

Minot State University - ND

HLC ID 1519

STANDARD PATHWAY: Mid-Cycle Review

Review Date: 4/11/2022

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Context and Nature of Review

Review Date

4/11/2022

Review Type:

Mid-Cycle Review

Scope of Review

- Mid-Cycle Review
- Federal Compliance (if applicable)
- On-site Visit

- 2021–22 COVID-19 Response Form

Institutional Context

Minot State University(MSU) is a member of the North Dakota University System (NDSU) and is governed by the State Board of Higher Education (SBHE). MSU received initial, five-year accreditation from the North Central Association of Schools and Colleges in 1917. MSU's accreditation has been continuously renewed since that time. MSU is on the Standard Pathway and offers Associate's (1), Bachelor's (56), Master's (7) and Specialist (1) degrees along with certificate programs (19). Located within the city limits of Minot, North Dakota, MSU's campus holds 26 buildings. Over 60 clubs and organizations are available to students along with 17 NCAA II team sports.

Interactions with Constituencies

President

Vice President for Academic Affairs

Associate Vice President – Enrollment Management and Graduate School

Vice President for Administration and Finance

Vice President for Student Affairs

Vice President for Advancement

Director of Athletics

Director of Institutional Research

Director of Marketing

Director of Enrollment Services

Director of University Communications

Director of Institutional Assessment

Assistant Vice President for Business Services/Controller

Registrar

Board of Regents (3)

Faculty Serving on Various Committees Participating in Meetings (10)

Criteria 1 & 2 Open Forum Attendees (13)

Criteria 3 & 4 Open Forum Attendees (12)

Criterion 5 Open Forum Attendees (7)

Staff Attending Open Forum (55)

Faculty Attending Open Forum (24)

Students Attending Open Forum (7)

Drop in Meeting Attendee (1)

Additional Documents

<https://www.minotstateu.edu/>

<https://ndus.edu/sbhe/>

<https://msubeavers.com/>

1 - Mission

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

1.A - Core Component 1.A

The institution's mission is articulated publicly and operationalized throughout the institution.

1. The mission was developed through a process suited to the context of the institution.
2. The mission and related statements are current and reference 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 and related statements identify the nature, scope and intended constituents of the higher education offerings and services the institution provides.
4. The institution's academic offerings, student support services and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
5. The institution clearly articulates its mission through public information, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans or institutional priorities.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Minot State University (MSU) utilized a campus wide process to develop its mission and vision in 2015-2016. Simultaneously, the campus was engaged in developing the MSU's strategic plan, *Empowering Generations*, and which has continued to be refined and updated on an annual basis. Faculty, staff, students, the Board of Regents, and community leaders shared in creating the mission, vision and strategic plan through participation in of the Project Council, subcommittees, focus groups, surveys, and SWOT analysis. Throughout the strategic planning process, administration scheduled open forums for the campus at large to share information and gather feedback. Campus communication tools includes a strategic planning website and newsletters which provide updates of the process to the campus and external community. The new mission, vision, and goals were presented and distributed to the MSU community at Convocation in August 2016. The North Dakota State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) approved *Empowering Generations* in September of 2016.

During academic year 2016-2017, ninety faculty, staff, and students volunteered to serve on the goal committees with the charge to develop implementation plans that included milestones, actionable items, deadlines, responsible people, and resources. The implementation plans and updates on the progress of the strategic plan's action items were shared with the campus for discussion and refinement. The strategic plan, *Empowering Generations*, was finalized with action items and posted on MSU's website in May 2017, then announced to campus at Fall Convocation.

In academic year 2017-2018 the Strategic Planning and Budget Council (SPBC) met to refine and prioritize action items for each of the major strategic plan goals. After consultation with the campus community, a subgroup of the SPBC members were asked by the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA) to streamline and focus objectives and action items under each goal without compromising their general intent. This work was completed during summer and early fall of 2018. The revised goals, objectives, action items, progress and accomplishments were shared with the campus in November 2018. Beginning in 2018-2019 MSU revised the budget and planning process tied unit budget requests to the strategic plan. In spring of 2022 a draft of a new strategic plan was shared with the campus and feedback was received by the SPBC and President's Staff. The new strategic plan will be finalized during the summer of 2022 and implemented in fall of 2022.

MSU's academic programs are approved following North Dakota University System (NDUS) policy and specific professional accreditors and license boards. MSU promotes excellence in education through high-quality academic programming such as the First-Year Experience (FYE) Learning Communities that support students transition to university life and academic expectations. At the end of their undergraduate program of study, participation in culminating experience within their major to synthesize, demonstrate, and apply their knowledge. MSU students may choose from a wide range of general education courses and experiences designed to impart and develop skills that will allow them to flourish and make life-long contributions to their professional, civic, and social world regardless of discipline, major, or career path. Co-curricular activities outside the classroom complement learning that happens inside the classroom. Students have opportunities for active learning to prepare students for the twenty-first century world of work, including clinical, hands-on, and capstone-level experiences. The MSU's mission embraces scholarly activity and research, and its faculty work closely with students to support collaborative and undergraduate research. Scholarship is expected of all tenure-track and tenured faculty members and is built into the annual faculty evaluation process. Community engagement and a commitment to public service are important elements of the MSU mission. These experiences are expected, and most students, faculty, and staff participate. MSU students receive recognition and can have their community engagement documented through distinction on their transcripts. A component of the mission, a vibrant campus life is realized through a number of experiences and activities available for the campus community.

As a Carnegie Master's level institution, MSU's programs are broad in scope. It offers 64 Undergraduate majors, 57 minors, 53 concentrations, 15 pre-professional programs, seven certificate programs and one post baccalaureate program. It also offers seven master's degrees and seven graduate certificates, as well as one educational specialist degree. MSU has aligned its academic offerings and student support services with its stated mission and related statements as well as with the needs of its constituents. Academic programs at the university have expanded on its original mission of preparing teachers and currently serve the needs of local, state, region, and international communities with high-quality undergraduate and graduate programs as well as major and minor areas of study, certificates, concentrations, and pre-professional programs including the fine and performing arts, the humanities, education and the human service professions, sciences, technology, and business.

The MSU Academic programs are aligned with the mission and serve the needs of the region, state, country, and world. Through three colleges and a graduate school, programs span the humanities, fine and performing arts, education, social and natural sciences, human services, and business. Course and program offerings are online, in-person, hybrid, and at a distance to meet the needs of today's varied learners. The academic support services were centralized for ease of access as well as for collaboration for the success of students. The Academic Support Center houses several programs

that prepare students for workplace success, including the Career Center, Access Services and the POWER Student Support Center. The Career Center provides career exploration, employment opportunities and job-search skills. The Military Resource Center offers similar support for veterans, active-duty military personnel and their spouses and dependents. First Year students participate in the Frist-year Experience designed to support and facilitate student's transition to the university life and learn through community experience with their peer. Support services are in place to provide additional assistance to international students, Native Americans, students with disabilities, veterans, active military, students from low-income families, and those students who are first generation. The Wellness Center, Counseling Center and Lutheran Campus Ministries provide a variety of services and supports for students.

MSU articulates its mission in a variety of ways, the primary communication source is the university website which shares the mission, vision and strategic plan with the campus and external community. The undergraduate and graduate catalogs include the mission and vision statements. The strategic plan website is the repository for all documents including the Strategic Planning and Budgetary Committee documents related to past and current actions. The website for the Office of the President contains reports and news columns written for the Minot Daily News. The Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) website presents policy, operational practices, achievements, and access to data related to both academics and assessment. University Communications utilizes the website to share press releases and new stories with local and regional media. There is a publication for alumni, the Connections Magazine, newsletter for the employees and friends of MSU and daily campus announcements for the faculty, staff and students. The student newspaper is published biweekly. The Student Affairs website provides information for students and parents related to university affairs and plans.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.B - Core Component 1.B

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

1. The institution's actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public, not solely the institution or any superordinate entity.
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 external constituencies and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Students at MSU regularly engage in experiential learning through internships and externships in various community organizations, clinical experiences such as Communication Disorders Clinic and Adult Health Maintenance Promotion and Wellness Clinic located in Henry Towers, and student teaching at Magic City Day Care. MSU regularly hosts events for the public throughout the year and faculty, staff and students engage in community service (e.g., Native American Culture Center).

MSU is a member institution of the North Dakota University System (NDUS) and the State Board of Higher Education (SBHE). The NDUS is a unified system of higher education institutions organized in 1990 and governed by the SBHE. It is led by the chancellor and supports the SBHE's 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. The SBHE is the policy-setting and advocacy body for the NDUS. It entrusts the day-to-day operation and management of the University to the President.

MSU's operating expenditures for educational activities (instruction, academic support, student services, and institutional support) constituted 65.2 percent operating expenses in FY20 and 67.2 percent in FY21. MSU uses all funds, including any carry-over, in accordance with North Dakota rules and statutes, which are designed to ensure public monies are used for the institution's mission.

In accordance with its mission and within its capacity, MSU responds to the needs of its regional citizens and local community members. Some examples of the University's local and regional outreach services include the following examples:

- North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD) - meeting the needs of individuals with developmental disabilities in North Dakota. Several faculty hold appointments at the Center and several additional faculty work as researchers.
- Para-to-Teacher Program which provides an online bachelor's degree program for certification in special education to work working paraprofessionals.
- MSU's TV and radio station, KMSU Channel 19, broadcasts to the university campus and

20,000 households in the Minot Area. In addition to a weekly TV campus news program, 24/7 music, and MSU sports coverage, KMSU provides very public service announcements to the community.

