintains a public [Online Calendar of Events](#) listing events occurring on campus by all organizations and events sponsored by campus held off campus.

## Sources

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- 2016-17 Factbook
- 2017 Spring Connections Magazine
- About Us
- Academic Affairs Website
- Accreditation
- Accreditation Brochure
- Accreditation listed in 2016-17 Undergraduate Catalog
- Archived Catalogs
- Athletic Luncheon Series
- Bismarck Gathering
- Business Office Services
- Cost of Attendance
- Daily Announcements Newsbytes
- Empowering Generations
- Enrollment Services Marketing Piece
- Enrollment Services Tuition Information
- Enrollment Services Webpage
- Examples of MSU Social Media Use
- Facebook Page
- Faculty and Staff Directory Web
- Faculty Profiles on Website
- Graduate School Financial
- HLC Accreditation Website
- Homecoming Reunions
- Inside Newsletter
- Las Vegas and Arizona Events
- MSU Home Page
- MSU Website Academics & Departments
- MSU Website Student Services
- NDUS University
- Online Calendar of Events
- Residence Halls
- Student Affairs Webpage
- Student Consumer Information

## 2.C - Core Component 2.C

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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

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Minot State University (MSU) belongs to the North Dakota University System (NDUS), which is governed by the [State Board of Higher Education](#) (SBHE). The SBHE sets system policy and direction.

The [NDUS Strategic Plan](#), carried out by the SBHE and NDUS institutions, encourages all campuses to deliver degrees that are the best value in the nation, provide programs people want, equip students for success, and maximize the strengths of the unified system. The SBHE recognizes each campus has its own mission and its own unique set of programs that can be advantageous for the campuses and their communities. Sharing services and utilizing collaboration among institutions provides even greater advantages to the institutions.

The SBHE considers input from a wide cross-section of stakeholders. For example, the NDUS Strategic Plan development considered input from over 100 individual and group interviews covering internal and external constituents. The SBHE is composed of [representatives](#) selected from across the state to represent diverse interests and includes a faculty representative, a staff representative, and a student representative. The SBHE meets monthly, either face-to-face or online.

The SBHE sets policy and direction for the NDUS system and assumes control, oversight, and administration of the institutions in the system. The SBHE delegates control and authority to the NDUS Chancellor and the presidents of each campus. Responsibilities and authority of the SBHE and individual campuses are detailed in [SBHE policy 100.6](#).

The governing board delegates significant authority to the institution president regarding the day-to-day operation of the campus, its goals, and its [administrative structure](#). SBHE policy on [Academic Freedom 401.1](#) grants faculty the freedom to pursue research, publication, and teaching in their subject or field of competence: "Cognizant of their responsibilities to their profession and to their institution, faculty accept certain obligations; they should attempt to be

accurate, to exercise sound judgment and respect the rights of others to express opinions. They must make clear that their actions, their statements and their memberships do not necessarily represent views of the academic community. If there are controls to be exercised over faculty members, they are the controls of personal integrity and the judgment of their colleagues.”

## Sources

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- Faculty Handbook Administrative Structure Section A Part V
- NDUS SBHE Mission and Vision
- NDUS Strategic Plan
- SBHE Members
- SBHE Policy 100.6 Authority and Responsibility
- SBHE Policy 401.1 Academic Freedom

## 2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

### Argument

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Minot State University's (MSU) [mission and vision](#) promotes freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning. MSU graduates are prepared for future social and technological challenges, inspired to seek scholarly and creative activities, and empowered through their distinctive professional expertise and broad based education. MSU is dedicated to excellence in education, scholarship, and community engagement.

Through the [Faculty Senate Constitution](#), MSU faculty are afforded academic freedom as an "unhampered opportunity to seek the truth in any field." Tenure appointments are made annually and reflect the rights of faculty to continuous academic employment, and both tenured and probationary faculty complete annual evaluations. MSU's [Faculty Senate Tenure committee](#) oversees the tenure process while the [NDUS regulates academic freedom and tenure](#) throughout the university system. Ongoing faculty scholarship is supported through department and college funding, [small research grants](#), [external grants](#), and the [sabbatical program](#).

The [MSU Student Handbook](#) promotes academic honesty (page 25) reminding students that MSU is committed to academic integrity. Further, the student conduct policy (page 47) outlines MSU's expectations of its students: "Students enrolled at Minot State University will be expected to conform to the ordinary rules of polite society; to be truthful; to respect the rights of others; to maintain integrity in scholastic work; and to have regard for the preservation of state property as well as the private property of others. A student is expected to be responsible for his/her actions whether acting individually or in a group."

### Sources

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- External Grant Funds for Faculty and Student Research and Study
- Faculty Senate Appendix A Constitution
- Faculty Senate Bylaws Appendix B Article III Tenure Committee
- Faculty Senate Bylaws Appendix B Article V Tenure
- Faculty Small Research Grant Awards
- MSU Strategic Plan Mission and Vision
- Sabbatical Program Description and Recipients
- SBHE 605.1 Academic Freedom and Tenure



## 2.E - Core Component 2.E

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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

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Minot State University's (MSU) [Institutional Review Board](#) (IRB) is responsible for creating and implementing policies and procedures for protection of research with human subjects. These policies and procedures comply with regulations for human subjects research established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations 45 CFR 46. IRB membership includes faculty representation from all three colleges. One member is a licensed attorney, and another member is from the Minot community. The committee meets regularly, and individual members review IRB requests for approval as they are received. MSU subscribes to [Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative \(CITI\) program](#) for IRB workshops. Faculty and students conducting research with human subjects are required to complete the Social/Behavioral Research for Investigators and Key Personnel training module.

In spring 2017, the [North Dakota University System \(NDUS\) updated policy](#) requiring institutions receiving any external funding or support for research to adopt a policy that requires Responsible Conduct in Research (RCR) training for all undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral researchers participating in sponsored research activities. [MSU's policy](#) has been updated to align with the NDUS policy. Additionally, MSU has a [Responsible Conduct in Research](#) policy, regarding policy and procedures for research misconduct, which complies with the Office of Research Integrity requirements for institutions to remain eligible for federal grant funding.

MSU's [Faculty Handbook](#) outlines policies and faculty responsibilities regarding [Research with Human Subjects](#), Intellectual Property, [Copyright](#), and Responsible Conduct in Research. The [Intellectual Property policy](#) is currently being updated to align with the updated NDUS policy. Expectations for faculty research practice are outlined in the [Faculty Handbook Section F](#). Included are sections on research and development, research with human subjects, allegations of misconduct, conflict of interest, patent, and copyright. These areas all fall under the oversight of the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

MSU's [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee](#) (IACUC) oversees research involving animals. Committee members include science and non-science faculty and a local veterinarian. IACUC reports to the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) on an [annual basis](#) as to the status and compliance of the animal care program at MSU.

Through 2012, MSU research protocol was overseen by the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (RSP). More recently, the roles of RSP have been shared by IRB, IACUC, Grants and Contracts, and the VPAA. In recognition of the need to coordinate these functions, the MSU strategic plan, [Empowering Generations](#), calls for reinstatement of an RSP office and plans to “empower students, faculty, and staff to seek and secure external funding.”

MSU expects students to demonstrate academic honesty and integrity in all matters. The MSU Catalog clearly addresses [academic honesty](#), with specific attention to plagiarism and academic integrity. Faculty emphasize academic integrity and plagiarism in syllabi, particularly in [English 120](#) and in [survey history courses](#), which include paper writing with documented sources. English 120 is part of the [required General Education core](#) while History survey courses are part of [MSU's foundational General Education](#) requirements. In addition, the developmental portion of MSU's General Education requires students complete a course that satisfies [information literacy](#), including proper selection, usage, and citation of source materials. These requirements ensure that students will receive instruction in at least two, and likely more than two, courses in which research methods, source citation, and plagiarism are discussed by faculty. Faculty design of online courses also includes [beta testing](#) that specifically checks for inclusion of the campus academic honesty policy

To assist in identifying plagiarism, faculty have the option of requiring Safe Assign through Blackboard for any format of course, online or face-to-face, since all courses have Blackboard shells created at the start of each term. Concerns about plagiarism and academic honesty are first handled by faculty according to policy listed in syllabi and in the [MSU Catalog](#). This policy lets faculty document plagiarism, determine penalties, and file documentation with academic chairs. In addition, faculty and chairs have the option of referring serious issues related to plagiarism or academic honesty to the Office of Student Affairs to be considered under the student conduct policy for Academic Honesty, articulated on page 25 of the [Student Handbook](#).

In addition to these expectations, MSU faculty recognize that in the Internet age, an ongoing need exists for education to examine and address academic honesty. Discussion of these concerns has appeared in different contexts, including a College of Business (CoB) meeting where an ad hoc committee was established to study the issues, a College of Arts and Science (CAS) chairs meeting where the issue between students was discussed, and in the Faculty Senate General Education committee's discussions related to approval of courses satisfying the critical writing and informational literacy requirements. As on many campuses, when instances of plagiarism occur, faculty inevitably discuss the need to do more to educate students about academic honesty. Although informal discussions continue to occur, the potential for this topic to become a formal discussion at the 2017-18 Faculty Senate meetings is being considered.

## Sources

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- Academic Honesty 2017-18 Catalog
- Academic Honesty Student Handbook 2017-18
- Annual Report to OLAW 2016
- Empowering Generations

- English 120 Syllabus
- Faculty Handbook Policies Section F part II
- Faculty Handbook Section F Policies Part X Human Subjects Research
- Faculty Handbook Section F Policies Part XV Copyright
- General Education CCS2 Website
- General Education FC3 History
- General Education Required Core English 120
- History 212 Syllabus
- Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
- Intellectual Property Policy
- IRB
- Online Course Beta Test Showing Academic Honesty Requirement
- Online Training for IRB, IACUC, and RCR
- Responsible Conduct in Research Policy
- SBHE Policy 410.0 RCR
- SBHE Policy 810.0 Appropriated Funds Reserve

## **2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary**

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

### **Summary**

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Minot State University (MSU) acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible. Fair and ethical behavior are governed by the State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) policy, which MSU follows. Further, MSU adheres to all policies regarding financial, personnel, academic, auxiliary, and other functions.

MSU's governing board is the SBHE, which sets policies and direction for the institutions in the North Dakota University System (NDUS) and is comprised of leaders from around the state. The SBHE delegates day-to-day management of the NDUS institutions to the Chancellor and campus presidents, who shoulder much of the responsibility for carrying out the NDUS strategic plan as well as the unique missions of the campuses.

Training and clear processes that include reviews and approvals by relevant directors are used to maintain integrity. External audits also ensure policies and practices are followed. To maintain transparency, MSU's annual budget is available at the Gordon B. Olson Library on campus. Further, costs to students are posted on the website.

Over the past 18 months, MSU and all other institutions in the NDUS were asked to make two allotments totaling 6.55%, followed by an over 18% reduction to the 2017-19 biennial budget. During this time, an ad hoc Budget Recommendations Committee (BRC), led by the Vice President for Administration and Finance (VPAF), was established as an advisory group to the President and President's Staff. The BRC reviewed numerous documents and data prior to making their recommendations to President's Staff. The President presented final budget reductions to campus in May 2017.

Faculty, staff, and students are hired according to SBHE policies and practices in consultation with the Human Resources Director. Faculty are evaluated, tenured, and promoted according to policies and procedures in the Faculty Bylaws and according to SBHE policies.

MSU is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning. Faculty are afforded academic freedom and have opportunities for scholarship, service, and professional development. They are also eligible to apply for tenure and promotion if applicable.

MSU's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge by its faculty, students, and staff. These policies and procedures are outlined in the Faculty and Student Handbooks. In addition, campus committees like Institutional Review Board and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee oversee research practices on humans and animals to ensure such research is conducted with integrity and is compliant with federal policies and regulations. CITI training is provided and required for those completing various types of

research. Finally, all students must take at least one course with information literacy as a focus as part of MSU's General Education program. Academic honesty and integrity policies are included on faculty syllabi and in the Student Handbook.

Academic policies and procedures are transparent and enforced fairly. The Registrar's Office posts degrees, trains faculty, handles transfer credits, and enforces FERPA. They also handle grade appeals and facilitate Student Rights Committee meetings in coordination with the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA). The Registrar is a non-voting, ex officio member of the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee to assist with the curriculum change process.

Information Technology Central ensures MSU follows NDUS policy for data integrity and usage. Auxiliary enterprises are monitored by vice presidents, and the VPAF handles contractual agreements with these auxiliaries.

In addition, Minot State University clearly and completely discloses information to multiple audiences through its comprehensive website, print media, and social media. The website provides information about nearly every area of campus, from academic departments and student services to athletics. Tuition, fees, housing, and board costs are listed online, and a Student Consumer Information page provides links to a lengthy list of informational sites. Accrediting bodies are listed as well. Print and social media are also used summarize and distribute information. University Communications sends daily announcements to faculty and staff and weekly announcement to students. They also handle press releases and other information dissemination. Finally, a campus calendar provides information on scheduled events.

## **Sources**

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*There are no sources.*

### **3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support**

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The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

#### **3.A - Core Component 3.A**

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The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.
3. The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

#### **Argument**

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In 2016-17, Minot State University (MSU) offered 1 associate, 62 baccalaureate, 55 minors, 61 concentrations, and 5 certificate programs at the [undergraduate level](#); and 7 graduate degree and 4 certificate programs at the [graduate level](#). During the 2016-17 academic year, [two additional graduate](#) programs were approved for delivery beginning in spring 2017. General expectations for degrees are outlined in the MSU Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs. Student learning outcomes for all programs are also provided in the [Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs](#).

Ensuring programs are current and require appropriate levels of student performance is accomplished through oversight at a variety of levels. New degree programs, minors, and certificates are approved at the North Dakota University System (NDUS) level through a [multi-step process](#) involving assessment of need and appropriateness relative to the missions of the NDUS and the campus. Ultimately, all programs require approval from the State Board of Higher Education (SBHE). Internally, approval is required by the discipline faculty and chairpersons; the [Curriculum Committee](#); the Faculty Senate; and the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA). Graduate and Teacher Education programs also must gain the approval of appropriate committees ([Graduate Council](#) and [Teacher Education Administrative Council](#), respectively) prior to being considered by the Curriculum Committee.

MSU also ensures that its programs are current and appropriate through regular external review. Discipline specific accreditation is held by 49% of undergraduate programs and 100% of graduate programs. External accreditation requires regular reaccreditation reports and campus visits. Programs not overseen by an outside accrediting agency are evaluated every seven years following MSU's [Academic Program Review Cycle](#) as required by [NDUS](#) and [MSU](#) policies. These reviews involve a self-study, review by an appropriate outside consultant, and

development of a plan that addresses the external review as needed. As a campus, all programs participate in an annual review through program assessment. The VPAA and the [Assessment Committee](#) oversee annual assessment procedures. In fall 2016, the newly hired VPAA developed a [SharePoint](#) portal to electronically store annual program assessment reports, external reaccreditation documents, and external program reviews.

Student learning outcomes are articulated for each undergraduate and graduate program and are listed in the [MSU Graduate and Undergraduate Catalogs](#). Examples of program student learning outcomes include those in the [Master of Education, Master of Science in Information Systems, Honors program, Bachelor of Applied Science in Business Information Technology, and Bachelor of Science in Nursing](#). Current [General Education student learning outcomes](#) are articulated in the General Education Curriculum on the MSU website. The General Education curriculum has been updated in the 2017-18 Undergraduate Catalog. MSU's General Education incorporates learning across disciplines and learning throughout an entire college career, involving lower- and upper-division courses, and courses taken both inside and outside a student's major.