- The Athletic Department sponsors summer camps for area youth to develop their skill and abilities in various sports.

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Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

1. The institution encourages curricular or cocurricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success.
2. The institution's processes and activities demonstrate inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations.
3. The institution fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff and administrators from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives.

Rating

Met

Rationale

General Education and major program requirements incorporate required components and experiences that foster informed citizenship and cultural awareness. All students must complete Personal and Social Responsibility (PSR) credits as part of General Education. MSU's General Education Interconnecting Perspective (IP) courses require students to study, reflect upon, and apply diverse global and domestic perspectives in the classroom and in a broader community setting. The Foundational Content portion of General Education requires six credits of humanities to "demonstrate knowledge of human cultures and cultural products—the arts and letters—and of how to study, compare, and critique diverse cultural perspectives and aesthetics."

Evidence of several co-curricular activities that encourages informed citizenship and workplace success include the University Diversity Council, Democracy Café, MSU's Leadership Studies Program, Honors Program, Residence Life, Student Government Association, and related student clubs and Engagement Honor Roll.

MSU provided a number of examples of documents such as the Faculty Diversity, Equal Opportunity Statement and Non-Discrimination Statement and groups such as the MSU Diversity Council, MSU Athletic and Inclusion Council, Access Services, Office of International Students that demonstrate inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations.

MSU provided examples of activities, social events, lectures, films, and programs that focus on creating awareness, education, and inclusivity among students, faculty and staff. through a Presidential Lecture Series. The Diversity Council offers examples such as a Latino Heritage Celebration Discussion Panel, International Mother Language Day, PRIDE week, Black Heritage Month, MLK Day of Service, Her Voice Resounds MSU Choir Concert and Women's Art Exhibition, International Cultural Celebration, Religious Celebrations Across the World, Juneteenth events, International Deaflympics Presentation, and the MTNA Diversity Library and Diversity Library Showcase Concert.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

Rationale

The mission of Minot State University is clearly articulated in numerous institutional documents and university website. MSU's mission emphasizes educational and campus experiences, scholarship, creative work, and community engagement: *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 current strategic plan, *Empowering Generations*, was approved by the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) in September of 2016 has continued to be refined and updated on an annual basis. In 2017-18 the Strategic Planning and Budget Council (SPBC) was charged to streamline and focus objectives and action items under each goal without compromising their general intent. The SPBC revised goals, objectives, action items, progress and accomplishments were shared with the campus in November 2018. Beginning in 2018-2019 MSU revised the budget and planning process tied unit budget requests to the strategic plan. In spring of 2022 a draft of a new strategic plan was shared with the campus and feedback was received by the SPBC and President's Staff. The new strategic plan will be finalized during the summer of 2022 and implemented in fall of 2022.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

2.A - Core Component 2.A

The institution establishes and follows policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty and staff.

1. The institution develops and the governing board adopts the mission.
2. The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources and auxiliary functions.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Minot State University (MSU) is governed by the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) as part of the North Dakota University System (NDUS). MSU's revised mission was approved by the SBHE in 2016.

Policy and procedures for fair and ethical behavior are governed by SBHE policy and MSU develops policy that are within the scope of those policies. Policies and procedures related to conduct issues which can be found in the Faculty Handbook and Staff Handbook.

The NDUS requires annual fraud and internal control training for all MSU employees. MSU adheres to the NDUS Policy on Procurement for major purchases which follows the state mandated procurement process. The MSU Development Foundation has a policy for investments.

The NDUS reviews the finances of MSU annually and the financial report is inspected by the state auditor. The NDUS and State Auditor follow a regular schedule of external audits of all MSU business activities, revenues, and expenditures. MSU's budget, including faculty and staff salaries, is published yearly and publicly available in the Gordon B. Olson Library.

MSU provides students with information related to the costs of attendance on the Financial Aid Office, Business Office and Enrollment Services webpages. The website also includes a net-price tuition calculator along with the costs of housing and meal plans.

The annual budget is appropriated by the state legislature in two-year increments, as North Dakota's legislature meets biennially. MSU documents its budget, reserves, and financial status in regular reports to NDUS. Per SBHE policy, MSU has a minimum amount of funds that it is required to keep in its financial reserves. MSU's administration has achieved a financial reserve of 14 percent of the

appropriated/tuition budget as of fiscal year 2020.

Annual budget requests at MSU follow a timeline and procedures and are presented to the Strategic Planning and Budget Council (SPBC). All budget presentations are held publicly, and all steps of the process are thoroughly documented on the website. At the conclusion of these presentations, the SPBC makes recommendations to the President's staff.

Requirements for admission to MSU, for both graduate and undergraduate programs, are provided on the website as well as in respective catalogs. Admission requirements for first-year students, transfer students, international students, and graduate students are documented.

Policies for undergraduate and graduate transfer credit, academic credit and graduation requirements are found in the MSU online undergraduate and graduate catalogs. Degree requirements are set by the faculty, implemented through the Registrar's Office, and managed through Campus Connection software. The Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee includes a representative from the Registrar's Office and utilizes CourseLeaf software to track course and program proposals, course changes and ensures review at each level, from initial proposal to final VPAA approval. Students and Advisors can check student progress toward graduation by accessing the Academic Requirements Report.

The Graduate Student Rights and Student Rights committees meet as needed and follow specific guidelines for addressing student appeals, which include grade appeals, approval of exceptional course withdrawals for medical or other circumstances and may also address appeals of decisions from the Student Welfare and University Affairs Committee (SWUAC). The Student Welfare and University Affairs Committee (SWUAC) deals with issues affecting student life, including serving as an appeals committee.

The faculty, staff and adjunct faculty who require access to student records complete FERPA training.

The NDUS and MSU's IT Central systematically audit the MSU computer servers to ensure security of confidential data. These audits are provided in a public report at a broad level and specific information is available to NDUS security team members and shared with campuses so that they can make needed changes. All employees follow the NDUS Computer and Network Usage Policy and MSU students, faculty, and staff are responsible for reviewing the IT Policies available on the MSU website.

All programs have established Student Learning Goals (SLGs) and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), which are published in the catalog and on the website. The Director of Institutional Assessment (DIA) reviews the academic program assessment reports submitted by departments/divisions each fall. The assessment of courses in the General Education program is under the purview of the General Education Committee. A Co-Curricular Committee was instituted in 2019 to oversee the development, planning, and implementation of MSU's five-year cocurricular plan. Each committee presents to the campus each year during Assessment Day, to keep the faculty and staff abreast of the state of assessment at MSU. The DIA also serves on the General Education committee and Co-Curricular committee.

MSU's adoption of Simple Syllabus, beginning in the Fall of 2020, is guided by policies developed collaboratively by the DIA, faculty, and administration. Chairs and the Academic Assessment Committee regularly review syllabi to ensure that comparable information and assignments are contained in each and that the content of the same course taught across different modes and

schedules is consistent.

University hiring, evaluation, and personnel policies and practices adheres to the NDUS employment guidance and follows SBHE policies in all matters, including those related to personnel.

The HR office and VPAA also assist with employee onboarding for faculty, adjunct faculty, and staff to ensure proper compliance with Veterans' Preference, position advertisements, EEO wording and process, formal and clear employee grievance procedures, Title IX procedures, and drug and alcohol policies.

The VPAA manages faculty affairs and evaluations, including publishing an evaluation schedule and timeline. The VPAA works with the Faculty Senate in overseeing the faculty evaluation process, pre-tenure, tenure, and promotion policies. The Faculty Senate, Committee for Evaluation of Teaching, has developed an evaluation for adjunct faculty. Faculty will vote on the adjunct faculty evaluation policy and process during spring 2022. MSU staff participate in an annual performance review.

The Faculty Rights Committee is charged with dispute resolution, primarily stemming from faculty non-renewal. The committee follows SBHE policies that detail the steps for requesting a hearing and submitting an appeal and the mediation process.

MSU employs a full-time Title IX Coordinator who oversees campus Title IX policies and procedures. Additionally, MSU has three Deputy Title IX Coordinators assigned in the areas of student affairs, security, and institutional research. The Title IX office conducts mandatory annual training for all employees and students.

MSU's auxiliary services include the bookstore (Barnes & Noble), food services (Sodexo), student housing, student health and counseling, and security. MSU's Student Health Clinic provides both mental health, physical health services and educational programming for the students.

Beginning in August 2018, MSU is able to offer 24/7 security coverage, eliminating the need to contract with an outside company. In addition to six full-time and four part-time officers, MSU has a Blue Light system at 27 locations across campus, with direct links to both the MSU Security emergency line and Minot central dispatch. MSU Safety and Security offers many programs ranging from fingerprint services to Safe Walk.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.B - Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public.

1. The institution ensures the accuracy of any representations it makes regarding academic offerings, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, governance structure and accreditation relationships.
2. The institution ensures evidence is available to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through research, community engagement, experiential learning, religious or spiritual purpose and economic development.

Rating

Met

Rationale

MSU's mission statement identifies MSU as a comprehensive public university in the NDUS and can be found on the strategic plan website. MSU organizational structure, including the governance structure (faculty senate, staff senate and student government association) and bylaws can be found on the website.

The MSU website is comprehensive, well organized and provides descriptive links for constituents, depending on their relationship to MSU for their informational needs. Information about Enrollment Services, Faculty and Staff Directory, Student Consumer Information, Strategic Plan, Accreditation, current Student Profile, news stories, and other information is easily accessed. The Academics link provides information about academic programs, academic advising, General Education, and links to distance education offerings. Most links from the homepage are connected to the Graduate and Undergraduate catalogs. The MSU academic catalogs (undergraduate and graduate) includes program requirements for all degree levels. Current information is available for all accreditations and status.

The MSU homepage provides constituents quick access to Student Support Services, including campus resources such as housing, bookstore, business office, and academic services. The tuition calculator and fees information can be located on the website. Recruitment and admission documents for prospective students indicating requirements for institutional and program entry can be located on the website. The MSU Student Handbook provides information regarding MSU policies, student conduct code, and various academic and support services.

In addition to the website, prospective and incoming students have access to printed literature available for public distribution. Enrollment Services has a presence on social media with public Facebook and Instagram accounts. New and prospective students and parents can access admissions requirements, degree offerings, residence hall information, costs, and other student resources on the Enrollment Services menu page.

Faculty and staff offices, emails, and phone numbers are listed in the MSU faculty and staff directory,

and academic units maintain profiles of faculty on their web pages. 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.

MSU tuition and fees, housing, and board costs are located on the Financial Aid Office, Business Office and Enrollment Services web pages. The net price calculator provides prospective students estimates of the cost of attendance and also of the amount of financial aid they may receive. The Financial Aid webpage provides constituents with detailed information on student financial assistance, federal loan education, intercollegiate athletic programs, campus security, student outcomes, and general information.

MSU offers a wide variety of opportunities for engagement on campus through student government, student athletics, student clubs and organizations and study abroad opportunities. MSU has over 60 student clubs and organizations which span a variety of interests including academics (e.g., English Club), athletics (e.g., Women's Club Hockey), professional organizations (e.g., Nursing Student Association), special interests (e.g., Social Dance Club and Gaming Club), and those dedicated to social justice and diversity (e.g., Campus Pride and Native American Cultural Awareness Club). Study Abroad has a long history at MSU, although it was understandably interrupted by the pandemic. KMSU provides 24/7 broadcasting on Midcontinent Communications Channel 19 and the radio. The campus newspaper, the Red and Green, is published approximately every two weeks.

The pandemic caused some fall 2020 sports to be canceled while other teams played an abbreviated schedule. Beginning fall 2021, a full slate of fall sports resumed.

MSU offers many opportunities for students to participate in performing groups in theatre and music that serve the campus, the Minot community, and the region. These opportunities are open to majors and non-majors alike. Interested student can appear on stage in one of MSU's three physical venues: Harold G. Aleshire Theatre, Black Box Theatre, and Summer Theatre.

The music program has a strong presence on campus, with performances that highlight students and faculty throughout the semester. Many students and faculty are members of the Minot Symphony Orchestra which holds its rehearsals and concerts in MSU's Ann Nicole Nelson Hall.

MSU offers a variety of arts-related events for the campus and the Minot community at large. These events include gallery openings at the Northwest Arts Center, the Flat Tail Press Gallery and Campus and Community Dialogue Series and the annual Springs Honors Dance and Pow Wow, hosted by the Native American Cultural Center.

MSU has defined co-curricular learning as "ungraded learning that happens outside the classroom, which complements learning that happens inside the classroom." Co-curricular opportunities at MSU are centered around four co-curricular areas, each with its own goals and outcomes; these include leadership, wellness, self-awareness, and career and professional development.

Incoming students are involved in engaged learning and service through their First-Year Experience Learning Communities (FYE), where they complete some type of engagement activity (volunteer, community service, service learning, or community problem solving activity). Students who complete 50 hours of engagement, civic, or community activities are recognized by being named on MSU's Engagement Honor Roll. The Honor Roll is released publicly to the community and the achievement is formally documented on student transcripts.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution in compliance with board policies and to ensure the institution's integrity.

1. The governing board is trained and knowledgeable so that it makes informed decisions with respect to the institution's financial and academic policies and practices; the board meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
3. The governing board reviews the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
4. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties.
5. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the institution's administration and expects the institution's faculty to oversee academic matters.

Rating

Met

Rationale

MSU is a member institution of the North Dakota University System (NDUS), which is governed by the State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) composed of seven citizen members appointed to four-year terms by the governor and one student appointed by the governor to serve a one-year term. The Council of College Faculties selects the board's non-voting faculty advisor, and the NDUS Staff Senate selects the board's non-voting staff advisor. The SBHE has articulated principles and core values that guide decision-making in relationship to the eleven institutions that compose the NDUS. Officers for the SBHE are elected following a clearly outlined process. Their responsibilities are outlined in SBHE policy, including a clause devoted to autonomous decision making "...Represent the people of North Dakota and be an advocate for the NDUS without special regard to a particular institution, interest, political affiliation, community, or constituency."

The SBHE meets monthly, either face-to-face or online and publishes agendas, minutes and recording of its meetings. SBHE responsibilities, as outlined in the policy manual, provide for ongoing professional development and evaluation of the Board, the system Chancellor, and institution presidents.

The SBHE recognizes each campus has its own mission and its own unique set of programs that can be beneficial for the campuses and their communities. 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.

The SBHE works to preserve and enhance all institutions in the NDUS through provision of shared services, support of specific budget requests made to the state legislature, and institutional oversight

through the evaluation of the institution presidents. The NDUS provides many shared services to the institutions of higher education in North Dakota including Campus Connect, Hobsons, MSU's Learning Management System (Blackboard), and some survey tools used by the MSU Institutional Research office. The NDUS has supported MSU's requests for GEERF and HEERF money as well as major renovation projects such as the renovation of Hartnett Hall.

The SBHE is composed of community members selected from diverse professions and regions of North Dakota and approved by the Governor. It also includes a voting student member, a non-voting faculty adviser, and a non-voting staff adviser. The board seeks the input of its constituents, as well as that of the Chancellor and University Presidents.

The Council of College Faculties (CCF) consists of faculty from North Dakota's 11 public institutions who meet regularly to identify and share interests relevant to teaching, research, and service. CCF communicates with the SBHE regarding issues of consensus and of matters of concern, which the SBHE takes into consideration. The SBHE also seeks the input of North Dakota State Staff Senate and North Dakota Student Association and NDUS Councils.

The SBHE has explicit policy governing conflicts of interest and undue influence on Board members. This policy requires all Board members, NDUS Chancellor and vice-chancellors, and institution presidents to complete a conflict-of-interest disclosure each year.

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. The governing board delegates authority to the institution president regarding the day-to-day operation of the campus, its goals, and its administrative structure.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

SBHE policy on Academic Freedom affirms that faculty have 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.”

Academic freedom for faculty is recognized in the MSU Faculty Senate Constitution. Tenure appointments are granted by the SBHE 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 pre-tenure and tenure processes while the NDUS regulates academic freedom and tenure throughout the university system.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.E - Core Component 2.E

The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, staff and students.

1. Institutions supporting basic and applied research maintain professional standards and provide oversight ensuring regulatory compliance, ethical behavior and fiscal accountability.
2. The institution provides effective support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students.
3. The institution provides students guidance in the ethics of research and use of information resources.
4. The institution enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Rating

Met

Rationale

MSU's Institutional Review Board (IRB) is responsible for creating and implementing policies and procedures for protection of research with human subjects. 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. Information about the IRB policies and processes are available to faculty, students and staff on the Institutional Review Board website.

The North Dakota University System (NDUS) requires 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. The MSU policy aligns with the NDUS policy. MSU updated its Intellectual Property Policy in 2019. The policy can be found in the MSU's Faculty Handbook.

The Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) and the hiring of a half-time director position was reinstated in July of 2019. The Director of OSP facilitates the procurement of external support through grants, fellowships, contracts, royalties, licensing agreements, and technical assistance agreements. The office assists faculty and staff in seeking and identifying external funding opportunities, reviewing requests for proposals or notice of funding opportunities, contacting funding agencies, and assisting with the preparation and submission of grant proposals. MSU's Grants and Accounting Analyst supports these efforts through the review of all grant proposal budgets and financial oversight support of funded projects. MSU's research protocol continues to be overseen by the IRB and the VPAA. Ongoing faculty scholarship is supported through department and college funding, small internal research grants, the sabbatical program, external grants and by the OSP.

The MSU Student Handbook promotes academic honesty reminding students that MSU is committed to academic integrity. The student conduct policy outlines MSU's expectations of its students. MSU is utilizing a communication tool, the Starfish software program, which readily links faculty with

advisors and other support staff to help students achieve their academic potential. In 2018, Faculty Senate instituted the use of Starfish to raise an academic honesty flag. Faculty can “flag” a student for concerns related to academic honesty and that flag is used to initiate a process of communication with the student and follow up by appropriate faculty and staff members. Students are provided instruction and guidance in at least two general education courses regarding academic integrity and honesty. All syllabi include the campus academic honesty policy.

MSU expects students to demonstrate academic honesty and integrity in all matters. The MSU Catalog clearly addresses academic honesty, with specifically as it relates to plagiarism and academic integrity. Concerns about plagiarism and academic honesty are first handled by faculty according to policy listed in syllabi and in the MSU catalog. This policy allows for the faculty to 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.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Rationale

The expectation of integrity in the operation of a public institution of higher education has been evidenced in the review of Minot State University through its assurance argument, site visit, and review of additional resources such as the University website and evidence provided. It is clear that the State Board of Higher Education operates autonomously and has appropriate safeguards in place around integrity and ethical behavior. The SBHE has, appropriately, granted the authority to the University President for the routine operation of the University and faculty who have significant authority over the academic matters for the University.