MSU offers courses face-to-face on the main campus, at the [Minot Air Force Base](#), in [Bismarck](#), and in [Fargo](#), and at various high schools through Dual Credit/Early Entry courses. A number of courses are also available (in some cases only available) online using Blackboard Learn or through an interactive video network (IVN). As of spring 2017, six baccalaureate programs can be completed at off-campus sites, and [18 degree and certificate programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels](#) are offered online. The Center for Extended Learning (CEL) oversees MSU's programs offered off-site, online, and via IVN. Courses are offered in both 16- and 8-week sessions.

Program learning goals as well as program assessment plans are consistent regardless of mode or location of delivery or course length. Sole control of the creation and modification of programs and courses, including learning goals, resides at the faculty/department level as does approval of course instructors, regardless of the mode of delivery. All faculty teaching in alternative modes are vetted and hired by the academic department using the same criteria as those hired to teach on campus. Faculty teaching at off-campus sites are often included in campus department meetings, via Skype, or elect to come to campus to attend meetings. An excellent example of campus and off-site faculty collaboration is through the Social Work bachelor's degree program. [Social Work faculty](#) from all three locations (MSU, Bismarck State College (BSC), and North Dakota State University (NDSU)) meet at least monthly via Skype; often faculty from BSC and NDSU remotely join the [monthly department meetings](#) as well.

Early Entry (dual credit for high school students) and online course development and content adhere to strict guidelines overseen by CEL. Department chairs or full-time faculty discipline experts follow [guidelines](#) to review and [approve](#) online course content. These [guidelines](#) ensure that the course content, learning outcomes, syllabi, and textbooks for online courses have departmental approval, regardless of who teaches the courses. Faculty teaching Early Entry courses are guided by the [Early Entry \(Dual Credit\) Program Policy Manual](#). The English department is a prime example of the collaboration occurring between campus faculty and Early

Entry faculty. [Faculty meet annually](#) with dual credit instructors to complete assessment processes and discuss academic requirements and revisions.

Program quality is ensured through the MSU procedures for assessment of programs, involving annual assessments and program reviews. These procedures are uniform for all locations and modes of delivery.

## Sources

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- Academic Program Review Cycle
- Academic Program Review List
- Academic Program Review Process
- Appendix B Article III Academic Assessment Committee
- ASPSW Department Meeting Minutes
- BetaTest
- CEL Bismarck
- CEL MAFB
- CEL NDSU
- Content Sign Off Online Asynchronous and Master Course
- Degree Offerings Graduate Catalog 2016-17
- Degree Offerings Undergradraduate Catalog 2016-17
- Early Entry (Dual Credit) Program Policy Manual
- English Early Entry Meeting
- Faculty Senate Bylaws Appendix B Article III Curriculum Committee
- General Education
- Graduate Learning Goals Examples
- Graduate Programs
- Graduate School Governance and Advisory Boards
- MSU VPAA SharePoint Portal
- NDUS 403.1 Academic Request New Program
- NDUS Approval MC and MSSM
- Online Programs
- SBHE 403.1.2 Instructional Program Evaluation
- Social Work Meeting Minutes
- TEAC Policy Manual
- Undergraduate Learning Goals Examples



### 3.B - Core Component 3.B

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The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.
2. The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.
4. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.
5. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution's mission.

#### Argument

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Minot State University's (MSU) current General Education Curriculum was developed through the work of a Faculty Senate General Education ad hoc Committee (GEAHC) between fall 2008 and spring 2012. The curriculum was approved by Faculty Senate in May 2012. Following some minor revisions, the General Education curriculum replaced the previous version as a graduation requirement for new students beginning in the fall of 2014.

The General Education curriculum was designed to meet the North Dakota University System (NDUS) General Education Requirement Transfer Agreement ([GERTA](#)), but to do so while embedding the curriculum in a framework that emphasizes a common rationale and set of expectations for the MSU graduate. This new framework reflects the MSU faculty's desire that students master essential content-related material across the curriculum (Foundational Content, which includes the NDUS required core) and that they demonstrate the skills essential to life-long contributions to civic society and the workplace (Critical Capacities and Skills-CCS). Additionally, this framework requires students to develop a sense of personal and social responsibility as individuals and within the community (Personal and Social Responsibility-PSR), and to examine complex social issues through coursework and through applied experiences (Interconnected Perspectives-IP). A complete listing of courses approved to meet the General Education curriculum is available on the MSU website and the [MSU Undergraduate Catalog](#).

While the model was developed under MSU's previous mission, *Vision 2013*, the General Education Curriculum aligns well with the [newly approved mission and vision](#) as it strives to

*prepare students and the institution for the evolving social and technological challenges of the world, and empowers graduates with a distinctive combination of professional expertise and broad-based education to support varied careers and productive lives.*

General Education student learning outcomes are articulated in the [Degree Requirements](#) for General Education section of the [MSU Undergraduate Catalog](#). MSU articulates an overall goal for General Education and specific student learning outcomes for each area. While this information is included in the 2016-17 Undergraduate Catalog, the information was clarified in the 2017-18 Undergraduate Catalog and is now consistent with the website, providing a clear description of MSU's General Education. The specific learning outcomes and assessment rubrics are articulated in the [General Education Course Application](#) forms, available on the MSU web page. They are used by faculty to apply for approval of a course to count toward one or more particular parts of the General Education curriculum.

The General Education curriculum is part of the annual assessment process for baccalaureate programs. New assessment plans, using rubrics based on those provided by AAC&U's LEAP project, were developed and piloted for the Developmental Content ([CCS](#), [PSR](#), and [IP](#)) of the General Education requirements. The assessment plans encouraged students to develop mastery of learning goals and make connections between General Education and their major.

In 2015-16, the General Education committee realized the data they were collecting did not provide the information in a format that could be analyzed in a meaningful way. Data were submitted in aggregated form and did not allow summaries or comparisons by class year. Thus, in 2016-17, the MSU Assessment Committee developed a better way to collect the data that enables analysis and reporting by General Education category or criteria (CCS1, CCS2, PSR1, IP2, etc.), by class year (freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior), and calculated directly from data. These methods were presented at MSU's spring 2017 Assessment Day meeting, approved by Faculty Senate at its April 20, 2017 meeting and are being implemented in fall 2017, as evidenced in the [Academic Assessment Committee minutes](#) for the year.

MSU faculty have embraced the new General Education model and have stepped up to incorporate the new developmental content within their current courses, thereby providing students many opportunities to meet the requirements without taking additional courses. Notable in the General Education requirements is UNIV 110. This First-Year Seminar is part of a learning community linked with one or two other courses. [Goals of UNIV 110](#), or each learning community as a whole, include enhancing student competency in information literacy, critical reading, critical thinking, quantitative literacy, problem solving, and written and oral communication. Each of these goals represent critical skills and capacities in the General Education program.

Notable in the Developmental Content are the [Personal and Social Responsibility \(PSR\) requirements](#). In completing PSR1, students demonstrate the ability to recognize their relationships to communities, and to evaluate different value systems associated with community issues. In completing PSR2, students are engaged in meaningful community activities. Beyond the PSR requirements, students develop skills adaptable to changing environments through

requirements in some particular majors. Examples include [NURS 456 Public Health Nursing](#) in the Nursing program, and coursework in the [International Business program](#).

The mastery of modes of inquiry or creative work in baccalaureate programs is typically demonstrated through a capstone experience that often involves presentation of student research or an exhibit or performance of student creative works. Every MSU graduate degree program engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information, and in mastering modes of inquiry through course work as well as a required capstone course, internship, project, or thesis. All programs provide information regarding capstone experiences within their respective section of the appropriate [Undergraduate or Graduate Catalog](#).

The General Education Curriculum incorporates diversity through [PSR](#) and [IP](#) requirements in the Developmental Content. The PSR1 requirement asks students to demonstrate the ability to evaluate different value systems associated with community issues. The IP1 and IP2 requirements ask students to demonstrate knowledge of cultural self-awareness and cultural worldview frameworks, curiosity about other cultures, empathy and recognition of intellectual and emotional dimensions of more than one worldview, and openness in their interactions with other cultures.

Exposure to and appreciation of diversity is further enhanced through the work of a variety of entities on campus:

- The [Curricular Diversity and Campus Climate Committee](#) has duties that include assessing the overall effectiveness of MSU's curricular-based diversity initiatives, and working with the [University Diversity Committee](#) to create a more visible and coherent variety of campus programs in diversity awareness and inclusivity.
- The [Office of International Programs](#) manages [study abroad opportunities](#) for MSU students, manages cooperative agreements with international colleges and universities (currently nine), and supports international students attending MSU. During 2014-17, 12-13 students per year were engaged in international experiences through outside organizations. Students share their [study abroad experiences](#) in campus newsletters, encouraging other students to participate in future opportunities. MSU [faculty-led international courses with study tours](#) engaged five students in a trip to Thailand (summer 2014) and six students in a trip to Spain and Portugal (summer 2016). During the last three years (2013-16) an average of 400 [international students attended MSU](#); this number reflects 12% of the overall student population.
- The [Native American Cultural Center](#) provides counseling, advising, and academic student transitional assistance to [Native American/American Indian students](#) enrolled at MSU; this number reflects 2% of the overall student population.
- The [POWER Center](#) at MSU offers a variety of support services to students through a TRiO Student Support Services grant and another TRiO grant in support of students with disabilities. POWER Center programs help students overcome class, social, and cultural barriers to higher education, and in doing so help to increase the diversity of the student population at MSU.
- The North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) is a University Center of Excellence on Developmental Disabilities, Education, Research and Services. In

addition to numerous projects involving research and service, grant-supported projects increase campus diversity by bringing students with intellectual disabilities to MSU (Adult Student Transition Education Program, [ASTEP](#)) or enhance diversity by engaging MSU students in mentoring relationships with students that have intellectual disabilities.

Understanding of diversity for some MSU students is further enhanced through particular degree programs that include [coursework dealing with diverse people and cultures](#). Examples include Art, English, Native American Studies, History, Sociology, Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Special Education, Social Work, and Gender/Women's Studies.

Other efforts on campus also work to enhance diversity at MSU. For example, the Foreign Language Program offers a foreign film series ([Northern Lights Film Festival](#)) through a grant by the North Dakota Humanities Council. The series presents full-length feature films from around the world, in specially designed programs that encourage students to gain a deeper understanding of different cultural points of view.

Although dominated by teaching, a portion of the contracted effort of probationary tenure-track and tenured faculty members is dedicated to scholarship and service. Accordingly, [the annual faculty evaluation process, tenure criteria, and promotion criteria](#) (listed in the Faculty Senate Bylaws section of the [Faculty Handbook](#)) all recognize that faculty members have a continuing responsibility to do scholarly and/or creative work in their specialty. Every year, faculty are evaluated on their scholarly contributions in the annual evaluation process.

MSU's mission, vision, and goals articulate its dedication to scholarship and creative activity by its students and faculty. Faculty scholarship and creative work is supported in a variety of ways:

- The [MSU Faculty Small Research Grants Program](#) provides modest funds for faculty research on a competitive basis to faculty members. The Faculty Small Research Grant Committee oversees this program. It typically funds about 10 projects per year. Many of the research projects are student-faculty collaborations.
- The [MSU Faculty Sabbatical Program](#) offers opportunities for faculty members to take a paid one-semester sabbatical (or half-release for a full academic year) to advance their scholarly work. During 2014-17, one to three sabbaticals were funded each year.
- The Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning (CETL) provides [funding for professional development and engagement activities](#).

One of MSU's strengths is the faculty's commitment to engaging undergraduate students in scholarship and creative activity. Many undergraduate academic programs have built such experiences into their curriculum, typically culminating in a capstone experience. Student works are disseminated through a number of venues, including the annual [MSU Research Poster Session](#), [Nursing Scholarship Day](#), [CETL Engagement Experiences](#), and several discipline-specific presentations ([Digital Minot-History](#), [Math Research](#), [INBRE Research](#), Student Directed Plays, [Honors thesis presentations](#), [senior art exhibits](#), and [music recitals](#), for example). Graduate programs prepare students for more advanced scholarship, and support [professional presentation of student work](#) in various venues.

## Sources

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- Academic Assessment Committee Minutes
- Application for General Education
- Art Student Exhibitions
- ASTEP
- CCS1-4 Original
- CD Grad Student Publication R&G
- CETL Engagement Experiences by Major
- CETL Opportunities for Faculty
- Digital Minot
- Diversity in Programs
- Faculty International Opportunities
- Faculty Senate Bylaws Appendix B Article III Curricular Diversity and Campus Climate Committee
- Faculty Senate Bylaws Appendix B Articles IV-V-VI Evaluation Tenure Promotion
- Faculty Small Research Grant Awards
- Final Report Gen Ed Ad Hoc
- FYE Goals Grid
- General Education
- General Education Foundational Content
- Graduate Programs
- Honors Theses Presentations
- International Business Degree
- International Student Population
- IP1-2 original
- MSU Diversity Committee
- MSU Poster Session Abstracts
- MSU Strategic Plan Mission and Vision
- Music Student Recitals 2015-17
- Native American Cultural Center
- NDUS 403.7 Gen Ed and Transfer
- Northern Lights Film Festival Foreign Language
- Nursing 456 Public Health Syllabus
- Nursing Scholarship Day Posters
- Office of International Programs
- POWER Center Programs
- PSR1-2 Original
- Sabbatical Program Description and Recipients
- Student Totals by Ethnicity
- Student Works INBRE Inside MSU
- Student Works Math Inside MSU
- Study Abroad
- Study Abroad and Study Tour Opportunities
- Undergraduate Student Research CAS 2016

### 3.C - Core Component 3.C

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The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

1. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning.
2. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.
3. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
4. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.
5. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
6. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and co-curricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.

#### Argument

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Based on total students and faculty (total faculty is determined as full-time plus 1/3 part-time), the 2016-17 Minot State University (MSU) student-to-faculty ratio is 12 to 1. Over the past seven years, the ratio of students to faculty has varied from 11.9 to 14.6 ([MSU Common Data Set 2016-17](#), page 24). Based on available institutional research and the website, MSU has had a lower [student-to-faculty ratio](#) than the ratio reported by all peer institutions.

During 2016-17 year, the faculty (faculty determined as full-time plus 1/3 part-time) numbered 207 ([MSU Common Data Set 2016-17](#), page 23) with a range of years of service that provides an effective mixture of new ideas and institutional memory for carrying out classroom and non-classroom roles. In fact, according to MSU's Human Resource Office, 13% of faculty members have been at MSU 5-9 years, 14% 10-14 years, and 37%  $\geq$  15 years. Forty-one percent of the faculty are tenured, holding ranks of professor (48%), associate professor (27%), and assistant professor (25%) ([MSU Factbook, Tenured Faculty by Rank and Gender](#)). Of the 158 full-time faculty members (instructional plus research/service), 101 (64%) have terminal degrees in their field.

While faculty members who have been at MSU for some time provide continuity in performing the various roles of the faculty, all faculty members are held to the same expectations for teaching, and all are involved in oversight of the curriculum and setting expectations for and assessing student learning. Faculty expectations for teaching are outlined in the [Faculty Handbook Section B II. General Responsibilities](#) and [Adjunct Faculty Handbook](#). These

responsibilities include providing a syllabus to all students describing grading procedures and outlining student expectations for the course. Syllabi are also submitted to chairpersons to be archived.