Transparency and accountability have been achieved by MSU in a number of different ways. The Strategic Planning and Budget Council has improved the fiscal transparency of the University and allowed for a mechanism that clearly articulate how fiscal and human resources are aligned with the University mission, vision, core values, assessment outcomes and strategic plan. Research and scholarly work regulated, and resources are available to faculty, staff and students to support academic integrity.

3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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

3.A - Core Component 3.A

The rigor of the institution's academic offerings is appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of student performance appropriate to the credential awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its 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).

Rating

Met

Rationale

Minot State University's (MSU) courses and programs are current and require levels of student performance appropriate to the degrees awarded. MSU offers an associate degree, bachelor degrees, master degrees, and certificate programs. Courses and programs are reviewed and approved through a faculty driven process initiated by faculty and their departments, and then approved through a faculty curriculum committee, Faculty Senate, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Depending on the program, review and approval may also involve the Teacher Education Administrative Council and/or Graduate Council. MSU curricular changes are governed by the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) and the North Dakota University System (NDUS). Approval of academic programs and the basic requirements thereof, are governed by the two entities and MSU requirements are in harmony with them. Changes to programs are also approved by the SBHE and NDUS. A recent effort to ensure academic rigor was a thorough Faculty Senate review of what constituted a credit hour.

MSU has separate undergraduate and graduate catalogs. Each program lists student learning goals and outcomes in a clearly stated easily accessible manner. An example provided from the Disability Human Services program illustrates the differentiation of learning goals and outcomes based on type of degree. Since 2019, MSU has used the Simple Syllabus software to manage and store all course syllabi. Course syllabi are required to list student learning goals and learning outcomes. A review of syllabi in Simple Syllabus indicated most departments had student learning outcomes for their courses. All had course and/or program outcomes listed. Review of syllabi has taken place each year since 2020 and faculty believe that the campus has come to understand the importance of learning outcomes. In addition, much work has been accomplished to establish an agreed upon vocabulary

with regards to assessment terms. This has facilitated the work of clearly defining learning outcomes for their undergraduate and graduate programs.

MSU offers courses at remote sites (such as the Minot Air Force Base) and via distance education. It also offers courses in 16 week and eight week formats. Course offerings, regardless of teaching mode or length, are consistent with regards to learning goals and content. Syllabi reviewed on Simple Syllabus showed evidence that courses, regardless of teaching modality and length had consistent learning goals and outcomes. MSU's Center for Extended Learning provides support and guidance for the development of asynchronous online courses. MSU has done tremendous work in ensuring that courses are comparable across modes and semester lengths. MSU's 2020 HLC focused visit report detailed efforts to review course syllabi for compatibility across teaching modes and teaching length. This report was approved by the HLC focused visit team. Review of courses continued with Assessment Days in 2020 and 2021 with a revised review template passed by the Faculty Senate. Faculty indicated these were valuable exercises in formalizing syllabi content and assessment processes.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.B - Core Component 3.B

The institution offers programs that engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in mastering modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution. The institution articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements.
2. 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. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity and provides students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world.
4. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their offerings and the institution's mission.

Rating

Met

Rationale

MSU's general education program has been in place since 2014. It aligns with the NDUS General Education Requirement Transfer Agreement as well and the mission and vision of its general education program received approval from the SBHE in 2016.

MSU's general education framework focuses on core and foundational curricular content, critical skills, and personal and social responsibility. The rationale and details of the general education program are stated in the undergraduate catalog. Student learning outcomes are listed for each area. Students may fulfill the requirements of general education through a selection of courses, which have been vetted and approved through the General Education Committee.

MSU's emphasis on foundational content and critical skills is in keeping with general education frameworks found at most universities. Notable among its distinctive features are its Personal and Social Responsibility (PSR) requirements. This broad requirement engages students in the examination of complex issues through coursework and applied experiences so as to develop a sense of personal and social responsibility toward others. The general education program incorporates a first year experience organized around learning communities designed to build competency in skills such as information literacy, critical reading, critical thinking, quantitative literacy, problem solving, and written and oral communication. Mastery of skills and content are demonstrated in senior capstone experiences.

A commitment and understanding of diversity is manifested at several levels by MSU. Its general

education program incorporates learning outcomes where students demonstrate the ability to evaluate different value systems, knowledge of cultural self-awareness, and differing world views. It encourages students to develop curiosity about other cultures and empathy towards others with different world views. It fosters practice at working with others who come from backgrounds different than their own. A commitment to diversity is also enhanced by courses offered in a number of programs including Art, Native American Studies, Sociology, Education, and Gender/Women's Studies, to name a few.

In addition, the campus has a number of offices and programs designed to reinforce the importance of multicultural learning and diversity. The MSU Diversity Council, consisting of faculty, students, and staff seeks to promote a diverse and inclusive campus climate. The Office of International Programs working with faculty provides opportunities for study abroad, and international students constitute approximately nine percent of their overall student population, with the majority coming from Canada. The Native American Cultural Center provides services for Native American/American Indian students at MSU, where they are approximately two percent of the student population. MSU also houses the North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities. A federally funded TRIO grant supports the POWER Center to provide services to underrepresented students. These offices and programs help to reinforce the diversity and multicultural competencies that students develop through their coursework.

The faculty acknowledged that promoting greater diversity among faculty and staff was an ongoing challenge for a campus in a remote location. Nevertheless, through its curricular offerings and diversity related offices, MSU is viewed within the community as a place that prioritizes diversity, equity, and inclusion. The campus has celebrated Juneteenth in recent years and was very public about supporting Gay Pride, with a flag ceremony outside City Hall. The Diversity Council recommended the hiring of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Director in the latest budget cycle.

Part of MSU's mission is to promote scholarship and creative activity. Faculty members on the tenure track are evaluated on scholarship and it is an expectation of all tenured faculty. MSU provides competitive research grants for faculty where approximately 7-8 grants are awarded each year; sabbatical leaves are available where one or two are awarded every year; and the scholarship of teaching and learning is supported through the Conversations with Colleagues about Teaching series sponsored by the Office of the VPAA.

Faculty also work with students in scholarship and creative activities. Many academic programs culminate in a senior capstone experience that often requires a research project. Student scholarship is disseminated in annual programs such as the MSU Research Poster Session and in discipline specific venues. Students present at state, regional, and national conferences and venues such as Posters on the Hill. The majority of graduate programs incorporate coursework on research methods that scaffold the development of research projects and papers.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.C - Core Component 3.C

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

1. The institution strives to ensure that the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflects human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.
2. 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, assessment of student learning, and establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff.
3. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual and consortial offerings.
4. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
5. 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.
6. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
7. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising and cocurricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their professional development.

Rating

Met

Rationale

MSU's faculty and staff broken down by gender reflects that of its student population which is majority female. The faculty and staff's racial/ethnic make-up is 93 percent Caucasian to 77 percent Caucasian among the student body. The community and state are also overwhelmingly Caucasian.

The student to faculty ratio at MSU is 11:1 which indicates that there are sufficient faculty to carry out the classroom and non-classroom roles of faculty. The faculty represent a range of years in service with 35 percent with 15 years or more to 19 percent with 5-9 years as of 2021. Faculty are broadly distributed among the professor, associate professor, and assistant professor ranks. Fifty-one percent of the faculty are either tenured or tenure probationary.

All tenured and tenure track faculty are expected to participate in curriculum oversight and setting expectations for student learning. MSU has an extensive faculty committee system where the work of faculty governance and oversight take place. This includes establishing criteria for faculty recruitment of all instructional staff.

In 2021, the Office of the VPAA conducted an audit of faculty credentials, the results of which were provided in the assurance review. Faculty credentials are determined for each faculty search and credentials are verified before the person is hired. MSU states that all instructors must possess an

academic degree that is relevant to what they are teaching and at least one level above the level at which they teach. Faculty members who hold a Master's degree or higher in a discipline or subfield other than the one in which they teach must have completed a minimum of 18 graduate credits in the field in which they teach or demonstrate equivalent experience, as per HLC regulations. MSU utilizes a Faculty Teaching Qualifications form to evaluate equivalent experience. All forms and required materials are reviewed and approved by the VPAA. A review of the faculty credentials audit indicated that MSU was in compliance with this requirement.

Faculty are evaluated on an annual basis which begins with submission of a self-evaluation that documents activities for the previous year and outlines goals for the future. Faculty are generally evaluated in the areas of teaching, service, and scholarship/creative activity, unless their contracts stipulate otherwise (for example, someone hired to do 100% teaching.) Faculty evaluation processes are outlined in the Faculty Bylaws document which gives guidance as to types of evidence that can be presented to demonstrate satisfactory performance with regards to teaching, service, and scholarship/creative activity. Student evaluations called "student perception of learning" are incorporated into the evaluation of teaching effectiveness.

Faculty are regularly evaluated each year leading up to the tenure review. The Faculty By-Laws outlines the process for evaluating faculty performance and the procedures when there is disagreement over an evaluation.

In November 2021, the Faculty Senate approved a new teaching evaluation process and form for adjunct faculty. Adjunct faculty are evaluated through their departments and programs. Orientation to the University and teaching expectations are relayed via an adjunct faculty member's department.

Faculty at MSU are expected to stay current in their disciplines. As mentioned in 3B, MSU has a Faculty Small Research Grants program and a sabbatical leave program. It also has Advanced Study Grants. New faculty to MSU engage in a nine month orientation, where they learn about MSU policies, procedures, and events. The Academic Support Center supports professional development related to the First Year Experience and experiential education. The Office of Instructional Technology (OIT) offers training for online teaching.

Faculty make themselves available to students through office hours and increasingly through remote appointments via Starfish, Zoom, and Blackboard. Microsoft Teams has also been used. While the pandemic necessitated this shift to online means of reaching out to students, many faculty will continue to use these online options going forward.

MSU support staff are recruited and hired based on an NDUS Broadband Job Classification system. Job descriptions, including qualifications and salary ranges are determined centrally. Each office determines the type of onboarding necessary for the position and professional development opportunities exist whether it be Title IX training, FERPA regulations, or learning about technology. In addition, staff at MSU may apply for Advanced Study Awards to pursue coursework or degree programs in skill areas deemed critical to MSU. They are also eligible for tuition waivers and release time to take courses.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and resources for 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 offerings 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 and museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).

Rating

Met

Rationale

Minot State University provides multiple services to support student learning. In Fall 2019, student support offices were relocated to the basement of the Gordon B. Olson Library to provide a "one stop" location called the Academic Support Center (ASC). Through the ASC, students can access peer tutoring, supplemental instruction, assistance with writing, as well as the support of a number of offices, among them Access Services (formerly Disability Services), the POWER Center, and Multicultural Support Services. The ASC also provides student support services for online students. A visit to the ASC showed a combination of public spaces for group tutoring along with staff offices for private meetings. Faculty indicated that students were very aware of the ASC's location and its services. Locating student support services to a "one stop shop" seemed to resonate with students.

Students admitted to MSU participate in advising orientation where they are advised into first semester classes. Students are placed into appropriate English and math courses using NDUS-mandated ACT, SAT, or Accuplacer scores. MSU has a number of courses designed to provide developmental academic skills to underprepared students. Students are also required to enroll in a first year experience learning community which provides a cohort experience to acclimate students to the academic and non-academic demands of college. This program is currently being revised by the faculty.

Academic advising is provided through the ASC. Students with declared majors are assigned an academic advisor in their program. The Academic Advising Council lays out expectations and responsibilities for advising in an advising handbook, through regular newsletters, and sponsored workshops. The campus uses Starfish to promote connections between students, faculty, advisors, and other support staff. Starfish provides an early alert system to flag students who may be having academic difficulty as well as flagging students who have excelled at classroom performance.

The campus has the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and

learning. An extensive tour of campus learning spaces and the Athletics Center showed a campus that was well maintained. Using HEERF CARES funds, the campus installed HyFlex teaching technologies in the majority of its classrooms. Classrooms visited had ample technology, newer seat/desk configurations, and a number of flexible classroom arrangements to allow for standard seating or small group work. Science labs were well maintained and the nursing simulation center was state of the art. Swain Hall, which houses the kinesiology and teacher education programs, was recently renovated. Hartnett Hall, which houses the Arts and Humanities, is to be taken off line for a complete renovation in 2022-23. The outdoor summer theater was undergoing renovation. Athletic facilities were in very good shape, with study spaces available for athletes.

A recent survey of department chairs did not indicate any pressing concerns about learning spaces. However, the one concern expressed by a number of people, including students and staff, was the condition of student housing. Administration also raised as an issue the need to renovate student living spaces.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Rationale

MSU has demonstrated that the education it provides to its students, where ever and how ever delivered, prepares them to be life long learners in an increasingly culturally diverse and technologically complex world. Academic programs have defined learning outcomes and are clearly delineated in the campus catalogs and on the campus website. Its general education program ensures that students develop a combination of skills and dispositions for the 21st century. Faculty are qualified to offer instruction and faculty governance is very strong. Student support services are extensive and are centrally located in the Gordon B. Olsen Library. MSU has the infrastructure resources necessary to carry out its academic mission. Its academic buildings are well maintained with technology enabled classrooms, renovated labs, and inviting performance spaces. MSU has met the expectations for criterion 3.

4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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

The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews and acts upon the findings.
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 ensure 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 ensures 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 ensures that the credentials 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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Minot State University (MSU) had demonstrated a commitment to designing and implementing quality educational programs. MSU has instituted a review process for its programs that include both external and internal reviews. Reports follow standards from its external accreditors and the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education which requires a 7-year review cycle for undergraduate programs and a 10-year review cycle for graduate programs. MSU has refined the review process for its educational programs. There is a system in place for departments to complete a self-study and for external reviews. The Vice President for Academic Affairs coordinates this review process.

There appears to be a clear and systematic process in place for transfer credits from other institutions. These processes are handled by MSU's Office of the Registrar. MSU reviews courses for appropriate level of academic rigor. Perquisites for classes are described clearly and objectively. The University

also has a well-established system for evaluating credits and transcripts. The University has demonstrated that it has explicit and established policies to ensure the quality of accepted transfer credits. For example, the University is part of the North Dakota General Education Requirement Transfer Agreement which helps ensure and facilitate course equivalency with courses completed at other colleges and universities in the North Dakota University system.

MSU reported that the College of Business is piloting a credit for prior learning program. This program was approved by the Faculty Senate in April 2021 and will be published in their course catalogue for the 2022-2023 academic year. The assurance report did not indicate if this program is intended just for the College of Business or if the intent is to roll the program out to other colleges within MSU.

In 2019, MSU began a system to ensure clarity and consistency in course syllabi for all courses offered through MSU online and on-campus. This system is referred to as the Syllabus Integrity Review. Syllabi found in the system include a component that maps course objectives to student learning outcomes (SLO's). All syllabi are completed by faculty and sent to the department chair for final review and approval at which time they are published in the Simple Syllabus library.

MSU provided evidence that it maintains authority over its curriculum. Faculty are responsible for creating and revising courses. The assurance argument states that faculty are responsible for establishing the content and rigor of courses within their respective departments. The faculty are responsible for assessing courses relative to student learning outcomes and the Student Learning Goals (SLG's) within an academic department and program, respectively.

Courses and course changes are reviewed by the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee and the full Faculty Senate. Graduate courses and course changes are reviewed by the Graduate Council followed by the full Faculty Senate. Programs with external reviewing bodies, such as the teaching education program, are first reviewed and approved by the agency (e.g., Teacher Education Administration Council) before being reviewed by the full Faculty Senate.

The university provided evidence of a detailed and systematic process for hiring qualified faculty that includes review by department faculty, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the President. These steps were outlined in the Faculty Handbook and the tenure and promotion bylaws. The university also appears to have a system in place to ensure faculty are appropriately credentialed and teach courses within their discipline.

Specialized accreditation is tracked and the evidence included a list of accrediting bodies. Specialized accreditations at MSU include the following: Nursing, Communication Sciences and Disorders, School Psychology, Addiction Studies, Special Education, Education, Business, and Music. MSU reports that the accrediting body for each of the aforementioned programs require self-studies on a multi-year cycle. As per the evidence provided in the Assurance Argument, it appears that all accredited programs are in good standing with their respective accrediting bodies.

The institution provided evidence that it collects data across all units regarding the successes of its graduates. MSU referenced program level tracking of employment and/or examination pass rates for professional certification or licensure.

MSU appears to have taken many steps towards establishing an internal and external assessment process. The internal assessment process is developmentally and chronologically more mature since the HLC Comprehensive Review in 2017. The external review process appears developed and

programs reviewed were assessed positively. In addition, there were also multiple examples of links between assessment and course improvements in specific programs. However, there were some concern in the internal review process for undergraduate and graduate programs. It appears that the University is still in the process of developing a culture of assessment. MSU is encouraged to further refine the internal review process for consistency and detail in data analysis.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.B - Core Component 4.B

The institution engages in ongoing assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students.

1. The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and cocurricular offerings.
2. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
3. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty, instructional and other relevant staff members.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Minot State University offers numerous undergraduate programs and graduate programs including seven Master's programs, and an Educational Specialist degree. In addition, the university offers seven certificate programs centered on their management and special education programs.

Assessment is clearly underway across all departments at the university. MSU has taken several steps to improve the assessment process since the previous HLC visit. For example, the University created a new position in 2018, the Director of Academic Assessment (DAA), who reports directly with the Vice President of Academic Affairs. MSU hired an individual for the DAA position in 2018. However, that individual has resigned. The position was retitled the Director of Institutional Assessment (DIA) in 2021, and they have hired an individual for this role.

In addition to the assessment director role, the university has initiated a group of faculty (beginning in 2018) throughout the departments at MSU to further assist with data collection and analysis associated with assessment. This new group is titled the Program Assessment Liaisons (PALs). The PALs meet with the director of assessment monthly to discuss program assessment. During the forum on assessment, faculty reported that the primary improvements from the changes in the assessment process are with regard to standardization of assessment processes and terminology. Although the University's assessment processes have somewhat matured, there are noted concerns with consistency of assessment processes across the departments and faculty participation. It appears that a culture of assessment and improvement is still under development at MSU. For example, there are improvements that can be made with regard to data collection and analysis across the departments at MSU.