The curriculum at MSU is governed by the faculty. Curricular change proposals begin with faculty members at the program or department level, and proceed through a rigorous “checks and balances” process of vetting by multiple committees. New or updated courses proposed to meet General Education requirements are reviewed and approved by the [General Education Committee](#), while changes to programs and courses in Teacher Education programs must be reviewed and approved by the [Teacher Education Administrative Council](#). All graduate program and course changes are reviewed and approved by the [Graduate Council](#). In the end, all changes are reviewed for approval by the [Curriculum Committee](#) and then the Faculty Senate. The Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) has the final approval of all curricular changes.

In addition to setting and assessing expectations for learning in their own courses, faculty members are involved in assessment of General Education courses and curriculum through the [Academic Assessment Committee](#) and participation in each semester's Assessment Day activities. The Academic Assessment committee is responsible for defining and coordinating MSU's formative and aggregate assessment program for General Education and all academic programs and setting the agenda for Assessment Day.

Faculty members are involved in decisions about academic credentials and expertise expected when a search for a new faculty member begins. These decisions are based on the needs of the academic program or department. The [Faculty Search Guide](#) provides consistent procedures for the faculty recruitment and hiring process. [MSU policy](#) requires all faculty to have, at a minimum, 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline in which they teach. Appropriate qualifications are ensured by the procedures that govern faculty searches, which apply to all types of positions.

Searches for probationary tenure-track and adjunct faculty members require an appropriate terminal degree in most cases. Faculty members and their chairperson at the program/department level are responsible for setting expertise requirements that meet the needs of the program(s). Hiring of adjunct instructors may be done without a full advertised search but is still carried out through the academic unit that is responsible for that course. This process ensures that adjunct instructors, including those hired for online and dual-credit courses, are appropriately qualified.

Faculty members are evaluated based on performances in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service. General evaluation criteria and procedures are defined in [MSU Faculty Senate Bylaws, Article IV](#). Within these guidelines, each academic unit ([College of Arts and Sciences](#), [College of Business](#), and [College of Education and Health Sciences](#)) develops discipline-specific performance criteria. The specific dates for the various steps of the evaluation process are detailed in the [Academic Calendar](#) published each year by the VPAA.

The evaluation process begins with faculty member's submission of a self-evaluation document that summarizes activities for the year and outlines goals for the future. Regarding teaching effectiveness, faculty members are required to submit at least one item in each of three areas:

currency, peer review, and student feedback. The self-evaluation is reviewed and assessed by chairs and the VPAA.

All courses are subject to student course evaluations, called the Student Perceptions of Learning. Each session, students are prompted via email to complete the Student Perception of Learning survey for each [campus](#) and [online](#) course in which they are enrolled. At the end of the semester, faculty members receive a [summarized report](#) of the results. Faculty are responsible for including these evaluations in their annual self-evaluation.

MSU supports the professional development of its faculty members to help them to stay current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching and advising roles. The VPAA provides support for professional development with funds for travel (e.g., for research, professional conferences, etc.). Additionally, funds with the operational budgets of divisions/departments may be used for travel at the discretion of the chairperson.

Faculty new to MSU attend a [nine-month orientation](#) beginning with two full days prior to the annual Convocation to meet their new colleagues and to learn about MSU policies, procedures, and events. Adjunct faculty are welcome to participate in the orientation. All MSU faculty and staff are encouraged to attend the annual Convocation held prior to the first day of fall semester. Convocation is complimented by [mini-sessions](#) that cover a variety of topics relevant to both faculty and staff members.

The Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning (CETL) supports professional development through on-campus resources like the CETL library, and funding for [faculty and staff participation in professional conferences](#). Additionally, faculty and staff are eligible to apply for [Advanced Study Grants](#) through the Academic Affairs Office. This program provides financial assistance to faculty and staff members pursuing course work for degree programs or in skill areas deemed critical to MSU. The [Office of Instructional Technology \(OIT\)](#) provides continuous training opportunities through workshops and one-on-one instruction for all faculty teaching online courses.

The [MSU Faculty Small Research Grants Program](#) provides modest funds on a competitive basis to faculty members. The [Faculty Research Grants Committee](#) oversees this program, and typically funds 8-10 projects per year at an average funding level of \$1800 over the last two years. Total funding available was substantially decreased in fall 2012, but is again building. The [MSU Faculty Sabbatical Program](#) offers opportunities for faculty members to advance their scholarly work. The sabbatical can be taken for one semester with full pay, or for a full-year with half-time pay for both semesters (but full-time release). Typically, three sabbaticals are funded each year.

Instructors are accessible for student inquiry outside of class during required office hours. As part of their annual evaluation requirements, faculty in the different colleges are required to post regular office hours, as evidenced in their faculty evaluation documents ([College of Business](#), [College of Arts and Science](#), and [College of Education and Health Sciences](#)). Typically, faculty post up to five office hours per week; many faculty also avail themselves through email. Additionally, beginning in fall 2016, all campus courses were provided a Blackboard Learn



course shell, and registered students were automatically enrolled in the shell. While faculty are not required to use the shell to support their campus course, many do so in an effort to provide students a convenient means to contact them, post grades, and share resources.

The North Dakota University System uses a [Broadband Job Classification system](#) to categorize job positions. Within each general classification are various sub-bands, and within those are specific job classifications. Each specific job classification has a description of the scope of work, examples of duties, and minimum qualifications. Minimum qualifications include the educational background required, although institutions can substitute directly related work experience for educational background with a written justification.

While the Broadband Classification system includes examples of duties, MSU and other institutions are typically more specific in describing job duties and minimum qualifications as appropriate. Some example specific job descriptions include the [Advising Mentoring Coordinator](#) position and the [Director of Financial Aid](#). Training required for staff members varies with position, and is handled on a case-by-case basis by the appropriate supervisor.

A variety of [professional development opportunities](#) exist for staff members. These include specific training activities required or recommended by supervisors such as attending a professional conference to acquire needed background, or training on a specific software platform. As noted above, staff members are eligible to apply for Advance Study Grants through the Academic Affairs Office. This program provides financial assistance to faculty and staff members pursuing course work for degree programs or in skill areas deemed critical to MSU. All MSU employees are eligible for tuition waivers and release time to further their education by taking MSU courses. Employees are eligible for [tuition waivers](#) for up to three courses per calendar year, with release time for enrollment in one academic course per semester (up to five hours per week).

## Sources

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- Academic Affairs Calendars 2016-17, 2017-18
- Adjunct Faculty Handbook
- Advanced Study Grants
- Appendix B Article III Academic Assessment Committee
- CAS Policy Handbook
- CEHS Faculty Evaluation Policy MAY 2017
- CETL Opportunities for Faculty
- CoB Faculty Evaluation Policy and Procedures
- Common Data Set 2016-17
- Faculty Handbook General Responsibilities Section B Part II
- Faculty Recruitment and Selection Guide for MSU
- Faculty Senate Bylaws Appendix B Article III Curriculum Committee
- Faculty Senate Bylaws Appendix B Article III General Education Committee
- Faculty Senate Bylaws Appendix B Article III Small Research Grant Committee
- Faculty Senate Bylaws Appendix B Article IV Faculty Evaluation

- Faculty Senate Bylaws Appendix B Articles IV-V-VI Evaluation Tenure Promotion
- Faculty Small Research Grant Awards
- Faculty Teaching Qualifications Policy
- Fall 2016 Convocation Mini Sessions
- Graduate School Governance and Advisory Boards
- NDUS Broadband Job Classifications
- New Faculty Orientation Fall 2016
- Office of Instructional Technology
- Professional Development Opportunities for Minot State Staff
- Sabbatical Program Description and Recipients
- Staff Job Description Advising Mentoring Coordinator
- Staff Job Description Financial Aid Director
- Student Perceptions of Learning Course Evaluation Results
- Student Perceptions of Learning F2F
- Student Perceptions of Learning Online
- Student to Faculty Ratio Comparison
- TEAC Policy Manual
- Tenured Faculty by Rank and Gender
- Tuition Waivers

### 3.D - Core Component 3.D

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The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.
2. The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.
3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of its students.
4. The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites, museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).
5. The institution provides to students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.

#### Argument

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As outlined in the [Student Handbook](#), Minot State University (MSU) provides a variety of student support services for all students. The Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning (CETL) provides New Student Orientation, First-Year Experience learning communities, campus and community engagement opportunities, academic advising, Starfish Early Alert, peer mentoring, and academic assistance ([peer tutoring](#)) services. New and Transfer Student Orientation is conducted as a collaboration with Enrollment Services and includes a post-orientation Welcome Week. [Welcome Week](#) introduces students to the services that will assist them in being successful throughout their first year of college and help them build relationships with fellow first-year students and learn from experienced student leaders. They will also gain opportunities for service and engagement in the Minot community.

MSU's [New Student Orientation](#) is held eight times during the spring and summer. Transfer students are eligible to participate in Priority Transfer Orientation (PTO), where they work directly with their academic advisor to review course scheduling and issues related to transfer students. PTO allows transfer students the opportunity to register prior to New Student Orientation programming. Transfer students who do not participate in PTO must attend New Student Orientation to meet with their academic advisors and also attend transfer-specific programming. New first-year students attend a one-day orientation where they participate in placement testing for English and math, if necessary, and attend information sessions about campus policies and procedures. Most importantly, each student works one-on-one with a faculty academic advisor to enroll in courses.

The North Dakota University System (NDUS) policy states admission to baccalaureate programs requires a minimum high school GPA, composite ACT score or equivalent SAT score, and

completion of core high school curriculum. Applicants who do not meet [MSU's admission standards](#) of the GPA or ACT may apply and may be reviewed on an individual basis by MSU. Beginning fall 2017, MSU students admitted on provision are required to complete an [Academic Success Plan](#). Academic Success Plans help students map out a personal plan of action to be a successful college student, including discovering academic strengths and areas for improvement, developing a plan for meeting with an academic advisor, determining the available resources, and developing concrete goals related to academic success at MSU.

The [Passport Program](#) is a unique collaborative program offered by Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB) and MSU, available to students who are not eligible for full admission at MSU but want to attend college, pursue a four-year degree, and remain in the Minot area. These applicants may be admitted to the Passport Program where they will be collaborative students located on the MSU campus. Benefits to students include eligibility for earning a certificate in College Studies; full access and participation in MSU's student life, housing, dining services, organizations, facilities and activities (excluding varsity athletics); and academic preparation for a four-year degree program.

One of CETL's primary roles is oversight of [First-Year Experience](#) learning communities, in which a UNIV 110 course is linked with one or two other courses that are all taken by the same cohort of first-year students. Students are given the opportunity to work with talented, engaging faculty and staff members who care about student success and provide learning experiences that are unique, challenging, and relevant. Each section of UNIV 110 incorporates a Peer Mentor who assists in the instruction of the course and supports the transition of its first-year students. [Peer Mentors](#) are former students of the First-Year Experience who have been recommended by faculty and selected through an application and interview process based on their academic success, involvement in campus organizations, and knowledge of the MSU campus.

Academic assistance is offered to students through CETL's peer tutoring. The MSU [Writing Center](#) provides students assistance with writing skills. For online students, the Center for Extended Learning (CEL) offers access to [SmarThinking](#) tutoring.

Specific student populations have access to additional services. Students eligible for services through MSU's federally funded TRiO program, called [POWER](#), receive one-on-one tutoring, academic advising, career exploration, financial aid and budgeting education, as well as seminars and workshops to help promote better study skills and ward off test anxiety. They are often given referrals to other resources on campus and are motivated to become involved and engaged on campus. Students qualify for this program if they are a U.S. resident, a full-time student, and are working toward their first bachelor's degree. Eligible students must also meet at least one of the following criteria: 1) be a first generation college student; 2) be income eligible; or 3) have a documented disability.

The [Office of International Programs](#) provides support for international students. The Office of International Programs offers advising for admitted and enrolled international students on federal F-1 student and J-1 exchange visitors regulations, academic and cultural adjustment, health insurance and other matters.

The [Native American Cultural Center](#) provides counseling, advising, and academic student transitional assistance to Native American/American Indian students at MSU. Student personal, social, financial, and career concerns are also addressed at this "home away from home" student center. Coordination and correspondence with area tribal councils, offices and colleges is also maintained to benefit and support students.

The mission of [Disability Services](#) is to ensure a comprehensively accessible university experience where individuals with disabilities have the same access to programs, opportunities, and activities as all others. Disability Services is also committed to promoting access and awareness as a resource to all members of the community. The philosophy of Disability Services is to promote self-awareness, self-determination, and self-advocacy in a comprehensively accessible environment. Reasonable accommodations are afforded to eligible students and are individualized to address specific functional limitations resulting from a disability.

Graduate students have access to some of the same resources describe above. In addition, the [Graduate School provides ready access to resources](#) (information and forms) needed by graduate students.

[The Residence Life and Housing Office](#) is responsible for on-campus housing and works with the contractor who provides dining services. To promote student success, MSU [requires undergraduate students](#) who have earned fewer than 24 semester hours and are under 20 years of age prior to the first day of the current semester to live on campus in a residence hall and purchase a meal plan. The Residence Life staff consists of 8 Desk Clerks, 17 Resident Assistants, 5 Residence Hall Directors, and 3 Resident Managers, who live on campus.

The [Student Health Center](#) enhances student learning by promoting a healthy lifestyle, reducing risk behaviors, and providing health education to MSU students. The Student Health Center is staffed by a nurse practitioner, a registered nurse, and a licensed practical nurse with support of the UND Center for Family Medicine residents.

The [Wellness Center](#) provides exercise equipment, weight rooms, intramural gym space, group exercise classes, rock climbing, locker rooms, and wellness events. Focusing on the [8 Dimensions of Wellness](#), the Wellness Center strives to promote the overall health of students through a holistic approach to wellness.

MSU [Counseling Services](#) advocates for students' personal and educational development through short-term counseling and educational outreach. Personal counseling services provide free, confidential consultation, brief short-term intervention and referral.

In accordance with [Title IX](#), MSU strives to create a campus community free from interpersonal abuse including sexual misconduct. MSU has established a Title IX office and coordinator, and posts relevant Title IX information on its website. More information about MSU's Title IX policies and procedures is available in Criterion 2A.

[Academic advising](#) at MSU is an important part of the educational process. All students who have declared a major are assigned an academic advisor in the relevant program. Students who

have not declared a major or who are pursuing a General Studies degree are assigned to specifically selected advisors. Students are encouraged to visit with their academic advisor at least once each semester (many disciplines employ the “advisor hold” which requires that students meet with their advisor prior to registering for courses each semester). Campus Connection is an online tool used by students and advisors to ensure they are on track to meeting their graduation requirements. The [Academic Advisement Report](#) in Campus Connection is a tool that provides detailed information about the student's academic career plan.

The campus Advising Coordinator and Academic Advising Council (AAC) provide a number of resources to both students and faculty to support student success. For example, the Advising Coordinator publishes the [MSU Academic Advisor Handbook](#) and a monthly electronic [Advising Newsletter](#) during the academic year. Newsletters include advising tips, advising resources, campus services, information specific to working with transfer students, dates to remember, and other information specific to advising at MSU. The AAC also sponsors [advisor workshops](#) for faculty and staff to share advising techniques, discuss challenging situations, learn about university resources/services, improve advising techniques, and receive updates on new policies and university requirements.