As noted in the assurance argument, faculty and administration at MSU report that they sought to streamline and simplify the assessment process in 2021. However, there did not appear to be a consistent or clear answer among the faculty with regard what and how the processes were or would be simplified.

The University has defined learning goals with associated outcomes for its general education and graduate programs. The learning goals are defined explicitly in the description of the General Education curriculum, and they are easily accessible on the University's website. The over-arching learning goals include: a) critical capacities and skills, b) personal and social responsibility, and c) interconnecting perspectives. These learning goals are also referenced in the university's mission statement.

As of the Fall semester of 2021, the University reports to have completed three assessment cycles of the General Education curriculum. These efforts are led by the Director of Institutional Assessment and the VPAA. Student artifacts are embedded in identified classes and are assessed with rubrics. The process cumulates on Assessment Day, which is held in the spring term. Stakeholders throughout the university, including the General Education Committee, Assessment Committee, Director of Institutional Assessment, and the VPAA meet to review the findings of the assessment process and make recommendations based on those findings. The findings are available to the faculty on a web-based dashboard.

The University has recently begun assessing co-curriculars with the establishment of the Co-Curricular Committee in the Fall of 2018. The University began a 5-year plan for co-curriculars that started in 2019, and included the following elements: a) the development of core offices and programs (year 1), b) training personnel and implementation of programs (years 1-3), c) data collection and analysis, and connecting co-curriculars with broader institutional planning (years 2-4), and d) data-based improvement of procedures and practices. The student learning outcomes associated with the University's co-curriculars include: a) Leadership, b) Wellness, c) Self-Awareness, and d) Career and Professional Development.

The University appears to have programs in place to address co-curriculars on campus, which includes (but is not limited to) the following entities: a) academic support center, b) campus life office, c) wellness center, d) residence life office, and e) a leadership center. During the open forum with current undergraduate students, the students reported that the University provides ample activities and programming to get students involved and engaged.

The University has made noticeable improvement in the assessment process since the previous HLC review. The University appears to have made assessment a priority with the hiring and roll-out of Director of Institutional Assessment, who works under the VPAA. The University has also implemented their PALs program to further improve data collection and alignment. Further, the University has much more clearly defined assessment process with regard to the assessment artifacts, rubrics, and assessment cycle. However, the visiting team noted some concerns with the consistency of assessment practices and terms across the university. For example, during the assessment forum, one assessment committee member spoke to significant improvements in one area, as noted by improvements in rubric scores. However, that committee member also reported that statistical analyses were not conducted on those rubric scores to determine if the differences were statistically significant – this could have been determined with a simple paired sample t-test. There is also some concern with the level of faculty commitment to the assessment process used by the University.

Last, when asked in multiple forums about improvements made based on assessment (e.g., closing the loop), the responses offered were vague. In the assurance argument, the University noted that their assessment process was perceived as too complex and efforts were being made to simplify the process. When questioned about this, the team received vague answers with regard to what was complex about the process and how assessment was being simplified across the university.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.C - Core Component 4.C

The institution pursues educational improvement through goals and strategies that improve 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, 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.)

Rating

Met

Rationale

The University has clearly defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion, and these goals are aligned with the current strategic plan. During their 2010-2015 strategic goal campaign, the University reported a six-year graduation rate of 38 percent and a retention rate of 68 percent. The University's goals for 2023 is a 50 percent six-year graduation rate and a 80 percent retention rate. According to documents provided in the assurance argument, as of 2021, MSU's six-year graduation rate was 55percent and their retention rate was 71 percent. The six-year graduation rate surpassed the goal that they had set.

The University reported the establishment of a Data Metrics Team in 2015. This team is comprised of the Director of Institutional Research, the Registrar, the Director of Enrollment Services, the Online Program Coordinator in the Center for Extended Learning, and the Director of Financial Aid. The Data Metrics Teams is tasked with tracking retention and developing retention efforts. The team collects and analyzes data relating to students who have graduated from MSU and those who have transferred to other institutions and either graduated or stopped out. In addition to IPEDS, the University also collects data for Student-Achievement Measures (SAM) to supplement its understanding of transfer students.

The University also provided data on its Providing Opportunities with Enhanced Resources (POWER) Center, which is a federally funded TRIO program. The goals for the POWER Center for 2010-2015 were a 75 percent student persistence rate and a 45 percent six-year graduation rate. The University reported a 70 percent persistence rate and a 47 percent six-year graduation rate, which indicates that the University met their goals for student retention and persistence relative to the POWER program.

The University has established the Retain and Graduate Committee (RGC), which is comprised of the following: a) Looyenga Leadership Center Director, Academic Support Center, Power Center Director, Financial Aid Director, Director of Institutional Research, the Advising Coordinator, the Registrar, Director of Residence Life, two faculty members and two students. The committee is charged with enhancing efforts across the University to improve retention and completion rates. The RGC recently focused attention on lower-division students, adult learners, graduate students, and first-generation college students. There was a consistent response across the University, in multiple forums, that the noted improvements in student completion and retention rates are attributed to improvements made to student advising, residential life, and the first-year experience. The University uses the Starfish program to facilitate student advising and communication across faculty and staff regarding student progress. Reportedly, the program has been met with positive reviews from faculty, staff, and students. The University has also established learning communities to enhance the First-Year Experience. Small groups of students (~20) are matched and enrolled in three connected classes.

The University's institutional processes and methods for data collection and analysis relative to undergraduate student retention are aligned with the federally defined guidelines for graduation rates. The University collects and uses standardized measurements for retention and graduation rates that guide the reporting process of retention, persistence, and graduation rates. The University is encouraged to implement similar data tracking efforts with their graduate programs.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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.

Rationale

Overall, the documents and evidence provided in the assurance argument demonstrate how MSU maintains the quality of its academic programs. For example, the University provided evidence of initiating some curricular improvements across departments and externally accredited programs are in good standing with their respective accrediting bodies.

MSU provided evidence that a clear system is in place regarding the processes and standards for transfer credits from other institutions. The courses are reviewed for appropriate level of academic rigor and prerequisites are described clearly. In addition, MSU has a clear system and set of processes to evaluate the completion rates for its undergraduate students, and these processes appear to guide the development of goals for student retention, persistence, and graduation rates. The University has met or exceeded its goals for six-year completion and retention rates and has predicted further improvements in the near future.

However, assessment appears to be a developing process at MSU. Following the previous HLC review, the University has made some improvements to their assessment processes. While there have been noted improvements to assessment at MSU, the University is still developing a culture of assessment that applies across the campus. For example, there is room for improvement with regard to faculty participation in assessment and, by their own account, some faculty remain skeptical of assessment. In addition, improvements can be made with regard to consistency in assessment across the academic departments and programs at MSU. The University can also employ statistical analyses to determine if improvements are statistically significant. In addition, clarity can be improved with regard to how the graduate programs are assessed.

5 - Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

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

5.A - Core Component 5.A

Through its administrative structures and collaborative processes, the institution's leadership demonstrates that it is effective and enables the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. Shared governance at the institution engages its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students—through planning, policies and procedures.
2. The institution's administration uses data to reach informed decisions in the best interests of the institution and its constituents.
3. The institution's administration ensures that faculty and, when appropriate, staff and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy and processes through effective collaborative structures.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Minot State University (MSU) participates in shared governance on campus through three internal groups. These include Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and the Student Government Association. Each group has a web page where information is available such as bylaws, officer names, and updates on campus activities. Minutes for the Faculty Senate and Staff Senate are posted for easy access. Meeting minutes and agenda for the Student Government Association were uploaded to the addendum. Review of these documents show regular meeting discussions where senators engage in a wide variety of campus topics. All three of these groups provided evidence of shared governance in their minutes.

The State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) oversees the North Dakota system of higher education including 11 institutions. The board consists of seven members appointed by the Governor that serve four-year terms. The SBHE web site contains minutes of all meetings. The board also has eight smaller councils where individuals from campus institutions participate and make recommendations concerning statewide topics. Minutes available on the SBHE web site confirm conversations where officials from MSU actively participate in board and committee meetings. Items include academic program changes, budget proposals, financial audit reviews and tuition and fee increases.

MSU utilizes several strategic processes across campus to guide the decision making process. These include a combination of committees, reports, and key decision makers. Examples include budgeting,

strategic planning, and enrollment management. Documents provided for review include NSSE reports, Fact Book data, and satisfaction surveys. One example referenced includes enrollment management efforts where enrollment reports and application trends are reviewed and advertising strategies are evaluated and changed over time. This also ties back to budget requests for these efforts through an established process.

Campus meetings and forums provided verbal evidence to support the use of data across campus. Multiple examples were shared describing the open budgeting request process on campus. Budget administrators feel they have a voice in the process. All of these meetings are open to the campus community with summary information being available on the campus web site through SharePoint and Teams.

MSU has a number of established committees that provide input to the University Cabinet and President's Staff concerning decision making. As stated earlier, these on campus groups include the Faculty Senate, Staff Council and the Student Government Association. The MSU website provides links to each of these constituent groups where constitution and bylaw information can be found. These pages provide a clear understanding of the mission of each group. One example shared in the argument and discussed during the campus visit confirmed the quick decision making process to react to the Covid pandemic during the spring 2020 semester. Student, faculty, staff and administration had to quickly act to confirm alternative academic delivery methods and support was given to a successful/unsuccessful option for student final grades. This decision carried into the 2020-2021 academic year with support of all groups. Minutes from these bodies also provided evidence of the shared governance process including SGA passing their resolution in support of the proposal.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.B - Core Component 5.B

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

1. The institution has qualified and trained operational staff and infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The goals incorporated into the mission and any related statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources and opportunities.
3. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring its finances.
4. The institution's fiscal allocations ensure that its educational purposes are achieved.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Attracting highly qualified faculty and staff is a priority for MSU. The human resources office provides assistance to the campus community during the hiring and on-boarding processes. Faculty and staff handbooks are easily available on MSU's website. These documents contain information on employee benefits, support services and various committee's serving the campus.

The 2021-22 Fact Book shows between FY18 and FY22 very little shift in the full-time faculty count. During FY18 MSU reported 152 faculty and in the fall of 2022 reported 149 faculty. Uploaded to the addendum is a count of non-instructional staff positions. Full-time positions range from the fall of 2017 to the fall of 2021 as follows: 248, 240, 239, 225, and 250. Part-time positions for the same time period are reported as follows: 43; 40; 39; 19 and 40. Decisions to fill vacant positions are based on enrollment data and state funding.

The Human Resources Office hosts monthly training. These trainings were moved online due to Covid but are returning to more in-person sessions. During the staff forum, employees referenced several on-campus training opportunities. During the faculty forum examples of traveling to professional conferences for FYE (First Year Experience) and NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement) were shared.

MSU has 26 buildings on campus providing space for instruction, academic and student support, athletic participation and employee workspace. Support service operations include a wellness center, cafeteria (contracted with Sodexo), bookstore (contracted with Barnes & Noble), print shop and student dormitories. Buildings toured during the campus visit included: student union, the Dome, wellness center, Swain Hall, Gordon B. Olson Library, Cyril Moore Science Building, Pioneer Hall, Old Main Building, Ann Nicole Nelson Hall, Memorial Hall, and Hartnett Hall.

These buildings are well maintained and accessible to all. A number of parking lots are located across the campus. Noteworthy is the recent relocation within the Gordon B. Olson Library as the

home of several connected academic support services including the writing center, career services, advising center, and other student support offices.

Since the last visit by HLC, several buildings have been remodeled. Examples include the student union, theater, and Hartnett Hall. To help fill a campus and community need, a private partnership was established to open a daycare center in Dakota Hall. Currently a \$3 million renovation is occurring with the outdoor theater primarily funded with private dollars.

Also during the campus tour several labs were visited. Slightly under \$2 million dollars of CARES institutional funds were used to update technology across campus. Much of this investment is located in classrooms and laboratories. Evidence of this funding was uploaded to the addendum following the campus visit. Academic classrooms, laboratories, and conference rooms were equipped with HyFlex technology. Locations visited during the tour included labs in the Cyril Moore Science Building, nursing labs in Memorial Hall, mass communications labs in Hartnett Hall and several academic classrooms in the Old Main Building.

One area that will need attention in the future involves on-campus housing for students. This was shared as a concern by senior administration while on campus. This was further validated by meetings with staff and students. Physical space is available on campus, but both infrastructure upgrades and cosmetic repairs are needed. Discussions also yielded a trend of students moving off campus to live resulting in fewer rental dollars being generated for this auxiliary service. Currently approximately 350 students reside on campus.

MSU has been working on refining their strategic plan for several years. The most recent update occurred in the spring of 2022 following input from constituents. As described in the assurance argument and reinforced during the campus visit, several of the goals and action items have been updated to reflect a more realistic document. The Strategic Planning and Budget Council has a clearly stated vision to help with the budgeting process based on these university priorities.

Various groups and forum meetings on campus reinforced a universal awareness of the strategic plan and overall mission and vision for MSU. This included discussion with the Board of Regents as well as faculty, staff and students. Enrollment numbers and subsequent tuition revenue collected from these students will be critical for allowing these goals to become reality over the upcoming years.

As stated earlier, a significant portion of CARES funding was allocated to technology upgrades across the campus. The upgrade of this technology further supports the mission of MSU which in part states the campus will provide "active learning environments" for students.

As part of the North Dakota University System, funding is received from the state of North Dakota. The state legislature meets and approves funding on a biennially basis. The assurance argument explained and on site conversations confirmed this process. The state has a formula that is partially driven by past enrollment data to determine future funding allocations. Since MSU has seen a decline in both enrollment and credit hour production, a reduction in future appropriations is expected. MSU administration is fully aware of this probable outcome and conversations have already begun on how to reduce budget line items. One example includes the evaluation of resignations and retirements to determine if the vacant position will be replaced.

Another example of strategic decision making is the heightened campus awareness of recruitment and retention efforts. Tuition and fee revenue can be increased through the rewards of recruiting new students or retaining current students. The development of a Hometown Pride scholarship was

implemented for the fall 2022 semester targeting students to enroll directly out of high school. This has resulted in an increase of new admission applications. Another example referenced during the visit highlighted waiving the one-time application fee during one promotion period.

MSU uses historical data and well as enrollment estimates to prepare revenue projections. This process was explained and discussed during the visit and examples of spreadsheets were uploaded to the addendum. Expanded since the last HLC visit is the campus budgeting process. Overseen by the Strategic Planning and Budgeting Council, this active group provides an opportunity for budget administrators to present yearly budget needs and requests. These meetings are open to the public with handouts and videos being available to review at later times. Discussion with various campus groups also confirms this process. Uploaded to the addendum file are examples of the university budget approved by the governing board.

Yearly external financial audits are conducted and published for MSU. Uploaded to the addendum folder are completed audits for FY19, FY20 and FY21. Summary data highlights the university is in good financial standing.

The Higher Learning Commission tracks financial health of an institution by using a Composite Financial Index (CFI) calculation based on current financial audited information. For public institutions, this matrix ranges from a low of -4.0 to a high of 10.0. MSU has been "above the zone" for the past four fiscal years. Scores range from 1.79 (FY18); 1.14 (FY19); 1.11 (FY20) and 2.55 (FY21). University management is aware of these index score calculations and takes the ratio component impacts into consideration when making financial decisions. MSU uploaded CFI information to the assurance addendum.

In looking at various yearly budgets for MSU uploaded to the addendum folder, these documents clearly show allocations to instruction, academic support and student support. Auxiliary and grant operations are also supported with evidence of budgeting and spending. External audits presented to the team show that funds were used for their intended purposes.

In addition to the earlier mentioned CARES funding being allocated to technology upgrades, nearly \$1.1 million was spent to upgrade heat and air units on campus. This strategic planning decision will also help with future deferred maintenance expenses.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities, including, as applicable, its comprehensive research enterprise, associated institutes and affiliated centers.
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, including fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue and enrollment.
5. Institutional planning anticipates evolving external factors, such as technology advancements, demographic shifts, globalization, the economy and state support.
6. The institution implements its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.

Rating

Met

Rationale

MSU has a well developed process in place for the alignment of resources, both fiscal and human. As described in 5B of this assurance argument, the Strategic Planning & Budget Council engages with campus units and the administration to flush out budget requests. There is a clear understanding of how the budget process works across campus. Further understanding was demonstrated as to how certain funds can only be used for specific purposes. Examples of this would include state appropriations, auxiliary operations and capital project funds.

MSU has made great strides to tie co-curricular assessment requests and evaluation into the budget process since the last HLC visit. At the center of all discussions with the Strategic Planning & Budget Council is a triangulation process of tying budget requests to the strategic plan for the institution and documenting assessment outcomes. This was further confirmed on-site as members of the committee stepped through the process with the team.

One example referenced during the 2019-2020 academic year, four offices including academic support, wellness center, career services, and student activities, began a co-curricular assessment cycle. These offices represent the core of co-curricular assessment at MSU. Year 1 is focused on developing these core offices/programs. Years 2-3 will focus on development. As data is captured and analyzed, long-term planning and budgeting decision can reviewed and finalized.

Since the last HLC visit, a new strategic plan has been developed. Input was captured by both internal as well as external constituents. Starting with the summer of 2019, a retreat was held where over 80 participants provided valuable input. Developing out of this input was the creation of the Recruit and Enroll Team along with the Retain and Graduate Team.

A second retreat was held during April of 2021. The goal of this activity was to review and update progress of the plan. Some of the original items were identified as being too aggressive and unrealistic. Information and updates from this retreat were shared from the president's office to employees during the fall academic term. While visiting with the Board of Regents, they also discussed the planning process and their updates at board meetings and personal visits with university administration.

Through the budget processes described earlier in this report, MSU has controls in place to monitor expenses throughout the fiscal year. Mechanisms are available to reduce or halt discretionary spending during the year. Since North Dakota's state funding allocation is based partially on historical enrollment data, MSU is anticipating a reduction in funding for the next cycle (2 year). Enrollment numbers reported in the assurance argument show a decrease from 2016 to 2021.

Fact Book data confirms what was shared in discussions with administrators and students. Over the last four years residence hall numbers have trended down reflecting: 2018, 423 students; 2019, 393 students; 2020, 354 students and 2021, 327 students. Apartment occupancy shows an upward trend from 2018 to 2021 with numbers showing: 54, 60, 70 and 72.

Following a tour of the campus, the team agrees with MSU that the physical classroom space is in place to handle more on-campus students. Additionally, with the upgrade of technology in classrooms and laboratories, various modalities of instruction delivery are available to faculty and students. Dormitory space is also physically available on campus.