The [AAC](#) reviews academic advising across campus and makes recommendations to enhance the advising services provided. The AAC membership includes broad representation with faculty, staff, and students serving from a variety of disciplines. The AAC secures sponsorship for the two advising awards given annually starting in 2016. See more information on the establishment and activities of the AAC in Criterion 1A.

Supported by the NDUS, [Starfish Early Alert](#) was implemented in summer 2015. Starfish Early Alert is an easy-to-use student retention tool that helps students and their advisors stay informed about students' academic progress. Starfish users include students, advisors, instructors, and student support services. Starfish promotes communication between instructors with students and their advisors. Faculty can give students a “heads-up” regarding attendance, academic, and/or general concerns and “kudos” for their outstanding classroom performance. More permanent are “flag” notifications of areas for concern. Once a flag is received, the message remains active in the system until it is removed by the advisor or support person who addresses the concern with the student, thereby closing the loop, indicating the student has been contacted about the issue.

The basic technological infrastructure of the campus is overseen by [Information Technology Central](#) (ITC). This infrastructure includes computers, software, wired and wireless network systems, phones, and classroom technology. ITC is responsible for installation and maintenance of computer labs and/or computer kiosks and classroom technology in eight buildings on campus. Students can check out computer equipment from ITC for up to two weeks, or longer depending on availability.

Supported by the Center for Extended Learning (CEL), the [Office of Instructional Technology](#) (OIT) provides instructional and technical support for distance education courses at MSU. The OIT provides faculty assistance with online course design, including online course accessibility. They also have a variety of types of equipment that can be loaned to instructors (e.g., various types of cameras, lecture capture kits, personal response system, etc.). Through

Blackboard Learn and other tutorials and training courses, the OIT supports courses more broadly by helping faculty get more out of Blackboard.

CEL also oversees MSU's [Interactive Video Network](#) (IVN), a statewide videoconferencing communication tool that provides distance education opportunities throughout the state. CEL maintains and schedules three labs. Dakota College of Bottineau, MSU's Special Education Department, and the North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) maintain additional labs.

A number of specialized rooms on campus support teaching and learning in various programs. Some of these spaces also support student and faculty scholarship and performances. For example, in the College of Education and Health Sciences, the [Communication Disorders Clinic](#) supports and maintains twelve pediatric clinic rooms, five adult rooms, two diagnostic rooms, plus spacious waiting areas, observation rooms, and extra wide halls provide a comfortable and professional atmosphere for a variety of clinical services. Specialized clinics include a voice clinic for evaluation and treatment of voice disorders and an audiology clinic with modern audiologic diagnostic instruments. In the Nursing Department, recent remodeling provides high-fidelity clinical simulation experiences for all nursing students in the [Nursing Clinical Simulation Center](#).

The recently renovated [Swain Hall](#) now houses the Department of Teacher Education and Human Performance as well as some science lab classrooms. By taking advantage of previously unusable space, a third floor was created in the area that used to be the gym bleachers; and four new classrooms were added to the building. The basement now features high-tech athletic training equipment that students use as they take health, physical education, and recreation courses. The renovated gymnasium has been converted to a pedagogy lab that is the primary location for physical education and fitness courses, in addition to serving as a practice facility for Athletics.

The College of Arts and Sciences promotes a strong [Music Division](#) with spacious faculty music studios, soundproofed practice rooms, and versatile classrooms and rehearsal spaces for collaborative student learning. Ann Nicole Nelson Hall in Old Main is a 950-seat auditorium with a large stage that provides a place for performing arts and music events. The Art Program has several specialized art studio classrooms and an art gallery. It also has a ceramics studio classroom. The [Theatre Arts Program](#) uses the 200-seat Aleshire Theatre and a smaller Black Box Theatre. The program also makes use of an amphitheater located on the hillside in the northern part of the campus for Summer Theatre which holds almost 500 people. The [Broadcasting](#) Program has a fully functioning TV station that produces a weekly 30-minute show, and a radio station.

The Division of Social Sciences recently renovated a classroom to accommodate six computer workstations, with a large monitor and semi-circular table at each, so that small student groups can gather around each one. This innovative room is used for multiple purposes. [Cyril Moore Science Center](#) provides the Division of Science and Department of Biology teaching and research laboratory space. Additionally, a number of rooms house specialized equipment and instrumentation that meet both teaching and research needs in the sciences. Four additional

teaching laboratories were included in the renovation of Swain Hall, next to Cyril Moore (geosciences, physics/science education, and two biology labs).

In the College of Business, the [Slaaten Learning Center](#) features formal and informal learning spaces, including a trading lab with a stock ticker board providing immediate access to financial data and reports. The Slaaten Board Room contains a complete video conferencing system. Additionally, the Slaaten Learning Center includes a dedicated meeting space for student organizations, and a student lab for individual and team learning in a casual environment.

CETL provides [resources](#) related to effective teaching and learning, particularly resources related to experiential and active teaching, and First-Year Experiences. CETL maintains a small library of books, journals, and videos on a variety of topics, and provides resources. It also prepares faculty members to teach in First-Year Experience learning communities, offering a one-hour introductory seminar for those interested, and a one-day training session for those that will be teaching for the first time in an FYE learning community.

The [Gordon B. Olson Library](#) provides resources that support teaching and learning at MSU. As a federal repository, it houses a collection of federal documents as well as state documents. It houses the books, journals, databases, and other media resources appropriate to a university library. The library provides inter-library loan services. The Gordon B. Olson Library serves as an additional resource for guidance of effective use of research and information sources. Students can receive individualized help in appropriate information through the “[Ask a Librarian](#)” online tool. Also, the Gordon B. Olson Library staff frequently provides sessions in the library for individual courses, especially research methods courses. A staff member meets in the library with the class to cover what kinds of resources are available for the particular discipline, and guides students through examples that illustrate how to effectively search for appropriate information.

MSU is home to three art [galleries](#), two of which are managed by the Northwest Art Center. They are located in Hartnett Hall and in the Gordon B. Olson Library. Best known for its diverse contemporary and traditional art, the Northwest Art Center hosts exhibitions by local, regional, national, and international artists. The Gordon B. Olson Library also houses a Native American collection. Currently, a new Northwest Art Center is being constructed on the lower level of the MSU Gordon B. Olson Library. This new center will include the Walter Piehl Gallery and provide permanent space for MSU's premier Native American collection. The Flat Tail Press Gallery in the Administration Building hosts three or four exhibitions each year focusing primarily on works on paper. Prior to its renovation in 1999, the Cyril Moore Science Center housed a Science Museum. After the renovation, the displays were spread throughout the building in hallway cases, making them more accessible.

MSU maintains an [Institutional Review Board](#) (IRB) and subscribes to the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI Program) in support of student and faculty research efforts. As part of MSU's General Education program, students receive guidance and instruction in research and information resources in two requirements. All students complete English 120 (ENGL 120) as a General Education requirement, and all students must take a course that includes Information Literacy (CCS2).



A number of undergraduate programs include a research methods course or other courses that focus on research methods. Such courses include: BADM 421, BIOL 492, CHEM 494, CJ 480, ENGL 270, ENGL 391/491, GEOL 494, HON 450H, HON 451H, HIST 280, HUM 210, MATH 294, MATH 494, NURS 363, PSY 242, PSY 494, SCI 240, SOC 278, and SWK 442. Students learn how research is conducted in their discipline; typically this is in preparation for a capstone experience in which they put that knowledge to use.

Graduate committees and program directors mentor graduate students in effective use of research and information sources. Most graduate programs include one or more courses which include research methods: ED 501, ED 502, BIT 510, BADM 550, CD 503, PSY 512, SPED 503. Most also include a final experience that includes research. Through graduate research, students are introduced to MSU's IRB, conducting research involving human subjects, and misconduct in research.

## Sources

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- 8 Dimensions of Wellness
- Academic Advisement Report
- Academic Advising
- Academic Advising Council
- Academic Advisor Handbook
- Academic Program Review List
- Academic Success Plan
- Admission Standards
- Advising Newsletter
- Advisor Workshops
- Broadcasting
- CCS2 with Rubric
- CETL Resources
- Communication Disorders Clinic
- Counseling Services
- Cyril Moore Science Center
- Disability Services
- First Year Student Housing Policy
- First-Year Experience
- Galleries
- Gordon B Olson Library
- Graduate School Resources
- Interactive Video Network
- IRB
- IT Central
- Library Research Help
- Multicultural Support Services
- Music
- Native American Cultural Center

- New Student Orientation Program
- Nursing Simulation Videos
- Office of Instructional Technology
- Office of International Programs
- Passport Program
- Peer Mentoring
- Peer Tutoring
- Peer Tutoring Evaluation
- POWER Center Programs
- Residence Halls
- Slaaten Learning Center
- Smart Thinking
- Starfish Early Alert
- Student Health
- Student to Faculty Ratio Comparison
- Swain Hall New
- Theatre Arts Program
- Title IX
- Welcome Week
- Wellness Center Mission and Vision
- Writing Center

### 3.E - Core Component 3.E

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The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.

1. Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.
2. The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students' educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development.

#### Argument

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Minot State University (MSU) provides an enriched educational environment for its constituents through both curricular and co-curricular programming suited to the institution's mission as a public university dedicated to excellence in education, scholarship, and community engagement. MSU achieves this mission through rigorous academic experiences, active learning environments, and commitment to public service and a vibrant campus life.

MSU's co-curricular programs compliment and extend formal learning experiences. For example, MSU students can enhance their discipline skills through a variety of opportunities for peer instruction and mentoring. [POWER](#), [the Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning \(CETL\)](#), and the [Writing Center](#) hire students as peer tutors. Students also serve as [Peer Mentors](#) in a First-Year Seminar course and the [Advancing Students Toward Education and Employment Programs \(ASTEP\)](#) project, a grant funded program through North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) where peer mentors work with students with disabilities.

Major annual events provide opportunities for students to engage in their disciplines outside the classroom. For example, [Darwin Day](#), sponsored by the Department of Biology, is an annual participation in a global celebration of science and reason, with a focus on how all living creatures evolve. It begins with an evening lecture by a notable speaker. The next day, there are a number of events such as greenhouse and lab tours, activities about evolution, an artist's presentation, and a Brain Bee competition for area grade 9-12 students. The goal is to get more people interested in science. All events are open to the public. [NOTSTOCK](#) is an annual four-day event that offers multiple hands-on opportunities to participate in the arts, and brings between 500 and 700 people (mostly K-12 students from all over North Dakota) to campus. All who attend NOTSTOCK are encouraged to participate in printmaking, poetry, music, ceramics, theatre, foreign language, and communication arts events and activities. NOTSTOCK brings nationally-known printmakers, poets, ceramic artists, and musicians to campus to make art, give lectures, host poetry slams, offer workshops, and teach classes. All NOTSTOCK events and activities are free and open to the public.

MSU offers many opportunities for students to participate in performing groups in [music](#) and communication arts ([theater](#) and [broadcasting](#)) that serve the campus, the Minot community, and

the region. These opportunities enhance the education of majors in these disciplines, but many of them are open to non-majors as well.

Students may participate in any number of [MSU's 64 clubs and student organizations](#). Approximately two-thirds of these organizations are related to academic programs; these programs provide educational and service opportunities that enhance the students' education in these disciplines.

MSU is dedicated to quality in education and scholarship through active learning environments. In alignment with its mission, students experience active learning through participation research and creative activity in their chosen fields. Students learn the skills and modes needed for inquiry and creative work (see Criterion 3B). MSU is dedicated to providing students with opportunities to engage with faculty in research and creative activity (see Criterion 3B).

MSU is dedicated to community engagement through commitment to public service. Incoming students are involved in engaged learning and service through their [First-Year Experience Learning Communities](#), where they complete some type of engagement activity (volunteer, community service, service learning, or community problem solving activity).

A number of specific programs at MSU also provide opportunities for engaged learning and service. For example, students in Communication Disorders are given opportunities for engaged learning and service through work in the [Communication Disorders Clinic](#). A full range of services is available for both children and adults in a modern state-of-the-art facility. Undergraduate and graduate students perform evaluation and treatment of speech and hearing problems under the supervision of clinical supervisors certified by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) and licensed by the State of North Dakota. Students in History courses engage in the professional practice of historical research and writing in the [Digital Minot](#) project, an online museum of local history.

By participating in the [Severson Entrepreneurship Academy](#), students gain authentic experience in beginning their own business ventures. MSU's Entrepreneurship Club is affiliated with the national Collegiate Entrepreneurship Organization, and student members develop business start-up plans. The best projects receive funding from a donor-sponsored seed money fund. Students also participate in the Finance Club, which manages the seed money fund and distributes proceeds to the Entrepreneurship Club. The [Leadership Program](#) in the College of Business provides students with opportunities to learn about and practice leadership, in part by participating in service projects. One of the goals of the [Honors Program in Engagement and Scholarship \(HOPES\)](#) is to instill a commitment to community awareness, involvement, and service.

An example of MSU's broader engagement in community service was the [Power of 100 projects carried out as part of the MSU Centennial celebration](#). MSU students are recognized annually for their engagement activities by being listed on the [Engagement Honor Roll](#). The Honor Roll is posted by the Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning, and the honor is noted on student transcripts.

## Sources

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- ASTEP
- Broadcasting Productions
- CoB Leadership Program
- Communication Disorders Clinic
- Darwin Day
- Digital Minot
- Engagement Honor Roll
- First-Year Syllabus Requirements 2017
- Foreign Language Resource Center
- Honors Program
- MSU NOTSTOCK.2016
- Music Opportunities
- Peer Mentoring
- Peer Tutoring
- POWER Center Supplemental Instruction (SI)
- Power of 100
- Residence Life Leadership Opportunities
- Severson Entrepreneurship Academy
- Student Organizations and Clubs Provide Active Learning Opportunities
- Theatre Productions
- Writing Center

### **3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary**

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The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

#### **Summary**

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Minot State University's (MSU) degree programs are current and appropriate to higher education. New programs go through a multistep approval process on and off campus. Existing programs complete annual assessment reports and reflect on and make changes based on those results. Program reviews with an external reviewer occur every seven years for those programs without accreditation. Accredited programs follow their accrediting bodies' review cycles. All program reviews are stored on the Vice President for Academic Affairs's (VPAA) SharePoint portal. Learning outcomes for undergraduate and graduate programs, as well as General Education, are articulated in the catalogs and most course syllabi. These learning outcomes and their assessments are consistent regardless of delivery method or location for each course.

The Faculty Senate Academic Assessment Committee facilitates assessment activities. In recent years, its focus has been on an assessment system for the recently revised General Education program. After an unsuccessful attempt at an assessment system, the Assessment Committee, in consultation with the General Education Committee, developed and sought feedback about a new assessment system. This new assessment system was implemented for the first time in fall 2017.

At MSU, the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to educational programs. The General Education program includes required aspects of the North Dakota University System's (NDUS) General Education Requirement Transfer Agreement, but is also includes three new categories: Critical Capacities and Skills (CCS), Personal and Social Responsibility (PSR), and Interconnecting Perspectives (IP). Courses in these categories spread across the curriculum from 100- to 400-level courses; thus, students can meet General Education requirements in their major coursework. The learning outcomes in these three areas and their subareas are assessed using rubrics based on those provided by AAC&U's LEAP project.

All students must take a course with a focus on information literacy as part of General Education. They also learn these skills in College Composition II and usually in their capstone projects or in other courses. Graduate students are mentored in effective use of research and information during graduate coursework and when writing their theses or projects.

Most programs include a capstone experience that engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments. The results of these experiences are often seen at presentations in the departments.

Exposure to human and cultural diversity occurs in coursework and via other activities on campus. A number of committees and offices spearhead diversity initiatives, and many of the IP

General Education courses expose students to diversity. Campus events and study abroad also support human and cultural diversity.

MSU has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services. MSU's current student-to-faculty ratio is 12:1, which indicates adequate faculty are available to instruct and advise students, although some faculty have heavier teaching or advising loads than others. MSU's committees are fully staffed with faculty, staff, and student members. Faculty govern the curriculum. All changes to curricula go through a multistage approval process involving faculty committees. Further, faculty set expectations for students in their departments and on Faculty Senate committees like the General Education Committee, the Academic Assessment Committee, or the Academic Policies Committee.

Tenure-track and tenured faculty are expected to spend part of their time engaged in scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge. At MSU, many faculty do this work alongside students benefiting both parties. Faculty also participate on search committees and work together to write position descriptions for job advertisements. Faculty, regardless of delivery method or location of courses, are required to have appropriate credentials per assumed practices and MSU's policy on faculty qualifications.

Faculty are evaluated annually according to the process outlined in the Faculty Bylaws and in college handbooks. The newly formed Committee on Evaluation of Teaching supports the evaluation of teaching process on campus, including currency, peer review, and student feedback. Opportunities for professional development are offered on campus and travel funds provide opportunities off campus. Faculty are available to students during office hours and via phone, email, and online course shells.

Staff members who support student success have appropriate qualifications depending on their jobs. They also receive professional development and training (e.g., conferences, workshops, webinars) to support their work. All MSU employees are eligible for a 100% tuition discount at MSU and a 50% tuition discount at other NDUS institutions for one class each semester (three per year) to support their growth and professional development.

MSU provides support for student learning and effective teaching. Numerous student support services are available, including peer tutoring, peer mentoring, disability services, TRiO, New Student Orientation and Welcome Week, First-Year Experience Learning Communities, Career Services, faculty and staff advising, Native American Cultural Center, Office of International Programs, Veterans' Services, Wellness Center, student activities, and more. The Academic Advising Council and the Director of Advising lead many advising workshops and take an active role in improving advising at MSU. Starfish Early Alert supports advising and student success as well.

Remedial or developmental coursework is offered to students who do not meet minimum placement scores in beginning level college math and English courses. Others who do not meet all admission requirements are admitted with the provision of enhanced advising to support their success. These students are partnered with faculty advisors in their interest area and meet with them early in their first semester to develop academic success plans.

Classrooms and other learning spaces are well maintained, although there is room for improvement in some areas. Computers and projectors are in nearly every classroom. Computer labs are available to students and so are various places to study or work in groups. Blackboard supports online and on-campus learning. Other spaces, like in Music, Teacher Education, Athletic Training, Nursing, and the College of Business, have been updated recently to meet the needs of faculty and students. The galleries on campus are well-kept and new exhibits are featured each month. The three main performance venues (Aleshire Theatre, Ann Nicole Nelson Hall, and Summer Amphitheatre) are used frequently.

Finally, MSU's co-curricular programs compliment and extend formal learning experiences. Students learn as they serve as mentors, tutors, and student leaders. They also learn by participating in campus events like MSU's signature arts event, NOTSTOCK, or Darwin Day, hosted by the Biology Department. Additional opportunities exist via workshops, performances, clubs and organizations, and service projects. The Leadership Program in the College of Business and the Honors Program offer additional opportunities as well. All engagement experiences can be documented through the Engagement Honor Roll on student transcripts.

## **Sources**

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*There are no sources.*



## 4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

### 4.A - Core Component 4.A

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The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It assures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and Americorps).

### Argument

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All Minot State University (MSU) graduate and undergraduate programs are reviewed at least once every seven years in accordance with [North Dakota State Board Policy](#). MSU has a [detailed policy](#) outlining the requirements for external program review, and an [Academic Program Review Cycle](#) is maintained on the Academic Affairs website.

Twelve professional agencies have awarded [specialized accreditation](#) to various MSU programs. These specialized accreditation bodies review and evaluate programs on a regular basis. MSU's specialized accreditations cover programs in Addiction Studies, Business, Athletic Training, Communication Disorders, Music, Nursing, Social Work, School Psychology, Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, and Teacher Education. Programs within the College of Business were reviewed through [self study](#) and [reaccredited by IACBE](#) in 2015. The self-study included a summary of the changes, improvements, action plans, and results for the

previous three years. Data was collected and analyzed using the outcomes assessment plan for the previous year, and new changes, improvements, and action plans were identified. The Nursing program was reaccredited in 2014 by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, Inc., (ACEN) and the North Dakota Board of Nursing (NDBN). The Nursing program [self-study](#) addressed national standards, qualifications of faculty and staff, student learning outcomes, curriculum and program outcomes, and resources. The [ACEN report](#) identified areas for improvement and requested a follow-up report in two years. The Nursing faculty addressed the concerns and submitted a [follow-up report in 2016](#). This report was accepted, and the next ACEN reaccreditation will take place in 2022. These are just two examples of the specialized accreditation process maintained by MSU programs. Copies of these and other recent specialized accreditation self-studies, team reports, and accreditation letters are available in Appendix Y of the Federal Compliance report, and on the [Vice President for Academic Affairs \(VPAA\) SharePoint portal](#).

Programs without specialized accreditation complete a self-study and hire an outside consultant for external review. The recommended outline for self-study of academic programs is included in the detailed policy and process for academic program review. Recommendations relative to the selection of external consultants and payment of consultants are discussed with and approved by the VPAA. Upon conclusion of the self-study and review by the external consultant, the consultant submits a review of the program that is shared with the program, department, administration, and eventually the Chancellor. Program faculty review the report, reflect on its findings, and plan to implement feasible changes.

The Biology Department engaged in a peer-led external review in 2015. The [self-study](#), developed by the faculty, contained information about the department's mission and goals as well as its faculty, students, and facilities. Student admission requirements and program requirements were also included. Assessment of program and department quality was discussed and included results from student capstones, a focus group and a student survey, an exit exam, job placement, the B.S. in Medical Lab Science, and faculty quality as measured by promotions and scholarly presentations and publications. Perceived strengths and weaknesses were included as well as opportunities and threats for the Biology Department going forward. The [external review](#) by the consultant included information about the Biology Department's strengths and assets, issues warranting attention, issues beyond the department, and a summary.

Similarly, the Computer Science program completed a [self-study](#) in 2013. Once the self-study was complete, an external consultant was hired to review the program. The consultant reviewed the self-study and visited the campus to meet with students and faculty and any others deemed necessary. The [external review](#) of the Computer Science program included strengths, challenges, opportunities, threats, and recommendations with rationale. Additional external program review materials are located on the [VPAA SharePoint portal](#).

All academic programs are also reviewed annually in conjunction with MSU's campus-wide assessment process, discussed in Criterion 4B. Assessment of programs includes a thorough review by program faculty of data gleaned using direct and indirect measurement tools that address student learning outcomes. Annual assessment plans are maintained in on the [VPAA SharePoint portal](#).

MSU has policies in place for the evaluation of all credits that it transcripts including those credits transferred to MSU for undergraduate and graduate students, both domestic and international. These policies are in compliance with [North Dakota University System \(NDUS\) Policy 402.4](#) and are overseen by the [Registrar's Office](#). Policies also outline MSU's acceptance of [CLEP and AP](#) as well as credits earned by military personnel. [International transcripts](#) require course-by-course evaluation by World Education Services (WES), Education Credential Evaluators (ECE), or American Education Research Corporation (AERC).

In accordance with [NDUS Policy 402.4](#), MSU has policies and practices that assure the quality of the credits it accepts in transfer. The Graduate School, for example, limits the number of transfer credits considered for acceptance to nine semester hours. MSU participates in the General Education Requirement Transfer Agreement (GERTA) to ensure General Education taken at another NDUS institution with the same prefix and course number are equivalent and accepted. As noted above, all international transcripts require professional third-party evaluation for transfer consideration.

MSU maintains and exercises authority over its curriculum. Faculty within each program are responsible for determining the appropriate prerequisite course(s) and ensuring the prerequisite is attached to the necessary course. Prerequisites are validated through the MSU curriculum process, outlined in Criterion 3A. Moreover, faculty within departments and divisions are responsible for establishing course content and establishing appropriate rigor for course level. Program assessment, which includes establishing and measuring student learning outcomes, is developed and conducted by faculty and is used to maintain relevant, up-to-date content and pedagogy as well as program currency. Early Entry (dual credit) courses follow the campus syllabus and are aligned with department and division practices for course content, rigor, and assessment. Additionally, all Early Entry course faculty adhere to policies and procedures in the [Early Entry manual](#) provided by the Center for Extended Learning (CEL).

MSU evaluates the success of its graduates by collecting [graduate job placement data](#) and through professional licensure examination results such as the [CPA Licensure](#), [Praxis I and II for Teacher Education](#), and the [NCLEX for Nursing](#). [Internship, clinical practice](#), and [student teaching](#) placements are coordinated by faculty within each college. Additionally, in the fall of 2014, MSU's Teacher Education program, along with other ND teacher education programs in the ND Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (NDACTE), agreed to support a common survey of student teachers, [graduates in their first year of teaching](#), and [supervisors of first year teachers](#). This collaborative process enabled institutions to pool resources to develop well-tested instruments with excellent reliability and validity. Since 2015, survey data from all three surveys has been collected and compiled. Results have been shared from individual institutions to NDACTE and then back from NDACTE to individual institutions with aggregated and disaggregated information. This information has been used by institutions within the states, and specifically at MSU, for program improvement. While initial response rates were low for several institutions in the state, including MSU, MSU has worked hard and has increased response rates for the 2016-17 surveys. This year, MSU's Teacher Education unit is acting on two separate program improvement issues that emerged from the survey results.

## Sources

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- Academic Program Review Cycle
- Academic Program Review Process
- Accreditation
- Biology External Review 2015
- Biology Self-Study 2015
- CLEP and AP Policies
- CoB IACBE Reaffirmation of Accreditation Letter 2015
- Computer Science External Review 2014
- Computer Science Self-Study 2013
- CPA Licensure Pass Rates
- Early Entry (Dual Credit) Program Policy Manual
- Graduate School Transfer Credit Policy
- Graduate Survey Reports 2012-15
- IACBE Self-Study Report 2013-14 Final
- International Student Transfer Guidelines
- Licensure Pass Rates for PRAXIS I and II and NCLEX
- MSU TTS Report 2016 Final
- MSU VPAA SharePoint Portal
- ND Common Metrics 2015 Supervisor Survey
- NDUS 402.4 Transfer Credit Policy
- Nursing ACEN Follow up Report
- Nursing ACEN Reaccreditation Report
- Nursing Self Study Report
- SBHE 403.1.2 Instructional Program Evaluation
- Student Internships Clinicals
- Student Teaching Placements Spring 2017
- Transfer Student Guidelines

## 4.B - Core Component 4.B

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The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.

1. The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.
2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.
3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

### Argument

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Minot State University (MSU) demonstrates its commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning. Campus-wide assessment is a priority, as noted by action items in the new strategic plan, [Empowering Generations](#). MSU will strengthen assessment and accreditation efforts by establishing responsibility for ongoing regional accreditation requirements and developing a strategic assessment program of campus. The new Strategic Planning and Budget Council will be charged with implementing *Empowering Generations*.

Faculty collaborate in developing program learning goals and objectives, as well as appropriate assessment plans that include both indirect and direct measurement tools. Assessment data are gathered during summer, fall, and spring and reviewed annually by faculty. Fall Assessment Day is set aside for faculty to analyze assessment data, discuss findings, and develop action plans for addressing changes to program curriculum and delivery as well as to the assessment plan itself. The Fall Assessment Day may also be used by faculty to conduct student testing, presentations, or, as is the case in the Art Department, faculty-student assessment of [student art exhibitions](#).

Each program submits an [annual assessment report](#) to the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) in November. The VPAA reviews all assessment reports and works with program faculty to carry out action plans for improving programs based on assessment results. Archives of annual assessment reports are maintained on the MSU SharePoint portal and may be accessed by department/division chairs and their administrative assistants, the Director of Institutional Research, and the VPAA's office. Other faculty or staff may request access to the files through Institutional Research or the VPAA's office.

Program goals and objectives are published in the [Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs](#). Each program determines how these goals and objectives are addressed in the curriculum. For example, for programs in the [College of Business](#) and [Teacher Education](#), faculty

map objectives to specific courses to ensure the objectives are met. [Course syllabi](#) often include program student learning goals and outcomes specific to the course.

External program review, which usually includes program assessment, is completed on a [rotating basis](#), as required by [North Dakota University System \(NDUS\) policy](#) and individual program discipline specific accreditation agencies. Additionally, academic units such as [Nursing](#) and the [College of Business](#) submit annual or biannual external assessment plans and results to their accrediting agencies.

General Education student learning goals and outcomes are articulated in the Undergraduate Catalog and the MSU website. Development of the General Education curriculum is discussed in Criterion 3B. The Faculty Senate [General Education](#) and [Academic Assessment](#) committees collaborate to establish and maintain a [General Education assessment plan](#). Faculty propose courses for inclusion in [General Education](#), and the General Education committee screens applications and makes recommendations for course approval to the Faculty Senate. Proposals include a core syllabus common to all sections of the proposed course; narrative that explains how the proposed course addresses the developmental content area's description, learning outcomes, and course guidelines; and description of a specific student work product/assignment common to all sections of the proposed course that can be evaluated to determine a student's mastery of the learning outcomes. Faculty use rubrics, adapted from AAC&U's LEAP VALUE rubrics and approved by the Faculty Senate, to assess the extent to which students acquire the skills, capacities, experiences, and perspectives specified in each area of General Education. In 2016-17, [General Education assessment](#) was revamped to streamline the process by implementing an electronic survey tool. This survey will produce quantitative data to improve the process of assessing student learning outcome achievements across courses. The survey will be implemented fall 2017, and analyzed data from this new instrument will be discussed at spring 2018 Assessment Day.

Programs that support student learning beyond the classroom are identified as co-curricular by MSU. Therefore, co-curricular programs are student services and activities, including special events, related to academic disciplines. While co-curricular program assessment is not formalized at MSU, several programs have established outcome and assessment plans, and all programs participate in yearly planning. Each co-curricular program reporting to the Vice President for Student Affairs (VPSA) submits an [annual program plan](#) listing goals, actions steps, outcomes/benchmarks, and deadlines. The focus of these goals is on program improvement; goals do not articulate student outcomes but suggest improvement in student support. [Reports are updated](#) near the end of the academic year to assess progress toward the goals. Goal assessment is noted as complete, ongoing, or not complete. Ongoing and not completed goals include explanations and new deadlines.

Additionally, all non-academic programs participated in a campus-wide prioritization process, MSU's HLC Quality Improvement Project, in 2014. Prioritization reports provided each program's background, current status, viability, and future plans; and, in most cases, identified program outcomes and methods for evaluating the program's performance. Staff, faculty, and campus leaders were involved in the prioritization reports, available on the MSU SharePoint portal.

As co-curricular programs, the Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning (CETL) and the Center for Extended Learning (CEL) provide faculty and student support. Originally funded under a Federal Title III grant, CETL has student outcomes and assessment measures in place for the majority of its programming. Examples of assessment tools used in CETL programs include those for First-Year Experience (FYE) [Peer Mentoring](#), [Peer Tutoring](#), [Supplemental Instruction](#), and [Academic Advising](#). Analysis of data gleaned from these measurement tools is used to assess student learning as well as performance of those students involved in the peer activities. [New Student Orientation](#) has recently been restructured and incorporated under the CETL umbrella; outcomes and assessment measures are in development. CEL also supports student learning through excellence in distance education delivery. CEL annually updates its [strategic plan and articulates a mission and values](#) statement. CEL assesses its achievement through regular faculty and student satisfaction surveys. CEL's [assessment results](#) are used in revising the strategic plan to incorporate areas needing improvement.

Student activities include programs under both Student Affairs and Academic Affairs. An example of a co-curricular student activity is [student engagement](#). Directed by CETL, the outcome of engagement is to connect faculty, staff, and students to each other and to the greater community. Assessment of engagement activities is completed when students submit the engagement activity through the online Engagement Honor Roll form, and CETL confirms the experience with the listed supervisor, verifying completion of the hours submitted. Once all information is verified, CETL submits a request to the Registrar's Office to add a notation to the transcripts of those students who have successfully completed the requirements. Hours may be accumulated over several semesters. Student transcripts will show [Engagement Honor Roll](#) status for the semester in which the student totals 50 hours of reported and verified activities.

MSU does not currently focus on co-curricular program planning and assessment. Few programs have established outcome assessment plans. The new strategic plan, *Empowering Generations*, references co-curricular programming in Goal 3 (Objective 5, Action Item 4) to expand curricular and co-curricular diversity initiatives, and in Goal 4 (Objective 2, Action Item 3), to develop living-and-learning communities that offer support, co-curricular involvement, and inclusion. As well, Goal 1 includes the importance of student wellness and community services, both areas included as co-curricular programming. MSU has taken positive steps toward establishment of [living-and-learning communities for fall 2017](#) and will continue to build living-and-learning communities as student interest grows.

Recognizing a growing need for clearly articulated co-curricular programs with student learning outcomes, MSU proposes to address co-curricular programming in its next Quality Improvement Project. Defining co-curricular program at MSU, determining overall student learning outcomes, and developing assessment plans as well as evaluating current programming will be included in MSU's project goals.

Annual assessment results are analyzed and discussed by academic program faculty and co-curricular staff (where plans are in place) resulting in action steps to improve program quality for the following assessment cycle. At times, assessment processes are revised to provide more useful data. As a campus, the most recent academic improvements and changes resulting from the prior year's assessment report were the review and revision of the General Education

assessment process. Changes to the General Education assessment process are discussed in Criterion 3B.

MSU sets aside one day each fall and spring for assessment purposes. Fall Assessment Day generally focuses on internal activities such as faculty review and analysis of program assessment data from the past three semesters. Spring Assessment Day agendas vary, but usually include activities guided by the Academic Assessment Committee for professional development. For example, the past two years have been devoted to the discussion and improvement of the General Education assessment process. In past years, MSU has invited [assessment professionals](#) to provide best practices and address specific assessment issues for the campus.

Throughout the year, the Academic Assessment Committee continually seeks ideas for sharing successful assessment plans. For example, in [2015-16](#), several department/division chairs presented their program assessment procedures to the committee so that committee members could be better informed about the variety of assessment practices on campus. These presentations in part contributed to discussions on how to improve our General Education assessment.



## Sources

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- Academic Advising Student Outcomes and Assessment
- Academic Assessment Committee SharePoint Portal
- Academic Program Review Cycle
- Appendix B Article III Academic Assessment Committee
- Application for General Education
- Assessment Art Student A Example
- Assessment Art Student B Example
- Assessment Art Student C Examples
- Assessment Committee Minutes 2015-16
- Assessment Day Speakers
- Assessment of General Education
- CEL Assessment Data
- Center for Extended Learning
- CETL Engagement
- CETL FYE Peer Mentor Evaluation
- CETL Supplemental Instruction
- CoB IACBE Reaffirmation of Accreditation Letter 2015
- Empowering Generations
- Engagement Honor Roll
- Example of Matrix of Student Learning Outcomes Aligned with Curriculum CEHS MED
- Example of Matrix of Student Learning Outcomes Aligned with Curriculum COB MSM
- Examples of Annual Assessment Reports
- Examples of Co-Curricular Program Prioritization Reports
- Examples of Syllabi with Student Outcomes
- Faculty Senate Bylaws Appendix B Article III General Education Committee
- Goals for Student Affairs
- Goals Student Affairs Assessed
- New Student Orientation Program
- Nursing ACEN Reaccreditation Report
- Peer Tutoring Evaluation
- Residence Life Living-and-Learning Communities
- SBHE 403.1.2 Instructional Program Evaluation

## 4.C - Core Component 4.C

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The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion that are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations, and educational offerings.
2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs.
3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

### Argument

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Minot State University's (MSU) current strategic plan, *Empowering Generations*, establishes a goal for 2023 to have a graduation rate of 50% (defined as the percentage of first-time, full-time undergraduate students who start during fall semester and graduate within 6 years) and a retention rate of 80% (defined as the percentage of first-time, full-time undergraduate degree-seeking students who start during fall semester and enroll the following fall semester). MSU's fall 2016 graduation rate was 43% while their retention rate was 70%. In 2011, two years prior to the end of MSU's previous strategic plan, *Vision 2013*, the graduation rate goal was 50%, while the retention rate goal was 75%. At that time, the graduation rate was 39% and the retention rate was 71%. Additionally, as an institution in the North Dakota University System (NDUS), MSU provides an [annual campus plan](#) aligning MSU with the [NDUS strategic plan](#). In response to the NDUS goal to "Equip students for Success," MSU will focus on continuing to increase graduation and retention rates, setting a three-year goal of a consistent rate of 78-80% for retention. The three-year graduation rate goal is 45% with a five-year goal of 47%.

The Title III Part A - Strengthening Institutions grant, awarded in 2010, created the Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning (CETL) with two objectives: 1) to increase levels of engagement among MSU students to the level of our peer institutions, as measured by the National Survey of Student Engagement, and 2) to increase MSU's first-to-second year retention and six-year graduation rates. As reported in the final [Annual Performance Report \(2014-15\)](#), student engagement and, therefore, retention, increased primarily as a result of the First-Year Experience (FYE). The overall retention rate of MSU increased to 75% with the implementation of the FYE requirement. Graduation rates have also indicated the success of CETL programming. In the first four years of the Title III program, graduation rates ranged from 30% to 39%. The 2014 graduation rate was 40%, meeting the goal set forth in the grant. Minot State University saw an

additional 2% increase in the last year of the Title III grant, with a 2015 graduation rate of 42% and another 1% increase to 43% for 2016. The graduation rate for 2017 is currently being analyzed and should be available at the time of the site visit.

MSU's federally funded TRiO program, POWER, established similar goals for student persistence (75%) and graduation (45%) for 2015-20. In the 2015-16 Annual Performance Report, POWER reported a 79% persistence rate among [traditional students](#) and a 75% persistence rate among [students with disabilities](#). The graduation rate was 35% for traditional students; a rate was not available for the students with disabilities.

MSU continues to progress toward its 50% graduation rate. Retention has fluctuated between 65-75% over the past five years. In 2015, NDUS purchased [Starfish Early Alert](#), a student retention tool that helps students and their advisors stay informed about students' academic progress. MSU implemented Starfish in fall 2015 and continues to provide regular training sessions to encourage faculty usage. [Current usage statistics](#) are recorded based on the number of alerts, or "flags" raised each semester. These data help the institution determine needs for future training of Starfish use, areas for strengthening student support, and times of the semester when academic issues most often occur. In 2016, NDUS added [PAR](#) to the package, providing institutions access to predictive analytics to identify factors related to student progress and success. MSU is currently training faculty and staff to use PAR. During 2016-17, the Registrar and Institutional Research Director gave a demonstration of PAR to MSU's Academic Affairs Council and Retention Committee, as well as to the department/division chairs. Additional statewide training on PAR and Starfish were provided in June 2017. An NDUS Starfish Users group has been formed to communicate with all NDUS institutions.

Each year, MSU's Institutional Research Director produces a Fact Book that includes [retention and graduation rates](#). Retention of first-year students (fall to fall) has varied between 65% and 75% over the past five years; prior to fall 2011, retention was generally about 70%. This variation in the past five years may be attributed to the lingering effects of Minot's 2011 flood. Noted, however, is that retention, and thus persistence toward the degree, is consistently increasing for third and fourth years. Graduation rates have also been increasing at a steady pace, from 30% in 2008 to 43% in 2016. MSU should be on target to reach our 2023 goals for retention and graduation.

In addition to trends reported in the Fact Book, beginning in 2015 MSU implemented use of Data Metrics to track first-year students. Student cohorts are tracked from enrollment through graduation; prior to 2015, MSU relied on data from our CRM, Hobsons, but realized that this online tracking included inquiry through first year enrollment only. Data Metrics tracking is performed each summer semester, following graduation, and reports show data for five years. Information includes number and percentage of students who graduated from MSU, graduated from another institution, are still enrolled at MSU, are still enrolled but at a different institution, have stopped out, have stopped out and returned, have transferred, and are deceased. Using these data, administration can determine retention and persistence fluctuations and address concerns as necessary.

The NDUS employs [Student Achievement Measure \(SAM\)](#) to track graduation rates across North Dakota institutions. Goal 3, *Equip students for success*, and Objective 3.3, *Remove barriers to registering and advising transfer students*, is used by MSU to track our improving graduation rates of transfer students. Each [college also maintains graduation data](#) for both majors and second majors. This information has been used along with other information to make tough decisions about program continuation during times of budget reductions. The MAT Math, MAT Science, and Master of Music Education programs are no longer accepting students. Programs deactivated due to low numbers and/or limited faculty resources include the Elementary/Middle School Math Concentration in the MEd, BSEd Communication Arts, BA in Arabic, BSEd in German, Theatre Management minor, Creative Dramatics and Movement minor, and concentrations in Developmental Disabilities/Autism Spectrum Disorders, Theatre Services, Creative Dramatics concentration, and Arabic.

This fall, the Retention Committee will focus on the results from the [Student Satisfaction Inventory \(SSI\)](#). The SSI identified a few challenges the campus can improve upon, as well as areas of strength to be continued. The Director of Institutional Research is currently analyzing the First-Year Experience surveys from a few years in order to identify challenges and strengths. MSU has been drawing information from several areas in order to improve retention and graduation rates; we are now at a point where the information sources need to be reviewed and combined to create a consistent, reliable information source for decision-making.

MSU is fortunate to have a Director of [Institutional Research](#) whose primary responsibility is to collect, maintain, and analyze data as well as produce informational reports for campus decision-making. Having this dedicated position provides consistency and understanding of processes and reporting. Retention, persistence, and completion data are gathered through [IPEDs](#), SSI, Data Metrics, Starfish, FYE surveys, and PAR. Additionally, MSU uses NDUS reporting through SAM. As noted above, however, MSU is in a position now to review the data collection instruments and develop a more concise, consistent plan.

During summer 2017, MSU has contracted with Maguire Associates to review our campus retention efforts and make recommendations for best practices. This external agency works only with higher education and will audit our website, evaluate marketing and recruitment tactics, review campus retention efforts, and review organizational structure and operational practices for most effective enrollment results.

## Sources

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- Data Metrics Cohort Report 2016
- Degrees Conferred Within Each College
- Graduation and Retention Rates
- Institutional Research
- IPEDS 2016
- MSU Campus Action Plan for NDUS
- MSU Trio Program POWER Annual Performance Report 2015-16
- NDUS SAM Objective 3.3
- NDUS Strategic Plan
- PAR
- POWER APR Students with Disabilities
- SSI Summary Report
- Starfish Early Alert
- Starfish Statistics
- Title III 2014-15 APR

## 4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

### Summary

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Minot State University (MSU) demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs. Academic programs complete annual program assessments, and every seven years, programs are reviewed by an accrediting agency or an external consultant. These assessments provide feedback about program quality that is used to improve programs, teaching, student learning, and faculty scholarship as well to revise and update curricula.

Staff in the Registrar's Office evaluate transcripts for course credits in compliance with North Dakota University System (NDUS) policies and those of MSU to ensure quality of transfer credit. MSU is part of the North Dakota University System's General Education Requirement Transfer Agreement (GERTA) which ensures easy transfer of General Education courses between NDUS institutions. All MSU courses, regardless of delivery mode or location, have the same expectations for student learning and associated assessments. Syllabi are shared among dual credit instructors and adjuncts to ensure common expectations and outcomes as well as similar rigor.

Job placement rates are maintained by the Career Services office. In addition, some programs track their students as part of their accreditation requirements. Annual assessment reports typically document the placement of program graduates.

MSU demonstrates its commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning and a commitment to this learning is in MSU's strategic plan, *Empowering Generations*. The recently formed Strategic Planning and Budget Council will work to implement the strategic plan while continually assessing and publicizing progress toward goals and action items. Evidence has already been posted for each goal on the strategic plan's website.

Faculty are fundamental in the role of assessment of student learning. They develop and approve curricula and develop program goals, student learning outcomes, and related assessment plans. Every year, faculty write, review, discuss, and reflect on program assessment results during Fall Assessment Day. Using these results, they create action plans for the following year. These annual program assessment reports are submitted to the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) where they are reviewed and stored. External program reviews occur at least once every seven years either by accrediting agencies or using a self-study and external consultant for non-accredited programs.

During 2016-17, a new assessment plan for General Education was developed. It was shared and discussed during Spring 2017 Assessment Day and eventually approved at Faculty Senate later that semester. The assessment plan for General Education is being implemented for the first time

this year. During Spring 2018 Assessment Day, results of the assessment of General Education will be reviewed and discussed.

Programs that support student learning beyond the classroom are identified as co-curricular by MSU, which include student services and activities, including special events, related to academic disciplines. Some examples of these programs are peer mentoring, peer tutoring, supplemental instruction, New Student Orientation, and engagement activities. Many services under Student Affairs, like wellness, living-and-learning communities, and student activities, are also co-curricular. Improving the assessment of these programs could likely be MSU's next HLC Quality Improvement Project.

As indicated above, MSU uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning. Fall and Spring Assessment Days are used to analyze and reflect on academic assessment results and develop plans to improve practices that impact student learning. Similarly, most co-curricular programs have goals they assess each year as complete, ongoing, or not complete. Ongoing and not completed goals include explanations and new deadlines. The Academic Assessment Committee fosters reflection on and improvement of assessment as well as effective methods that align with accrediting agencies and sound results.

MSU demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs. MSU's strategic plan established a goal for 2023 to have a graduation rate of 50% and a retention rate of 80%. Retention and graduation rates are published in the MSU Fact Book and as evidence on the MSU Strategic Plan website. Several programs support MSU's retention and graduation efforts, including First-Year Learning communities, Peer Mentors, peer tutoring and supplemental instruction, Residence Life activities, TRiO program, Starfish Early Alert, and PAR (Predictive Analytics Reporting).

In addition to retention and graduation rates as determined using cohort data of first-time, full-time first year students, the NDUS uses Student Achievement Measure to track graduation rates of students who transfer to other institutions. MSU also publishes the number of graduates in each major and second major.

MSU's Retention Committee was reformed in 2016-17 after not being active for several years. This committee's focus is exclusively on retention and graduation, or more generally, student success. During 2017-18, the Retention Committee will examine last year's results of the Student Satisfaction Inventory as well as persistence and retention of sophomores and juniors, and MSU's implementation and current use of PAR and Starfish Early Alert.

Finally, MSU employs a Director of Institutional Research who compiles a great deal of data for the campus. The Director of Institutional Research uses sound methodologies when collecting and analyzing data, drawing on her expertise in research and data analysis.

## **Sources**

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*There are no sources.*



## **5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness**

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The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

### **5.A - Core Component 5.A**

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The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

1. The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The institution's resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.
3. The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources, and opportunities.
4. The institution's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.
5. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.

### **Argument**

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Recently, the State of North Dakota has experienced a downturn in revenues that impacted most state agencies, including higher education. In February 2016, and August 2016, North Dakota University System (NDUS) institutions were charged with reduction "allotments" totaling 6.55% or approximately \$3.22 million from the 2015-17 biennial budget. Minot State University (MSU) was required to reduce its budget by 4.05% or \$1,991,793, for 2015-16, and another 2.5% reduction or \$1,229,502 for 2016-17. During 2016-17, revenue projections resulted in the State Legislature preparing higher education spending bills for the 2017-19 biennium with reduced appropriation of 20%. Institutions in the NDUS were directed to prepare their 2017-19 budgets accordingly. At the conclusion of the [North Dakota Legislative Session](#), the final MSU appropriation for the 2017-19 biennium was reduced by approximately \$8.8 million, or 18.5%, from the 2015-17 biennium.

Despite this recent reduction in state support, MSU operates on a sound financial basis, as shown on the [FY2016 North Dakota University System financial statements](#). The NDUS requires institutions to have balanced budgets with 5% reserves. MSU has a balanced budget even after reductions and is at 4.94% in reserves. MSU has total assets of \$113 million, with total liabilities of \$23 million. MSU's debt load is quite small, at approximately \$12 million, with debt servicing being a very small percentage of the budget. Operating and non-operating revenues

(including all state support) for 2015-16 were \$57.4 million, and operating and non-operating expenses were \$58.2 million. The net position of MSU at the end of 2015-16 was \$90.5 million, which was down \$774,118 from 2014-15. MSU's [Composite Financial Index](#) has been relatively steady over the last several years.

MSU's major revenue sources in 2015-16 were state appropriations (43.0%), tuition and fees (25.6%), grants and contracts (16.4%), and auxiliary enterprises (7.1%). State support is determined by a funding formula on a bi-annual basis. MSU is also supported by the MSU Foundation, which for 2015-16 managed in excess of \$19 million in investments. The MSU Foundation has an endowment spending policy of 5% of the three-year rolling average of the endowment value. The MSU Foundation does not have supplemental draws on endowments; rather its intention is to reduce the spending rate to solidify sustainability.

MSU retains [tuition and fee revenue](#) as operating revenue for the campus. Tuition and fees are charged on a per credit basis, up to and including 12 credits and over 18 credits; 12-18 credits are charged at a flat rate. All students except those pursuing dual credit, regardless of mode of delivery, pay \$58.72 per credit for fees. Fees support student organizations and technology at the campus and state level. Fees from distance students, other than dual credit, support access costs for online learning. Distance students do not contribute to campus student organizations, contribute only a limited amount to the statewide student organization, and pay a small fee toward student support specific to their mode of delivery.

In regard to tuition and fee revenue, MSU's student headcount remains down by some 500 students compared to where MSU was in 2010, the fall semester before the devastating flood. Enrollment increased modestly last fall, but MSU remains at an historically low point relative to [enrollment over the past 15-20 years](#). Declining enrollment may be attributed to a number of external issues, including regionally changing demographics, recent impacts in the North Dakota oil patch, lingering community issues associated with flood recovery, smaller graduating high school classes in North Dakota, a weakened Canadian exchange rate, the competitive nature of higher education in this region, and more students seeking education in the trades and skilled areas. As a campus, however, MSU is working to address enrollment challenges in a number of ways. As of this summer, plans are underway to implement a new four-year renewable scholarship in fall 2018. MSU has contracted with Maguire and Associates consulting group to provide marketing recommendations. Private giving continues to grow, with this past year [setting a record](#) in contributions. The new strategic plan proposes creation of new opportunities for students, and fall 2017 freshmen enrollment is slightly up for the third straight year.

Grants and contracts contributed \$6,234,121 to the operating revenue in 2015-16. Funding was awarded through private, state, and federal funding. Examples of grants received to support student services included the U.S. Department of Education [Title III Strengthening Institutions grant](#) received in 2010 for \$1,998,316. The Center of Engaged Teaching and Learning (CETL) (see Criterion 3D) was established with this funding, and MSU assumed financial responsibility for CETL following the ending of the grant in 2016. MSU received a [TRiO grant](#) or \$1,061,586 for 2010-16. The funding established and maintains the [POWER Center](#) to provide academic support to first-generation college students, low-income students, and students with disabilities.

The TRiO grant was renewed for September 2015 through August 2020. In 2015, the State of North Dakota established a Challenge Grant program to provide matching funds for donations over \$25,000. To date, MSU has received donations of \$6,055,960.62 and matching funds of \$3,167,010.51 for a total of \$9,222,971.13. The majority of these funds have been endowed to support student scholarships. Finally, MSU has partnered with the University of North Dakota for several years to support student/faculty research through [INBRE](#).

The [North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities](#) (NDCPD) is a University Center of Excellence on Developmental Disabilities, Education, Research and Service. NDCPD is part of a network of similar programs at universities throughout the United States. NDCPD provides services throughout the region for people of all ages and abilities. Over the last three year, [NDCPD](#) has brought in over \$10 million in grants and contracts. NDCPD contributes substantially to MSU's revenue base through federal and state indirect contributions. For 2015-16, [this contribution was \\$458,103](#).

MSU's [Federal Negotiated Indirect Rate](#) for July 2016 through June 2020 is 32%; our prior rate was 30% from July 2012 through June 2016. Both rates are based on Modified Total Direct Cost. Indirect collected in 2016 was \$672,906. All departments with full (32%) indirect rates receive 35% of the indirect into their local fund for department use. Remaining indirect is maintained by MSU administration for repairs, maintenance, and construction projects.

MSU's auxiliary enterprises include the campus bookstore, Barnes & Noble, the food services, Sodexo, and student housing.

MSU maintains 25 campus buildings, including five co-ed residence halls and three apartment buildings, with a total 774 beds available in 2016-17. The occupancy rate from 2015-16 to 2016-17 dropped slightly (72% to 65%); however this drop may be attributed to MSU's removal of the Beaver Lodge trailers, set up temporarily to handle additional housing needs following the 2011 Souris River flood. Overall, fall occupancy rates are higher than spring.

MSU has 113 classrooms located throughout the campus, and most faculty have a private office. The MSU Dome, Wellness Center, Student Center, Swain Hall, and the Herb Parker Stadium house athletic facilities as well as publicly accessible wellness opportunities, such as the walking path in the Dome and the swimming pool in the Student Center. Student study spaces are numerous and are incorporated into most campus buildings. The Gordon B. Olson Library, for example, provides individual and group study rooms and a limited number of graduate student/faculty carrels for research. The main floor of the library was renovated in 2014-15 to be an open space in keeping with the information commons design. This allows students the freedom for individual and group work.

Recent additions to the campus include a new football stadium with a press box funded by \$4M from the City of Minot's sales tax revenue and approximately \$300,000 of local campus funding. This fall, a [seasonal air-supported dome](#) over the football field will become operational. Funding was secured through private donations and a \$1M appropriation from the City of Minot. This past year, [Facilities Management](#) was relocated to a new \$2.4M building on the north end of campus. This building will house facilities personnel, equipment, and the motor pool. The

previous building may eventually be renovated for an academic space; it currently houses Safety and Security.

MSU's technical infrastructure is supported by [IT Central](#) for computers, networking, and software issues; the NDUS Help Desk for Campus Connection issues; and the Office of Instructional Technology (OIT) for online course design and troubleshooting. Additionally, the library staff provides a link on the library website for distance education students. IT Central supports six computer labs available for class and individual student use, provides repair and maintenance to MSU-owned computer equipment, assists students with personal computer problems, maintains smart classroom technology, installs all campus computing devices, and maintains the network. MSU students, faculty, and staff can retrieve links to software from the IT Central website. IT Central also maintains an online Help Desk. The [NDUS Help Desk](#) supports users of Campus Connection, the statewide system student administration system. The NDUS Help Desk provides 24-7 online assistance.

[OIT](#) maintains the instructional side of Blackboard Learn. Staff assist faculty in designing and maintaining online courses and assist students with access issues. OIT oversees course design and reviews all courses initially and periodically to assure accessibility and best practices in online learning. The OIT website includes self-help tutorials for students and faculty. Faculty may engage in numerous training activities, either virtually or in the OIT office using the Media Lab.

MSU's resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are the primary focus. In spring 2017, MSU instituted a [new budget process](#) to facilitate the following objectives:

1. Align university resources with MSU's mission.
2. Create a detailed financial plan to advance the strategic plan.
3. Allocate MSU resources to areas of need or best uses.
4. Create measurable financial objectives and roadmap.
5. Use a formal methodology to engage a variety of stakeholders in the campus community in the planning process.
6. Facilitate collaborative strategic planning.
7. Create "buy-in" for the campus community to MSU's financial direction.
8. Assist in the articulation and communication of vision, strategy, and goals.
9. Ensure compliance with NSUS and North Dakota regulations and goals.
10. Monitor revenues and expenditures against desired benchmarks.
11. Impose financial discipline and deadlines.
12. Control and limit expenditures.
13. Plan for future growth or contraction.
14. Use the budgets as a component of program assessment and performance evaluation.

During the development of the [new strategic plan](#), MSU was also aware of the North Dakota's budget concerns. While the budget situation did not prevent the strategic plan from being forward-looking in scope, developers were cognizant of the challenges presented with declining state support. Goals align with the [NDUS Strategic Plan](#), while objectives and action items realistically build on current activities of both the system and the institution.

MSU's [Office of Human Resources](#) is run by a director who provides guidance to faculty and staff. The HR Director assists in campus hiring, training, and retirement negotiations. The director oversees employee benefits and is also responsible for ensuring MSU's compliance with federal and state equal opportunity and nondiscrimination laws and regulations.

MSU's staff are qualified and participate in ongoing training. NDUS policy guides the hiring process at MSU. The [NDUS Human Resource Policy Manual, Sections 2-4](#), outlines appointment, qualifications, and probationary periods for staff. [SBHE Sections 601, 602, and 603](#) address presidential searches, faculty appointments, and non-discrimination. Specific policies for the MSU hiring process are located in the [Faculty Hiring Manual](#). A handbook for classified staff is currently under development. These handbooks provide guidance for individuals currently employed by the university as well as direction for hiring. Open faculty and staff positions are publicly advertised on the MSU website, and position descriptions include qualifications, responsibilities, university overview, and application process. MSU uses [Frontline-ApplicantTrack](#) software to assist in the application and review process. Final hiring decisions rest with the appropriate vice president or athletic director and president.

Professional development and training of faculty and staff is the responsibility of the institution. Faculty new to MSU participate in a year-long [new faculty orientation](#) designed to develop necessary skills to be successful within their discipline and pedagogically. All faculty are also afforded the opportunity through the Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning to attend seminars associated with teaching. In addition, OIT provides faculty development opportunities associated with teaching online and use of online resources. University-sponsored Faculty Research Grants, Advanced Study Grants, and departmental funds can be used for travel to professional conferences. Classified staff training opportunities are offered by various departments throughout campus in areas such as use of institutional software and record keeping strategies. As noted in Criterion 2A, [staff also attend state and national training sessions, professional conferences and seminars](#). Annual training, mandated by State Board of Higher Education and MSU, is provided online for all employees to be aware of and report [fraud](#) and to understand responsibilities under the [Clery Act](#). Additional training for Title IX is currently being added.

MSU creates line-item budgets in its financial system at the beginning of each fiscal year and adjusts or transfers funding as requested or required within MSU's allowable parameters. Monthly and year-to-date budget reports detailing budgets, expenditures, and remaining budget are available upon request for departmental budget managers and administration. The MSU Business Office closely monitors budgets to ensure budget deficits do not occur. Budget and financial system training is always available for budget managers across campus.

## Sources

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- Annual Financial Reports June 2016
- Clery Act Training
- Empowering Generations
- Faculty Recruitment and Selection Guide for MSU

- Fall Enrollments by Headcounts 1997-2017
- Federal Negotiated Indirect Rate Letter 2016
- Fraud and Conduct Training for all NDUS Institutions
- Frontline Appli-Track
- Governors Funding Model
- Human Resources Home Page
- INBRE 2017-18 Signed
- IT Central
- MSU Budget Process
- MSU CFI
- MSU Facilities Building
- MSU Seasonal Dome
- NDCPD Awards 2014-17
- NDCPD Indirect
- NDCPD Web
- NDUS Help Desk
- NDUS Procedures for Hiring Section 2-4
- NDUS Strategic Plan
- New Faculty Orientation Fall 2016
- Office of Instructional Technology
- POWER TRiO Program and Funding
- Professional Development Opportunities for Minot State Staff
- Record Year of Giving
- SBHE 601.602.603 Hiring
- Senate Bill 2003
- Title III-CETL grants
- TRiO Grant Current
- Tuition and Fees 2016-17

## 5.B - Core Component 5.B

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The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight of the institution's financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in the institution's governance.
3. Administration, faculty, staff, and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

### Argument

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Minot State University's (MSU) governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission. MSU is one of eleven institutions in the North Dakota University System (NDUS). The NDUS supports the State Board of Higher Education's (SBHE) mission *to enhance the quality of life for all those served by the NDUS as well as the economic and social vitality of North Dakota*. [NDUS's administrative structure](#) provides leadership to the SBHE and the individual campuses as needed.

The SBHE is the governing board for MSU. The [SBHE](#) is comprised of seven North Dakota citizens who have been appointed by the Governor to serve four-year terms. Additionally, a student attending one of North Dakota's eleven public institutions of higher education is appointed for a one-year term by the governor. The [Council of College Faculties](#), a statewide organization representing ND faculty, selects the non-voting faculty advisor, and the [NDUS Staff Senate](#) selects the board's non-voting staff. The SBHE sets policy for the eleven public institutions and advocates for the NDUS. Additionally MSU has a [Board of Regents](#) who support and advocate for MSU through strategic planning, public relations, and advancement of the university faculty, students, and programs.

As part of recent campus budget reductions, [MSU's administrative structure](#) has recently changed, becoming flatter with fewer administrators. This new structure eliminated the academic dean level of administration, thereby enhancing shared governance and collaboration between top level administration and faculty. Shared governance is well established at MSU through [Faculty Senate](#), [Staff Senate](#), and the [Student Government Association \(SGA\)](#). Each representative group works collaboratively with administration, [Faculty Senate subcommittees](#), and [Institutional committees](#) to create university policies and procedures. As needed, ad hoc committees are established with membership representing constituents across campus. For example, in response to budget cuts specified by the governor, MSU's President formed the ad hoc Budget

Recommendation Committee (described in Criterion 2A) to ensure multiple campus entities were represented.

The SBHE and the NDUS meet regularly throughout the year and review several reports required of all institutions of higher education in the state. Institutions such as MSU are required to follow a robust set of [Academic, Administrative, Financial and Human Resources policies](#). MSU annually assesses institutional needs and bi-annually develops an institutional budget request within the state funding formula that complies with the established [SBHE Policy 802.6](#). SBHE budget guidelines include the roles of the Board, the NDUS Chancellor, and MSU in budget management. MSU's President and its chief fiscal officer, the Vice President of Administration and Finance, are responsible for meeting with and explaining the budget to SBHE members as well as legislative budget committees. The institutional budget requests are submitted to the NDUS Chancellor for approval. The Chancellor is responsible for the management of the financial, educational, and other policies of the system and reports to the SBHE. The Chancellor and NDUS staff review the requests and ensure the budget complies with the SBHE guidelines. Allocation of institutional resources is generally at the discretion of MSU administration and is based on the [MSU budgeting process](#). MSU reports to the SBHE Budget and Finance Committee on a semi-annual basis if there is a variance of +/- \$100,000 or 2 percent or more, whichever is greater, in any fund or revenue item.

As noted above, collaboration among administration, faculty, staff, and students is established at MSU through a committee structure. Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and the SGA are comprised of elected members who represent their constituents. Each committee also includes representation from administration and the other two committees. For example, the Faculty Senate includes MSU's President and Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) as non-voting members, two SGA representatives, and one Staff Senate representative. [Faculty Senate subcommittees](#) and Institutional committees include representatives from administration, faculty, staff, and students.

Another large institutional committee is [University Cabinet](#). The role of University Cabinet is to advise the president, provide a forum for communication on key university topics, appoint subcommittees, and distribute information about the campus. The committee is comprised of the university vice presidents, directors, and the presidents of the Faculty Senate, Staff Senates and SGA.

[Information sessions](#) are held at the beginning of the academic year during Convocation; the sessions inform and train faculty and staff on new policies, procedures, and technological changes. Convocation is held each fall, and college and department meetings are held regularly to provide information and engage faculty in discussions about major events or projects occurring on campus such as strategic planning and the Higher Learning Commission comprehensive visit.



## Sources

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- Board of Regents
- Committees
- Council of College Faculty
- Faculty Senate Bylaws Committees
- Faculty Senate Home Page
- Fall 2016 Convocation Mini Sessions
- MSU Budget Process
- MSU Organizational Chart August 2017
- NDUS Organizational Chart
- NDUS Staff Senate
- SBHE 802.6 Budget Management
- SBHE Members
- SBHE Policies
- SGA Home
- Staff Senate Home Page
- University Cabinet

## 5.C - Core Component 5.C

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The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.
5. Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

### Argument

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Minot State University (MSU) is undergoing several changes to better align its resources with its mission and priorities. A new mission statement and corresponding strategic plan, [\*Empowering Generations\*](#), were created during 2015-17 academic years. The strategic plan includes six clearly stated goals with accompanying objectives and action items. The new Strategic Planning and Budget Council will be implementing *Empowering Generations* and considering appropriate budget allocations necessary to carry out action items. A new [budgetary process](#) was created to be more inclusive of faculty and staff by having a clear hierarchical process. This process allows more integration between the budgeting process and MSU's strategic plan, as well as meets departmental goals. In addition, MSU completed a [program prioritization](#) in 2012-14 as a beginning evaluation process of MSU programs. Through this process, MSU administrators learned valuable information about programs; this information along with updated data will be useful in guiding financial decision making while supporting the strategic plan.

Departments are responsible for making sure their programs are appropriately funded and meet national accreditation standards for specific disciplines. The beginning of the yearly budgeting process involves significant input regarding the requests needed at the department level to fulfill its responsibilities. Departments must carefully evaluate their needs based on daily operations, faculty development, student support, and program updates. One of the department's responsibilities is to conduct annual program assessments and academic program reviews. Such reviews help departments identify needs for updates, improvement in curriculum, and professional development for faculty. As detailed in Criterion 4B, each program completes an annual assessment of program objectives to identify strengths, weaknesses, and challenges. Additionally, the program review process is multi-purposed with an emphasis on improving student learning, aligning student learning with the strategic plan, and ensuring that student learning is consistent with the needs of external stakeholders to increase employability. Budget requests are reviewed by the President's Staff and allocated as close as possible to the identified needs. Departments are held to their initial budget requests; in the case of an unexpected expense, departments can advocate for additional funding with the Vice President for Academic

Affairs (VPAA) and Vice President for Administration and Finance (VPAF). The VPAA oversees the internal budgeting process for academic units.

MSU's strategic plan, *Empowering Generations*, set goals, objectives, and action items attainable within five to seven years. The [planning process](#) involved a supervisory committee, a project council, and five subcommittees. Details about the strategic planning process are provided in Criterion 1A. Focus groups and surveys were used to gather information. Focus groups included faculty, staff, students, alumni, and area constituents from business, education, health care, and community organizations.

The budget process at MSU specifically addresses the capacity of the institution as well as the impact of revenue fluctuations. Every two years, the [Campus Master Plan](#) is revised to address capacity issues with the State Legislature. In determining the budget, MSU closely monitors enrollment and tuition revenue with weekly enrollment reports. University administration also closely follows legislative bills and is updated regularly by the North Dakota University System (NDUS) office regarding state revenue projections that affect the institution's state support. Recently, in response to reduced state revenue, MSU experienced an 18.5% reduction in state funding for the new biennial budget that began July 1, 2017. Additionally, tuition revenue budgets were reduced to better reflect previous shortfalls in enrollment. In order to balance MSU's budget with projected revenues, the 2017-19 biennial budget was reduced from the 2015-17 biennial budget by approximately 51 FTE positions. The funding for another 10 FTE positions was changed from state general funds to institutional local funds. Departmental operating budgets were reduced by approximately \$1.5 million dollars. MSU's administration has achieved a reserve of 5% of the previous year's general fund and tuition budget as mandated by State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) policy. The reserve is required to mitigate future large unexpected downturns in tuition revenues and/or state funding. The State Legislature and NDUS office authorized 4% tuition increases for each year of the 2017-19 biennium to help offset the impact of declining state support. Fiscal Thinking/Planning for the 2019-21 biennium was an agenda item for the President's Staff retreat in August 2017.

Minot State University anticipates and plans for emerging trends in education, as evidenced in its new strategic plan, [Empowering Generations](#). MSU's vision focuses on flexible delivery, technological challenges, innovation and creativity, and preparation for the future. This vision aligns with North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum's ideas for higher education in the upcoming months. Governor Burgum strives to reimagine and transform education through collaborative partnerships among K-12, higher education, and industry. He also proposes to create a nimble higher education that embraces technology and innovation in preparing students for 21st century jobs in a global economy. Toward this end, MSU continues to increase distance offerings, especially online; incorporate technology; and develop new programs addressing societal needs. MSU, the University of North Dakota, and North Dakota State University are currently collaborating on the development and delivery of programs in cybersecurity at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. MSU follows data trends in addressing needs and wants of incoming students, and is looking into competency-based learning and adopting four-year scholarships for incoming freshmen. Finally, MSU recently hired Maguire Associates to review its marketing,

retention, website, and Enrollment Services. Maguire Associates will recommend updates to assist in increasing enrollment and improving practices.

## **Sources**

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- Academic Program Review Process
- Campus Master Plan 2017-19
- Empowering Generations
- MSU Budget Process
- Strategic Planning Newsletters
- University Prioritization Process

## 5.D - Core Component 5.D

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The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

1. The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.
2. The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.

### Argument

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Minot State University (MSU) examines and documents its performance in several ways and is transparent in providing this information to its constituents. The primary document used to share MSU's performance is the annual [Fact Book](#), developed by the Office of Institutional Research. The Fact Book includes static and comparative detail about many aspects of MSU's performance and is archived on the Institutional Research website. The [Office of Institutional Research](#) administers surveys, analyzes results, prepares and publishes reports, and retains data for most internal campus research.

MSU evaluates its [operating and contributed income ratio](#) as well as its [operating expense](#) trends to determine needs for additional income. Expenses are analyzed by function. This financial information, combined with enrollment projections and [salary data](#), provides administration operational information for decision making when planning the biennial budget and tuition/fees requests from the state.

MSU collects and reports a variety of student information. The [College Student Inventory](#) (CSI) is administered during summer and fall New Student Orientation sessions and serves as an early intervention, early alert system based on students' self-reported information of their needs, strengths, attitudes, motivational patterns, resources, coping mechanisms, and receptivity to intervention. This information is most useful to academic advisors when working with students to plan their initial semester courses and activities.

Enrollment trends, including yearly [enrollment highlights](#), [student headcount and FTE comparisons](#), and trends about full- and part-time status, gender, and age are reported. Additionally, MSU compares its annual enrollment to that of [other North Dakota institutions](#). Student information is used at the department level for planning course section offerings and advising loads, and at the operational level for projecting student service needs such as tutoring and housing. Student data are also used in measuring and setting campus performance goals, such as [retention and graduation](#) rates.

Programs are assessed annually through a formal assessment process, detailed in Criterion 4B. Additionally, as noted in Criterion 4A, 11 programs hold discipline-specific accreditation and all programs are reviewed every seven years. Assessment, accreditation, and program review are

essential in maintaining currency in offerings and, as noted in sample reports, faculty use reports to set goals for program improvement and measure success during the next reporting cycle.

Faculty and [staff](#) are evaluated annually, as detailed in Criterion 3C. As part of faculty evaluation and student satisfaction, courses are evaluated fall and spring semesters using the electronic [Student Perception of Learning](#) process. Faculty consider students' ratings and comments when improving course pedagogy. Department/division chairs review Student Perception of Learning analyses for courses as part of the faculty annual performance evaluation. The Student Perception of Learning analyses also aid in planning faculty development activities and are components of tenure and promotion.

The [Student Satisfaction Survey](#) (SSI) and the [Priorities Survey for Online Learners](#) (PSOL) are administered and analyzed annually by the Director of Institutional Research. The SSI and PSOL measure what students deem important and their satisfaction with these areas at MSU. MSU's data are also compared with national averages. The SSI and PSOL results are used by university administrators to improve the quality of student life and learning by guiding objectives and action statements in the [strategic planning](#), strengthening student retention goals and initiatives, meeting accreditation requirements, and laying a foundation for future progress in areas identified as needing improvement.

MSU [faculty](#) and [staff](#) complete annual satisfaction surveys. These satisfaction surveys are used to maintain and build a supportive campus environment and increase staff and faculty retention. Feedback from each group is used by the respective Senates in part to set an agenda for areas of focus for the coming year. Administration collaborates with the Senates in addressing issues brought forward in the surveys.

MSU's [Career Services](#) completes an annual [Employment Survey](#) of graduates to assist the campus in learning more about where its students are located and whether they are employed within their disciplines or related areas. Such information is useful for recruiting materials and for soliciting employers to attend campus career fairs.

## Sources

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- 2008-15 CSI Summary
- 2016-17 Factbook
- Average Faculty Salaries
- Career Services
- CEL Priorities Survey for Online Learners 2004-17
- Empowering Generations
- Examples of Annual Assessment Reports
- Faculty Satisfaction Survey 2016-17
- Faculty Senate Bylaws Appendix B Article IV Faculty Evaluation
- Graduate Survey Reports 2012-15
- Graduation and Retention Rates
- Institutional Research

- NDUS Fall Enrollment
- Operating and Contributed Income Ratio
- Operating Expenses by Function
- SSI Summary Report
- Staff Performance Development Reviews
- Staff Satisfaction Survey 2016-17
- Student Enrollment Highlights
- Student Headcount and FTEs
- Student Perceptions of Learning Course Evaluation Results

## 5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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The institution's resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The institution plans for the future.

### Summary

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Over the past 18-24 months, North Dakota experienced a downturn in its economy due to reduced oil prices and agricultural commodities. As a result, Minot State University (MSU), as well as all other institutions in the North Dakota University System (NDUS), was asked to make two allotments totaling 6.55%, followed by an over 18% reduction to the 2017-19 biennial budget. These reductions were made in ways that preserved as many programs and opportunities for students as possible. No academic or athletic programs and no student services were eliminated at MSU. Distance sites were preserved with some modifications in staffing, and dual credit is still offered at the same capacity. MSU is leaner, but it still has the fiscal and human resources as well as the physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.

Even with the reductions, MSU continues to operate on a sound financial basis. The budget is balanced, required reserves are in place, and the debt load is small. Revenue sources include state appropriations, tuition and fees, grants and contracts, and auxiliary enterprises. The MSU Foundation also provides financial support in endowments. The Vice President for Administration and Finance (VPAF) outlined a resource allocation process, included in Criterion 5A, that ensures educational purposes are the primary focus. The staff of the Business Office use a well-developed process to budget and monitor expenses in consultation with supervisors across campus.

The new strategic plan includes six goals and 20 objectives. An objective of the newly formed Strategic Planning and Budget Council is to implement MSU's strategic plan, *Empowering Generations*, and to advise in the budget development and required MSU budget modification processes. Thus, the strategic plan and the university's budget will be developed and implemented with each other in mind.

MSU's hiring practices ensure new employees meet necessary qualifications. Faculty and staff participate in professional development. On- and off-campus workshops and conferences support improved performance and new knowledge acquisition as well as webinars. In addition, annual training is required by the State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) in some areas.

The SBHE, MSU Board of Regents, MSU administration, and the campus governing bodies (Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and Student Government Association) work together to provide leadership and support that allow MSU to fulfill its mission. Other state and institutional committees (e.g., Academic Affairs Council, ad hoc Budget Recommendation Committee, and University Chairs Council) also support effective and shared governance.



MSU follows the policies and procedures of the SBHE. Various committees and councils with representation from the NDUS campuses provide input about these policies and procedures as they are developed or changed. In the end, MSU has the freedom to set degree requirements within the SBHE policies. Often, institutions are given freedom to develop their own procedures to implement SBHE policy, which allows each institution to determine the best implementation method for that campus. Faculty, staff, and students also provide feedback on these policies and practices via their governing bodies.

MSU recently completed its strategic plan, which required large systematic and integrated planning. Moving forward to implement that plan will require the goals and their objectives be aligned with resources. The Strategic Planning and Budget Council will play a significant role in these decisions. It will oversee strategic planning implementation and budgeting processes, including sustainable resource allocation methodologies and mid-cycle budget modifications. It will also communicate with campus constituency groups (e.g., senates) and seek total understanding and commitment by campus.

In departments, chairs are responsible for aligning resources with student learning, the curriculum, and faculty scholarship and professional development. In other areas, like the Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning (CETL), the director, with input from her staff as well as from faculty and students (when applicable) and with final approval from her supervisor, determines where to allocate resources. Some committees, like the Retention Committee, may drive efforts and thus, resources, to improve or increase retention efforts.

Because change is inevitable and not all predictions hold, the Strategic Planning and Budget Council will regularly review goals, objectives, and action items and update them in consultation with campus. Similarly, MSU's plans are based on current capacity and adjustments are made as revenue sources change.

Finally, MSU works systematically to improve its performance. Evidence, data, and experience are used to drive decisions. Enrollment trends, student feedback, assessment results, and graduation and retention rates inform the campus, which prompts reflection, adjustments, and sometimes celebrations. This effort happens at all levels. Faculty review feedback from the Student Perception of Learning surveys that students complete each semester. Chairs review faculty self-evaluations, and other supervisors review staff self-evaluations. Faculty and staff complete satisfaction surveys that provide information to the campus and administration. The Chancellor reviews and provides feedback to the Presidents, and the SBHE also provides feedback and direction. The governance structures work together to provide higher education to our students and new knowledge and creative works to the broader community.

## Sources

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*There are no sources.*