If enrollment efforts are successful, MSU will need to monitor staff located in academic and student support services to see if any new positions will be needed to process requests. Additional full-time or adjunct faculty may be needed in certain disciplines depending on how enrollment by major increases.

The visiting team agrees that MSU is engaged in on-going planning efforts that impact the campus community to include external factors. The Recruit and Enroll Team works to help anticipate trends in enrollment and develop strategies to combat enrollment and retention declines. One example of change includes expanding online enrollment opportunities for students.

As described earlier in this argument, CARES funding provided upgrades to many classrooms and laboratories across the campus. Infrastructure upgrades also help to provide better wireless connectivity for student learning. The newly purchased HyFlex technology is poised to help both in person classroom instruction as well as distance education.

A document MSU uses to help planning and strategic decision making is the Campus Master Plan. One piece of evidence includes the 2017-2018 Biennium plan. More recent is the 2022-2028 Campus Master Plan also included in the assurance argument. This detailed report reviews planning assumptions while reviewing both internal and external driving forces. Major areas covered include academic programs, enrollment trends, and facility and physical infrastructure needs of the campus. This document helps to guide the Strategic Planning & Budget Council in their decision making process. Also addressed in this document is the need for upgrades to campus housing.

Continuing with the changes made and documented in the 2020 Focused Visit Report, MSU appears to operate with continuous improvement and growth in mind. Through changes made to the campus planning process, campus operations have improved. By allocating more resources to the assessment process, procedures and processes are in place to track data and outcomes. Various examples are

included in the assurance argument and were discussed on site with the HLC team.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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

Rationale

The team feels that MSU administration and the governing board are aware and engaged with the changing environment of higher education, especially coming off of the Covid pandemic. These include a challenging enrollment environment, uncertainty of future state funding levels, unstable regional economic conditions, and changes to how the adult learner wishes to receive a higher education.

Review Dashboard

Number	Title	Rating
1	Mission	
1.A	Core Component 1.A	Met
1.B	Core Component 1.B	Met
1.C	Core Component 1.C	Met
1.S	Criterion 1 - Summary	
2	Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct	
2.A	Core Component 2.A	Met
2.B	Core Component 2.B	Met
2.C	Core Component 2.C	Met
2.D	Core Component 2.D	Met
2.E	Core Component 2.E	Met
2.S	Criterion 2 - Summary	
3	Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support	
3.A	Core Component 3.A	Met
3.B	Core Component 3.B	Met
3.C	Core Component 3.C	Met
3.D	Core Component 3.D	Met
3.S	Criterion 3 - Summary	
4	Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement	
4.A	Core Component 4.A	Met
4.B	Core Component 4.B	Met
4.C	Core Component 4.C	Met
4.S	Criterion 4 - Summary	
5	Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning	
5.A	Core Component 5.A	Met
5.B	Core Component 5.B	Met
5.C	Core Component 5.C	Met
5.S	Criterion 5 - Summary	

Review Summary

Conclusion

The mission of Minot State University (MSU) is clearly articulated in numerous institutional documents and university website. MSU utilized a campus wide process to develop its mission and vision in 2015-2016 which emphasizes educational and campus experiences, scholarship, creative work, and community engagement. Simultaneously, the campus was engaged in developing the MSU's strategic plan, *Empowering Generations*, and which has continued to be refined and updated on an annual basis. The institution's academic offerings, student support services and enrollment is consistent with the university's mission. In 2018-2019 MSU revised the budget and planning process tying the unit budget requests to the strategic plan. In spring of 2022, a draft of a new strategic plan was shared with the campus and feedback was received by the SPBC and President's Staff. The new strategic plan will be finalized during the summer of 2022 and implemented in fall of 2022.

MSU has provided evidence of integrity through its assurance argument, site visit, and review of additional resources such as the University website and other evidence provided. The State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) operates autonomously and has appropriate safeguards in place around integrity and ethical behavior. The SBHE has, appropriately, granted the authority to the University President for the routine operation of the University and faculty who have significant authority over the academic matters for the University. Transparency and accountability have been achieved by MSU in a number of different ways. The Strategic Planning and Budget Council has improved the fiscal transparency of the University and allowed for a mechanism that clearly articulate how fiscal and human resources are aligned with the University mission, vision, core values, assessment outcomes and strategic plan. Research and scholarly work are regulated, and resources are available to faculty, staff and students to support academic integrity.

MSU has demonstrated that the education it provides to its students, where ever and how ever delivered, prepares them to be life long learners in an increasingly culturally diverse and technologically complex world. Academic programs have defined learning outcomes and are clearly delineated in the campus catalogs and on course syllabi. Its general education program ensures that students develop a combination of skills and dispositions for the 21st century. Faculty are qualified to offer instruction and faculty governance is very strong. Student support services are extensive and are centrally located for ease of student access. MSU has the infrastructure resources necessary to carry out its academic mission. Its academic buildings are well maintained with technology enabled classrooms, renovated labs, and well-maintained performance spaces.

MSU provided evidence that they maintain quality academic programs. They have made recent improvements to their curriculum across the university and are in good standing with their respective accrediting agencies. As further evidence of the University's quality academic programming, MSU has exceeded its goals for students' six-year completion rates and retention rates and reports high numbers on these metrics. The University predicts that student completion and retention rates will continue to improve in the near future. Assessment is still a developing process at MSU. The University has made some progress in their assessment processes since the previous HLC review. However, improvements can be made with regard to the faculty involvement in assessment and the consistency of assessment procedures across departments and colleges.

MSU exhibits a strong system of shared governance through involvement with the Faculty Senate, Staff Senate and the Student Government Association. MSU's governing board is engaged with the campus and evidence was presented to show a clear understanding of both the academic and financial operations of the university. With the addition of the Strategic Planning & Budget Council, more transparency is available to campus stakeholders. This

process also allows for alignment with the strategic plan and assessment processes. MSU has a well maintained campus with adequate faculty and staff to deliver academic programs and services. Decisions will need to be made in the next few years concerning any updates to campus dormitory buildings and infrastructure. The President's Staff will also have to closely monitor the impact of declining enrollment and the anticipated reduction of state funds.

Overall Recommendations

Criteria For Accreditation

Met

Sanctions Recommendation

No Sanction

Pathways Recommendation

Not Applicable to This Review

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.



Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

INSTITUTION and STATE:

Minot State University, North Dakota

TYPE OF REVIEW:

Standard Pathway - Mid-Cycle Review

DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW:

Year 4 Comprehensive. The institution was granted an extension to comply with HLC's faculty qualification requirement (Assumed Practice B.2.a) solely as applied to its dual credit faculty until September 1, 2023. HLC will suspend review of the institution's compliance with its faculty qualification requirement solely as applied to dual credit faculty until the first evaluation occurring on or after September 1, 2023 at which time the institution's compliance will be specifically examined.

Per the institution's request, this visit will be conducted with the full team visiting the campus in-person.

DATES OF REVIEW:

04/11/2022 04/12/2022

✓ No Change in Institutional Status and Requirements

Accreditation Status

Control:

Public

Recommended Change:

Degrees Awarded:

Associates, Bachelors, Masters, Specialist

Recommended Change:

Reaffirmation of Accreditation:

Year of Last Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2017 - 2018

Year of Next Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2027 - 2028

Recommended Change:

Accreditation Stipulations

General:

The institution is approved at the following program level(s): Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's, Specialist



Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

The institution is not approved at the following program level(s): Doctoral

Recommended Change:

Additional Locations:

Prior HLC approval required.

Recommended Change:

Distance and Correspondence Courses and Programs:

Approved for distance education courses and programs. The institution has not been approved for correspondence education.

Recommended Change:

Accreditation:

Accreditation Events

Accreditation Pathway: Standard Pathway

Recommended Change:

Upcoming Events:

Comprehensive Evaluation Visit - 2027 - 2028

Federal Compliance Review - 2027 - 2028

Monitoring



Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

Upcoming Events:

(No Upcoming Events)

Institutional Data

Educational Programs

Recommended
Change:

Undergraduate

Associate Degrees 1

Baccalaureate
Degrees 56

Graduate

Master's Degrees 7

Specialist Degrees 1

Doctoral Degrees 0

Certificates 19

Extended Operations

Active Branch Campuses

(NONE)

Recommended Change:

Active Additional Locations

UNITED STATES, 1500 Edwards Ave. PO Box 5587, Bismarck, North Dakota, 58506-5587

UNITED STATES, HDFS Dept., EML Hall 283

1310 Centennial Blvd., Fargo, North Dakota, 58102

UNITED STATES, Francis X. Deignan Building (Education Center) 210 Missile Avenue, Minot AFB, North Dakota, 58704

Recommended Change:

Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

Contractual Arrangements

- 51.0907 Medical Radiologic Technology/Science - Radiation Therapist - Bachelor - - St. Alexius Medical Center
- 51.0911 Radiologic Technology/Science - Radiographer - Bachelor - - Avera McKennan
- 51.0911 Radiologic Technology/Science - Radiographer - Bachelor - - Mayo Clinic - Mayo Health School of Sciences
- 51.0911 Radiologic Technology/Science - Radiographer - Bachelor - - Minneapolis VA Health Care System
- 51.0911 Radiologic Technology/Science - Radiographer - Bachelor - - Sanford Health (Previously MedCenter One)
- 51.0911 Radiologic Technology/Science - Radiographer - Bachelor - - Trinity School of Radiologic Technology

Recommended Change: