



## Systems Portfolio

Academic Quality Improvement Program

June 2015

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The “wordle” on the cover represents the relative use of words in all items for the Systems Portfolio. [www.wordle.net](http://www.wordle.net)

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## OVERVIEW

Metropolitan State University is “a comprehensive, urban university committed to meeting the higher education needs of the Twin Cities and greater metropolitan population.” Founded in 1971 to serve the baccalaureate needs of working adults, Metropolitan State is governed by the Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. It aligns its programs and services to the system’s Strategic Framework by: providing an extraordinary education, becoming a partner of choice in meeting Minnesota’s workforce and community needs and delivering affordable, high quality education. The Board has oversight of all 31 institutions in the MnSCU system and directs system planning, sets strategic priorities, approves academic programs, establishes financial standards, sets tuition and fees and provides policies and procedures for institutional governance.

In accordance with its mission statement, Metropolitan State provides “accessible, high-quality liberal arts, professional and graduate education to the citizens and communities of the metropolitan area...” The university offers a variety of programs leading to degrees at the bachelor’s, masters and doctoral level and graduate certificates. Academic programs are organized into six colleges and schools including the: College of Arts and Sciences (CAS); College of Health, Community and Professional Studies (CHCPS); College of Individualized Studies; College of Management (COM); School of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice; and School of Urban Education.

### **Bachelor’s degrees:**

B.A., B.S. BAS, BSN, BSW, BSDH

### **Master’s degrees:**

M.A., M.S., MBA, MLS, MMIS, MPNA, MS ADT, PSM

### **Graduate certificates**

### **Applied Doctorates:**

DNP, DBA

As an urban university Metropolitan State makes its programs accessible throughout the Twin Cities area with four primary locations in Saint Paul; the Midway Center; the Management Education Center co-located with Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC) and at the Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Education Center (LECJEC) co-located with Hennepin Technical College (HTC) in Brooklyn Park, MN. The university also emphasizes its partnerships with the ten MnSCU community and technical colleges located in the Twin Cities and has degree completion and course offerings available on eight of the ten campuses. Originally conceived of as the “university without walls” our heritage is evident through the many locations we offer course work throughout the Twin Cities.

Online education programs are robust and an important part of our academic offerings. We offer nine baccalaureate, three graduate and five graduate certificate programs fully online. Approximately 27% of our course sections are offered online each year and another 10% are offered in the hybrid modality. Nearly one-third of our students are enrolled in at least one online course each semester. The Center for Online Learning offers a full program of faculty development that emphasizes both course development and online pedagogy.

One of the key defining mission, vision and value expressions of the university is its demonstration of “an unwavering commitment to civic engagement.” The Institute for Community Engagement and Scholarship, the largest unit of its kind within MnSCU, actively promotes community based learning and faculty, staff and student engagement. In 2014 the university was again recognized as a Community Engaged institution by the Carnegie Foundation and named to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, its fifth year of inclusion.

Metropolitan State continues to emphasize its mission to “underserved groups, including adults and communities of color.” Of its more than 11,500 students enrolled during 2014-2015, 90.9% are undergraduates and of those, 87% are transfer students. Less than one percent of undergraduates (0.8%) are traditional first time, full time students. The average age of students is 31 years and as working adults, 64% attend part time. As of Fall 2013, 38% were students of color.

Metropolitan State has 1,190 employees. Other than administrators or confidential employees, employees are represented by one of five unions. As of June 2014, there were 174 full-time (resident faculty) and 750 part-time (community faculty). The number of tenure-track faculty has increased by 23 over that past three years.

Since the last Systems Portfolio was submitted in 2010, the university has striven to develop a culture of quality improvement. Some action projects on using data (Data Counts) and motivating Cabinet level leaders to sponsor university improvement projects (UQIP Rollout) ended with mixed results. More recent AQIP projects are receiving more campus engagement and are beginning to produce results. A new AQIP project on Enhancing CI Capability and Culture Improvement (All Hands on Deck) is a broadly based online suggestion system, which is engaging individuals in identifying process improvements and empowering employees to develop and implement solutions. Enthusiastically endorsed by the Strategic Planning Council and the President this initiative is nurturing change.

In the past four years the institution has accomplished a great deal. By January 2016 three major building projects (parking ramp, Student Center and Science Education Center) will be open and operational. New partnerships for degree completion on partner two year campuses and dual enrollment programs in dental hygiene and nursing have been launched. Enrollment has been growing and stable. Twenty-three additional faculty lines and six additional professional advisor positions allow the university to deliver on its promise of quality educational experiences for students. Innovative new programs such as the BS in Computer Applications Development, PSM in Computer Science, graduate certificates in the Design of User Experience and Arts and Cultural Heritage Management have been approved and offered. These accomplishments have been realized despite significant challenges relating to the transition to a new MnSCU chancellor, leadership turnover at the university, unanticipated construction difficulties and costs, declining state funding and tuition freeze, and a serious issue involving faculty payroll which took more than a year to resolve and remediate.

Since February 2014 the university community has actively engaged in envisioning the future and determining actions needed to fulfill our potential and deliver an “extraordinary education.” A MnSCU emphasis on increasing the conferral of baccalaureate degrees in the Twin Cities area offer an opportunity for continued strengthening of academic programs and student services. Increased emphasis on academic, strategic and budget planning, better use of data to support decision-making and a commitment to outcomes assessment and closing the feedback loop will lead the university to more effective operations.

Guided by its mission, vision and values, the university is committed to processes such as AQIP, strategic planning, shared governance and process improvement that will lead us to the performance excellence associated with organizations that achieve integration of processes and results.

**Metropolitan State University is a comprehensive urban university committed to meeting the higher education needs of the Twin Cities and greater metropolitan population.**

**The university will provide accessible, high-quality liberal arts, professional, and graduate education to the citizens and communities of the metropolitan area, with continued emphasis on underserved groups, including adults and communities of color.**

**Within the context of lifelong learning, the university will build on its national reputation for innovative student-centered programs that enable student from diverse background to achieve their educational goals.**

**The university is committed to academic excellence and community partnerships through curriculum, teaching, scholarship and services designed to support an urban mission.**

## AQIP Category 1: Helping Students Learn

### INTRODUCTION

At Metropolitan State University, faculty members actively participate in the determination of student learning outcomes through the processes used by the university to assess, review, analyze, and implement improvements in the delivery of the student's educational experiences. "Category One" provides an overview of those processes and the current status of the university's commitment to deliver an extraordinary education to a community of primarily nontraditional adult learners. Metropolitan State's common learning outcomes are reflected in the General Education and Liberal Studies (GELS) requirements. The 10 GELS goal areas define a broad base of knowledge and also reflect the mission of the university. These common learning outcomes are also reviewed in accordance with the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC).

With this base of learning defined by the GELS requirements, program areas within the university have created statements and processes that help identify and implement the student learning outcomes associated with the individual programs. A wide variety of processes are in place to provide feedback and input regarding the student learning processes. Some of Metropolitan State's programs are guided by external accreditations; others have processes that range from capstone courses to standardized assessments. The co-curricular alignment of student learning experiences and opportunities can be most directly observed through the community engagement and anti-racism emphases, which are central to the university's mission.

Recently, Metropolitan State has focused significant attention on the issue of academic integrity and moved the processes and procedures for educating students regarding these issues to the university's Academic Affairs Office. The International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI) awarded Metropolitan State its "Campus of Integrity Award" at the organization's February 2015 conference.

Since the last portfolio review in 2010, Metropolitan State has had significant turnover in leadership, a factor that is reflected in the direction of the student learning outcome processes. See Table 4-3 Dean Transitions 2010 – Present. The university's assessment committee was discontinued, and leadership of assessment activities has been centered in the provost and vice president for Academic Affairs Office. At present, the university is in the process of hiring a coordinator of assessment, a new position that will be located in the newly constituted Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

While meaningful activity in the area of student learning outcomes assessment continues at Metropolitan State, additional improvements, regarding both processes and results, are needed to move the university to a more mature level. Currently, the university does attempt to use some repeatable measurement processes, but analysis and follow-through on that collected data with regard to improvement are often lacking. The university would consider its level of maturity to be systematic with a strong movement toward being aligned. The hiring of an assessment coordinator and the creation of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness are the actions that most saliently reflect the commitment of the university to more fully utilize assessments to improve learning outcomes.

### COMMON LEARNING OUTCOMES

#### **1P1| Common Learning Outcomes focuses on the knowledge, skills, and abilities expected of graduates from all programs**

*Aligning common outcomes to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution (3.B.1, 3.E.2)*

Metropolitan State University's common learning outcomes are outlined in General Education and Liberal Studies (GELS) requirements. GELS has 10 goal areas. To achieve the competencies embodied in these areas, students are offered a broad array of lower- and upper-division coursework, which can often be dually applied to fulfill specific degree requirements. The core goal areas of GELS are

(1) Communication, (2) Critical Thinking, (3) Natural Sciences, (4) Mathematical/Logical Reasoning, (5) History, Social, and Behavioral Sciences, and (6) Humanities and Fine Arts. The broad knowledge and intellectual concepts in these goal areas align with Metropolitan State's mission to provide high-quality liberal arts education. The university's commitment to "the citizens and communities of the metropolitan area, with continued emphasis on underserved groups" is underscored in GELS' theme goal areas, which help students develop attitudes and skills to address social problems and adapt to change. These areas are (7) Human Diversity, (8) Global Perspective, (9) Ethical and Civic Responsibility, and (10) People and the Environment. (3.B.1)

GELS courses that carry "Community Engagement" (CE) designation, defined as "providing students the opportunity to gain knowledge outside of the classroom and inside the community", reflect Metropolitan State's commitment to "community partnerships through curriculum, teaching, scholarship, and services designed to support an urban mission." (3.B.1, 3.E.2)

The university presumes that the common learning objectives have been fulfilled by previous baccalaureate degrees before admitting students into the professional and graduate programs.

#### *Determining common outcomes (3.B.2, 4.B.4)*

The purposes, content, and intended common learning outcomes of Metropolitan State's undergraduate general education requirements are contained in University Policy 2010, which was adopted in 2009 within the framework established by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) Procedure 3.37.1, known as the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC). (3.B.2) MnTC requires that all MnSCU graduates earn 40 credits in the 10 goal areas (cited above) to achieve broad knowledge and skills. Faculty determines the implementation of MnTC at Metropolitan State through the General Education and Liberal Studies (GELS) Committee, comprised of faculty representing each college and school. (4.B.4) This committee is charged with assessing and proposing changes in GELS curriculum. Metropolitan State additionally requires eight upper-division course credits in Liberal Studies, bringing the university's total GELS requirement to 48 credits.

#### *Articulating the purposes, content, and level of achievement of the outcomes (3.B.2, 4.B.1)*

Per University Policy 2010, the purpose of General Education and Liberal Studies coursework is "to facilitate depth and breadth of student learning." Each MnTC goal area is associated with four to seven competencies that specify the content and level of achievement required. These competencies are articulated on the MnSCU web site. The university's GELS committee reviews course outlines in accordance with MnSCU's *Guidelines for the Review and Design of a Minnesota Transfer Curriculum*, so that no matter who teaches a proposed course, the learning outcomes will substantially align with the competencies of (an) applicable goal area(s). (3.B.2)

Courses that satisfy GELS goal areas and Metropolitan State's Liberal Studies requirements are published on the university's web site each semester. A web-accessible PDF file lists approved GELS courses by goal area. This document also describes the credit requirements for the students and the level of achievement required. Examples of these descriptions include the following:

- Regarding Goal 2, Critical Thinking: "Students who complete the university's general education requirements will have met this goal."
- "Only courses worth two or more semester credits and a grade of "D" or higher can be used to meet goal area requirements."
- Students may transfer credits from other institutions to satisfy the GELS requirements. However, "MnSCU policy requires a cumulative 2.0 Minnesota Transfer Curriculum GPA to certify completion."

Student achievement of common learning outcomes is assessed at the course level, through the online Degree Audit Report System (DARS), graduation planning process and by survey information from

graduating students. DARS shows students and their advisors all the requirements, met and unmet, for GELS goal areas and major coursework. (4.B.1)

*Incorporating into the curriculum opportunities for all students to achieve the outcomes (3.B.3, 3.B.5)*

Satisfaction of the GELS requirements is mandatory for all baccalaureate degrees. Information about the requirements is included in admissions materials and in the description of each major. The diversity of GELS courses, as well as the option of fulfilling them through assessment of prior learning and/or through student-designed independent studies, gives students a broad opportunity to achieve the outcomes through coursework that is relevant to their degree programs. Forty-four curriculum areas, spanning all the colleges, offer GELS courses. Table 1-1 summarizes the distribution of GELS courses by curricular area.

Curricular Area	General Education/ Liberal Studies Goal Areas									# of Categories Covered
	1	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Anthropology				8		2	5	1	1	5
Arts					9			1		2
Biology		5							3	2
Chemistry		3							1	2
Criminal Justice Studies				6	1	1	2	1		5
Communication	8				1	1	1	2		5
Economics				9		1	1		1	4
Ethnic Studies				9	6	31		2	1	5
Geography				1					1	2
Geology		3							2	2
Gender Studies				1	3	6	1			4
History				49		12	9	4	2	5
Human Resource Management				1			1			2
Health Science							1			1
Human Services Disability Studies						1				1
Human Services				2		3				2
Human Services Family Studies				5		2				2
Human Services Gerontology				1						1
Humanities					16	2	3			3
International Business							1			1
Interdisciplinary Studies				2	1	2		2		4
Intermedia Arts					2					1
Linguistics	1			4		2	2			4
Literature					24	6	1		1	4
Mathematics			15						1	2
Media Studies	2				3		1			3
Management						1				1
Marketing							1			1
Music					5					1
Natural Sciences		3							3	2
Ojibway							2			1
Philosophy			1		22	4		8		4
Physics		6							2	2
Political Science				15		2	4	9		4
Psychology	1	2		74		4			1	5
Reading	1									1
Religious Studies				2	16	5	3	1		5
Screenwriting					1					1
Sociology				12		5	2	4		4
Spanish							4			1
Social Science				5		1	1	1		4
Statistics			1							1
Theater	4				3					2
Writing	7				1				1	3
<b>Total Courses Offered in</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>2.659099</b>
<b>Each Goal Area/ Average No. Courses Per Goal Area (by Department)</b>										

**Table 1-1.** General Education/Liberal Studies Goal Areas by Curricular Area

GELS requirements are further reinforced in the university's educational offerings through GELS courses that are prerequisites for undergraduate majors and through programs that reinforce common learning outcomes in coursework. (3.B.3, 3.B.5)

*Ensuring the outcomes remain relevant and aligned with student, workplace, and societal needs (3.B.4)*

MnSCU's Academic Affairs Council, which periodically reviews the MnTC, affirmed the appropriateness of Metropolitan State's 10 goal areas and related competencies in Fall 2014. The university's implementation of the MnTC, with its continual process of new course development, reflects the changing needs of students, the workplace and society. To help students fulfill their General Education requirements, Metropolitan State offers 660 GELS courses, a number that is about 10 times greater than that offered at six other MnSCU universities and at four peer institutions located in other regions of the country. The breadth of these courses reflects the university's historic emphasis on preparing students to be critical thinkers and contributors to their workplaces and society rather than masters of a narrow body of knowledge. In the two previous years (FY2013 and FY2014), 43 new courses were added to the GELS curriculum (see Table 1-2). The highest number of newly approved courses were in goal areas (7) Human Diversity and (8) Global Perspective (eight in each category); both are key skill areas consistently cited as important to employers. (3.B.4)

Goal Area		Number Approved	Number Denied
1	Communications	2	
2	Critical Thinking (defined as being met by the completion of the other GELS requirements)	0	
3	Natural Sciences	0	
4	Mathematical / Logical Reasoning	3	
5	History, Social, and Behavioral Sciences	6	
6	Humanities and the Fine Arts	5	
7	Human Diversity	8	
8	Global Perspective	8	1
9	Ethical and Civic Responsibility	3	
10	People and the Environment		1
LS	Liberal Studies only (any of the above courses that are at the 3xx level or higher were approved also for Liberal Studies)	8	
	Obsoleted courses		2
	Total approved	43	

**Table 1-2.** GELS Courses By Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC) Goal Area—Approved, Denied, Removed (FY2013-FY2014)

*Designing, aligning, and delivering co-curricular activities to support learning (3.E.1, 4.B.2)*

Co-curricular programs are guided by our institutional vision, notably that "[t]he faculty, staff, and students of Metropolitan State will reflect the area's rich diversity, build an anti-racist learning community, and demonstrate an unwavering commitment to civic engagement." The Institute for Community Engagement and Scholarship (ICES), an Academic Affairs department, routinely collaborates with faculty in planning out-of-class activities to directly support learning objectives, including in GELS-designated courses, because an atypically high number of these courses are upper-division level. (3.E.1) Using diverse and creative learning strategies, these activities especially reinforce competencies in the core goal areas of Communication; Critical Thinking; History, Social and Behavioral Sciences; and Humanities and Fine Arts. In addition, the activities build knowledge and skills in the thematic goals areas of Human Diversity, Global Perspective, Ethical and Civic Responsibility, and People and the Environment.

Co-curricular program alignment is enhanced through faculty and/or staff work groups (such as the ICES Faculty Work Group, which promotes policies and practices to advance community-based learning), advisory councils (to student groups, departments, or cross-departmental projects), collaboration with the Student Senate, and consultations among Student Affairs professionals and Academic Affairs faculty and staff. Senior leaders from Student Affairs and Academic Affairs, including the director of ICES, the dean of students, and the directors of student development, multicultural services, gender and sexuality services, and disability services, meet twice monthly as part of the Deans and Directors Council to review policies and procedures, identify ways to improve student learning and co-curricular experiences, and engage in cross-functional planning and coordination.

Examples of co-curricular alignment since 2010 include the following:

- American Democracy Project forums, including ones on racial equity in redistricting, gun violence in America, “Inequality for All,” and state amendments on same-sex marriage and voter ID
- “Metro State Votes 2012!” and “Metro State Votes 2014!” (voter registration drives), presidential debate discussions, and workshops on party caucuses/conventions
- Screenings of the National Endowment for the Humanities’ four films commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation
- Annual “Overcoming Racism” conference, including hosting the event and providing students with scholarships to attend
- Extensive cultural programs, including ones to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the U.S.–Dakota War of 1862; to examine relationships between African Americans and African immigrants; to celebrate a range of annual holidays and cultural practices, such as the (Asian) Dragon Festival, the Vietnamese New Year, and Eid al-Fitr; and to explore Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) identity and anti-LGBTQ bullying.

Faculty conduct assessments of co-curricular activities when the activities are integrated into the curriculum of the faculty member’s course(s). Participant evaluations are routinely collected for use by academic and student affairs staff, faculty, advisors, and students to help with the continual improvement of programs. An extensive Deliberative Dialogue™ evaluation tool is also sometimes used to measure changes in knowledge and attitudes, pre- and post-event, as was the case for a Spring 2013 forum on gun violence. (4.B.2)

#### *Selecting tools/methods/instruments used to assess attainment of common learning outcomes (4.B.2)*

Metropolitan State chose the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) as a primary tool for standardized assessment because it’s required by MnSCU. Course assessment tools are determined by faculty. Consultation with other faculty and instructional staff members is strongly encouraged in new course proposals, including those approved for GELS. Many faculty have developed their own rubrics to facilitate consistency within and between course sections; others use the AACU VALUE rubrics, which allow aggregation to a department or college level. (4.B.2)

#### *Assessing common learning outcomes (4.B.1, 4.B.2, 4.B.4)*

Assessment of common learning outcomes occurs at many points in a student’s program. Students can verify their progress against clearly stated GELS requirements (see 1P1) at any time by accessing DARS. See 1P1 regarding assessment of co-curricular learning. (4.B.1)

Faculty members assess learning outcomes in each course as outlined in syllabi. The university administers NSSE in the Spring of odd-numbered years to a sample of seniors. (4.B.2, 4.B.4)

### **1R1| Results for determining if students possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are expected at each degree level**

Evaluation of results within Common Learning Outcomes is at a reacting stage, with some movement towards systematic. The NSSE survey systematically provides indirect measures of this learning, and has been augmented with a section on transferable skill to help judge mission-oriented skills. Direct measures of achievement of common learning outcomes has not yet reached the systematic stage, as those measures exist primarily at the program or college level and are not yet used to improve institution-wide learning.

#### *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

Graduation requirements beyond GELS are defined at the program level. Common learning outcomes are measured within each department, but in some cases are aggregated to the college level. For



example, for all baccalaureate degrees in the College of Management, three core goal areas for GELS (Communication; Ethical and Civic Responsibility; and Critical Thinking) are measured in multiple courses required for the degrees. This assessment tool was piloted in Fall 2014. An analysis to establish procedures and benchmarks was undertaken in Spring 2015 and an assessment will follow in Fall 2015. The assessment report format includes sections on method used, results, issues, and recommendations for actions.

The indicators in the NSSE that are relevant to the university's common learning outcomes include the following variables within the domain of "perceptions of greatest areas of gain": thinking critically and analytically, writing clearly and effectively, speaking clearly and effectively, analyzing numerical and statistical information, understanding people of other backgrounds, solving complex real-world problems, developing or clarifying a personal code of values and ethics, and being an informed and active citizen. Some items in the "transferable skills" section also provide information about how often students practiced skills associated with successful application of the common learning outcomes.

### Summary results of measures

Key results from NSSE data related to common learning outcomes are shown in Table 1-3, Table 1-4.

How much has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?

(1 = Very little, 2 = Some, 3 = Quite a bit, 4 = Very much)

Key: Metro = Metropolitan State; Minn = Minnesota; Carn = Carnegie Class; All – NSSE 2013

Skill	GELS Area	Metro 2009	Metro 2011	Metro 2013	Minn	Carn	All
Speaking clearly and effectively	1	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.0	2.9
Solving complex real-world problems	2	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8
Being an informed and active citizen	5,9	Note	Note	2.8	2.6*	2.7	2.7
Developing or clarifying a personal code of values and ethics	9	2.6	2.6	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.8

\* $p < .01$ , \*\* $p < .001$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

Note: This question was not asked in 2009 or 2011.

**Table 1-3.** Perceptions of greatest areas of gain

During the current school year, whether course-related or not, about how often have you done the following?

(1 = Never, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Often, 4 = Very often)

Comparison Group = All module participants

Activity	GELS Goal Area	Metropolitan State Mean	Comparison Group Mean
Critically evaluated multiple solutions to a problem	2	2.9	3.0
Discussed or debated an issue of social, political, or philosophical importance	5,6	2.7	2.7
Discussed the ethical consequences of a course of action	9	2.7	2.6****

\* $p < .01$ , \*\* $p < .001$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

**Table 1-4.** Development of Transferable Skills

#### *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

No internal targets were set for this data. See Table 1-3 and Table 1-4 for comparison with external benchmarks.

#### *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

As the NSSE data indicates, Metropolitan State students believe their experience at the university contributed “quite a bit” in several areas related to the common outcomes. The highest areas of gain were “writing clearly and effectively” (3.1) and “understanding people of other backgrounds” (3.0). These results are attributable to the strength of our Writing Center and the diversity of our student population, including a relatively high number of non-native English speakers whose writing skills are improved through the practice of writing throughout their academic careers and whose presence enriches the learning of all students.

The transferable skills module, which was added to the NSSE survey for the first time in 2013, indicates that students practice the transferable skills associated with the common outcomes at rates comparable to students elsewhere. By contrast, trend data (2009, 2011, 2013) on the items measuring “perception of greatest area of gain” are relatively stable, with no more than a 0.3 variation between the yearly averages. The most consistent gain in scores (from 2.6 in 2009 to 2.8 in 2013) was in the “developing or clarifying a personal code of values and ethics” category. The most consistent and largest drop in scores (from 3.1 in 2009 to 2.8 in 2013) was in the “analyzing numerical and statistical information” category, a potential area for further reflection and analysis. There were few significant differences between the Metropolitan State mean and the means of the comparison groups.

### **11| Improvements that have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years (4.B.3)**

Improvements to GELS-related processes since 2010 include the following:

- E-mail communication each semester from the GELS Committee identifying GELS Committee members and explaining the processes for getting courses added to (or deleted from) the approved GELS course list and for appealing transfer decisions related to GELS requirements
- A new procedure and standardized form, the GELS Committee’s “General Education/Liberal Studies Minnesota Transfer Curriculum Change Request,” which ensures that changes to GELS are communicated to all relevant parties and triggers updates in the registration system, thus assisting students in their selection of courses and successful achievement of the common objectives

- A new procedure (currently being designed by the GELS Committee) for determining reasonable accommodations in GELS classes for students who have disabilities; primarily intended to address issues related to dyscalculia, the template could conceivably be enacted for any disability that would prevent a student from meeting any GELS requirement; and
- An improved, published GELS list that clearly indicates which courses satisfy multiple requirements (multiple GELS goal areas and/or liberal studies requirements).

Currently, GELS outcomes are validated primarily through assessments within each course and with self-reported measures, although some programs use validated AACU rubrics.

(See 1R1.)

## **PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES**

### **1P2| Program Learning Outcomes focuses on the knowledge, skills, and abilities graduates from particular programs are expected to possess**

*Aligning program learning outcomes to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution (3.E.2)*

When a program becomes established at Metropolitan State University, it includes a list of program learning outcomes. Each program undergoes substantial review every five years through the university's academic program review process outlined in University Procedure 255. When new programs are developed, learning outcomes are guided by the Program Navigator system administered by the MnSCU system. See 1P3.

Metropolitan State currently uses the Planning Tool for Academic Programs, which provides an outline for the reporting of specific data regarding individual programs and helps anticipate future program revisions or improvements. The tool also requires program proponents to align curriculum to college, university and MnSCU strategic plans and other external factors.

Curriculum committees of the faculty approve new courses and changes to existing courses. As a part of this preview process, faculty members determine whether or not the curricula are appropriate to the university's mission and fit the educational offerings at the appropriate degree level.

Professional programs and other disciplines align program requirements and learning goals with the practice standards of their professional associations and accrediting agencies (e.g., the Association of Computing Machinery for computer science programs and the Minnesota Society of Certified Public Accountants for accounting programs.) In programs leading to licensure (e.g. Urban Education, Nursing, Social work, Advanced Dental Therapy, Alcohol and Drug Counseling, and Law Enforcement) the learning outcomes also align with state requirements. See section 1P3 for a full list of state certification bodies.

*Determining program outcomes (4.B.4)*

Faculty, as members of departments and through their respective curriculum committees, design programs and majors, develop courses and learning experiences, and identify student learning outcomes. (4.B.4)

*Articulating the purposes, content, and level of achievement of the outcomes (4.B.1)*

The purpose and content of academic programs are defined by the program faculty and reported through the learning outcome goals established for each program. (4.B.1)

Levels of achievement of the goals are established by each program and reported through individual program assessment reports. For example, in the College of Management, the ETS Major Field Test for Bachelor's Degree in Business was administered to 119 senior students during Spring 2013. The seniors had a mean score of 154 compared with a national average of 150, placing them in the 65<sup>th</sup> percentile. In

areas that involve licensure, this information is collected and carefully tracked by programs to demonstrate levels of student achievement.

*Ensuring the outcomes remain relevant and aligned with student, workplace, and societal needs (3.B.4.)*

To ensure that learning outcomes reflect the expectations of the workplace and the needs of students, each department/college curriculum committee regularly reviews its program outcomes as part of its ongoing program review and assessment process. Also, to ensure that learning outcomes remain relevant to today's culturally diverse and complex workplace, professional programs (identified in 1P2 above) regularly update their learning outcomes to incorporate changing professional standards. (3.B.4)

*Designing, aligning, and delivering co-curricular activities to support learning (3.E.1, 4.B.2)*

Recently, Metropolitan State was selected by the Carnegie Foundation to receive its Community Engagement Classification through 2025. This designation reflects a "university-wide approach of teaching, research or experiential learning that combines authentic community or public service activity with academic instruction..." During academic year 2013-2014, more than 100 faculty were recognized as part of the "Circle of Engaged Learning" for incorporating community-based learning into their courses. Metropolitan State students performed more than 67,000 hours of active community service through these courses. These opportunities for community engagement enhance student learning and further the mission of the university. See 1P1. (4.B.2)

Student learning is further enhanced through the leadership opportunities orchestrated by the Office of Student Development and through the designation of official university student organizations; all student organizations must demonstrate alignment with the goals of the university to receive funding. Student Development encourages student leaders to track their extracurricular activities for an "involvement transcript" through the online system, OrgSync. (4.B.2)

*Selecting tools/methods/instruments used to assess attainment of program learning outcomes (4.B.2)*

The selection of tools to assess program learning outcomes is determined by the program faculty and reported regularly through the annual assessment reports submitted to the provost and vice president for Academic Affairs office. The varied tools include tests specific to program content (e.g., business, computer science), portfolio submission (e.g., technical communication, professional writing), undergraduate and graduate surveys (College of Individualized Studies) and ongoing assessment tied to licensure criteria (e.g., urban education). At the institutional level, the selection of assessment tools and instruments is directed by the provost and vice president for Academic Affairs Office in consultation with the Office of Institutional Research. Those tools and instruments include the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), the Adult Learner Inventory (ALI), and the Priorities Survey for Online Learners (PSOL). Assessment of student learning through the university's commitment to community engagement is directed by the faculty work group for the Institute for Community Engagement and Scholarship (ICES), which includes representatives of each college and school.

*Assessing program learning outcomes (4.B.1, 4.B.2, 4.B.4)*

Each program within Metropolitan State submits an annual assessment report to the provost and vice president for Academic Affairs Office; the report is summarized in an annual report written by that office. Before 2012, a university-wide assessment committee provided oversight to assessment activities. In 2012, a decision was made to discontinue this committee and to locate responsibility within the provost and vice president for Academic Affairs Office in conjunction with the Office of Institutional Research.

## **1R2| Results for determining if students possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are expected in programs**

While many programs have determined and assess learning outcomes systematically, appropriate levels of assessments vary across the programs and thus the university's maturity level is moving toward systematic with a clear action steps toward becoming aligned.

### *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

Student learning outcomes at the program level are tracked with a variety of outcome measures. Listed below is a representative sample of the outcome measures used by various programs. Specific results are available in the programs' assessment reports.

#### College of Management

- Knowledge of major fields in business: standard ETS test
- Decision Sciences, International Business Finance, Human Resource Management: individual course assessments
- Economics: Aplia™ online exercises
- Management: completion of MGMT 499 capstone course
- Marketing: comprehensive exam following completion of MKTG 300 course

#### College of Arts and Sciences

- Biology/life sciences teaching: American Chemical Society national standardized exam: Concept Assessment Tests (CATs)
- Professional communications: faculty evaluation of capstone course performance
- Technical communication and professional writing: professional portfolios
- Ethnic studies: capstone essay assessment
- Computer science: ICS 240 course assessment

#### College of Health, Community and Professional Studies

- Bachelor of Science in nursing: assessment during NURS 495 (Capstone Seminar)
- Social work: exit survey of graduating seniors
- Psychology: individual course assessments
- Human services: site supervisor assessment surveys

#### College of Individualized Studies

- Survey of graduates
- Capstone course completion and assessment

#### College of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice

- Minnesota POST (Peace Officer Standards Training) Board Licensing Exam

#### College of Urban Education

- Minnesota Teachers Licensing Examinations, which includes basic skills tests and pedagogy tests for initial licensure in early childhood, elementary, or secondary education, and content area tests for specialties (e.g., dance in early childhood or social studies in grades 5-12).

### *Overall levels of deployment of assessment processes within the institution*

The provost and vice president for Academic Affairs Office tracks the extent to which the assessment of student learning outcomes is occurring across the university. Programs are required to submit a summary of assessment activities annually and a program review every five years. A proposed reorganization of the assessment is currently underway. It is anticipated that this reorganization, which will include faculty training and development in the area of program learning outcomes assessment, will provide a more systematic promotion of appropriate program learning outcomes across the institution.

*Summary results of assessments*

Table 1-5 provides examples of outcomes for various student learning assessments used at Metro State.

Types of Measures					
	BA Biology	Standardized Pretest	Average score: 67.1%	Previous year: 63.3%	
	BA Education	Standard Test Licensure Examination/ MTLE Content Examination: Com Art and Lit	Pass rate: 96%		State Pass Rate: 96%
	College of Management	ETS Major Field Test for Bachelor's Degree in Business	Refer to Table 1-6		
	Management	Rubric Faculty Ratings		Mean scores calculated	

**Table 1-5.** Examples of Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

*Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

Although some Metropolitan State programs compare their student test results with national or regional norms, the most direct use of external benchmarks are within the programs that lead to licensure, as noted in 1R2.3. The table below contains 2013 results from the Educational Testing Service.

As the data indicates, Metropolitan State's College of Management seniors placed in much higher percentiles than students nationally for knowledge of their major fields in most subjects.

Assessment Indicator	2013			
	Metro Mean	National Mean	Metro Percentile	National Percentile
Accounting	48	44	65	45
Economics	47	44	66	44
Management	61	57	65	39
Quantitative Analysis	40	41	41	50
Finance	47	43	71	48
Marketing	56	55	48	42
Legal Environment	57	57	52	52
Information Systems	55	48	81	43
International Issues	54	53	51	45

**Table 1-6.** ETS Results from College of Management

*Interpretation of assessment results and insights gained*

Metropolitan State's licensure pass rates often meet or exceed the national or state benchmarked averages, indicating that graduates from these programs have successfully mastered their topics.

The university believes that valuable insights for the improvements of programs, curricula, and activities designed to improve student learning outcomes are gained consistently across programs through the analysis of a range of course-embedded activities. These improvements are highlighted in section 112.

**112| Improvements that have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years (4.B.3)**

In the area of program assessment, the most significant improvement will come in the organized manner that Metropolitan State University will move ahead with a comprehensive plan for assessment.

Metropolitan State is in the process of hiring a coordinator of assessment, who will work with the Office of Institutional Research and the university's accreditation team to develop, implement, and monitor a comprehensive program assessment strategic plan. In addition the university has alerted the Higher Learning Commission that we will be making an application for the Fall 2015 Assessment Academy.

Improvement activities already underway in Metropolitan State programs include the following (4.B.3):

- Economics: Aplia™, which was used on a pilot basis in Fall 2012, has proven to be a very successful tool. As a result, the use of the test was expanded to include an online section of ECON 635 during Summer 2013. Aplia™ was also used in ECON 635 in Spring 2015; other applications of the tool are also being explored.
- Decision Sciences: Assessment activities have led to more practice problems and case studies. Group activities and discussions on emerging topics in the field (including global operations, sustainability, tools of supply chain management) will be incorporated into the student experience. Pre- and post-test assessments will be utilized.
- College of Management (COM): COM is committed to creating a culture within the program that actively involves assessment activities. COM has adopted rubrics for six of the COM learning outcomes and is piloting this assessment in academic year 2014-2015. In addition, COM is developing a common case study to be used in all sections of MGMT 499; it will be assessed using a common rubric.
- Biology and Life Sciences Teaching: This program has made a commitment to achieve an assessment of students' basic concept knowledge during the 2014–2015 academic year. Biochemistry will use the national Toledo Exam to assess incoming students' content knowledge in chemistry and biology, while relying on different standardized exams for assessment in the final course.

- **Human Services:** The University will continue to implement the current version of the bachelor of science/bachelor of human services program, at least through Summer 2014. The program will then construct a new instrument or process for assessing student learning outcomes as articulated throughout the general human services curriculum.

## **ACADEMIC PROGRAM DESIGN**

### **1P3 Academic Program Design focuses on developing and revising programs to meet stakeholders' needs**

#### *Identifying student stakeholder groups and determining their educational needs (1.C.1, 1.C.2)*

In keeping with its mission and to meet the special needs of its highly diverse student body, Metropolitan State University provides a variety of student services designed to help student subgroups meet their educational needs. These include Multicultural Services, with staff serving students who are African American, American Indian, Asian American, Chicano/Latino and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ); Veteran Services; Disability Services; TRiO (a federally funded program that serves first-generation students, limited income students, and students with disabilities); Student Parent Center; and, International Student Services. (1.C.1, 1.C.2)

With an average age of 31 and an average of 75 transfer credits each, many undergraduate students arrive at Metropolitan State knowing the field of study they intend to pursue. A variety of courses, offices, and processes assist students in assessing the appropriateness of their chosen field. (1.C.2) These include the following:

- METR 101 "Your Academic Journey" (for students with 0-16 credits)
- PRSP 301 "Perspectives: Educational Philosophy and Planning" (for undergraduate students pursuing the Individualized Studies degree)
- "Intro to Major" courses
- Academic advising
- Internships and community service-learning opportunities
- Career services
- Travelers Pathway Program: A grant-funded program in the Career Development Center to develop and implement industry-based experiential learning opportunities.

#### *Identifying other key stakeholder groups and determining their needs (1.C.1, 1.C.2)*

Certification bodies, advisory boards and professional practice standards inform Metropolitan State programs. These groups help define the expected skills and competencies for graduates of the associated programs. (1.C.2)

The programs with specialty accreditation or certification are Nursing, Social Work, Urban Education, Law Enforcement, Advanced Dental Therapy, and Alcohol and Drug Counseling. See 1P4 for more details.

The advisory boards include:

- Technical Communication and Professional Writing Advisory Board
- Professional Science Master's (PSM) in Biology program development board
- Advance IT Minnesota, a "center of excellence" hosted by Metropolitan State within the MnSCU system that also guides the Management Information Systems (MIS) program.



Some Metropolitan State programs have ad hoc advisory boards of external stakeholders:

- The College of Management is reviewing its Masters of Business Administration (MBA) curricula and overall program with the assistance of a professional focus group of key decision makers in the business community
- In the Information and Decision Science department, experts advised the development of a Bachelor of Science degree in supply chain and operations management
- Alumni and student leaders are currently functioning as an advisory group to the Masters in Advocacy and Political Leadership (MAPL) program.

These entities, discussed further in section 1P4, illustrate the university's responsiveness to diversity within Minnesota. (1.C.1, 1.C.2)

*Developing and improving responsive programming to meet all stakeholders' needs (1.C.1, 1.C.2)*

Metropolitan State's University Policy 2070 documents the process for designing and reviewing new programs and certificates. New programs are proposed by the faculty and are then reviewed, consecutively, by the department, college, or school curriculum committee, the dean, the appropriate faculty committee (Graduate Programs Committee or Academic Affairs Committee (formerly, Academic Steering Committee), and the Faculty Council. All new programs must be approved by the provost and the president. Per the policy, "The academic programs or graduate programs committees will review the proposed program according to the following criteria (1.C.1, 1.C.2):

- consistency with mission of university [with its emphasis on anti-racism, community engagement and serving underrepresented students, including students of color and first generation college students]
- adherence to university academic policies
- academic integrity and quality
- avoidance of duplication with other Metro State programs
- demand or need for program, and
- existence of appropriate plan for resources."

The program proposal form, which is submitted through the MnSCU Program Navigator software, requires faculty and departments to address program-specific admission requirements, general education requirements, and prerequisites. External reviewers (one for new master's programs, two for new doctoral programs) provide feedback on these elements of student preparation. The program's faculty members then use this feedback to confirm, clarify, or change student-preparation requirements.

Finally, MnSCU's Board Policy 3.36 and Board Procedure 3.36.1 require review and approval by MnSCU's system Programs Office. This exhaustive review process holds each new program to a high level of scrutiny to ensure its ability to facilitate student learning and competitive success. (1.C.1, 1.C.2)

*Selecting the tools/methods/instruments used to assess the currency and effectiveness of academic programs*

The responsibility of selecting the tools and methods is primarily initiated by the provost and vice president for Academic Affairs Office in the form of program reviews. The program review process is documented in University Procedure 255. The provost/vice president, in consultation with deans and department chairs, proposes changes, when needed, to both the process and format of the program reviews. To finalize any substantial changes to the program review process, the draft procedure, provided by the provost/vice president, is reviewed and approved by the Faculty Issues Committee and then proceeds through the shared governance process for final approval.

*Reviewing the viability of courses and programs and changing or discontinuing when necessary. (4.A.1)*

Faculty ensure that courses and programs are up to date and effective through assessments of student learning outcomes, five-year program reviews, advisory board input, and, where applicable, program

accreditation. The process also relies on the advice of community faculty, many of whom represent government agencies, businesses, and non-profits. Critical to all these processes are the ongoing research, scholarship, and professional development that ensure that faculty members are engaged and current in their disciplines. (4.A.1)

Program faculty are responsible for the assessment of student learning outcomes. They establish and communicate learning outcomes, assess and report on students' achievement of the outcomes, and use assessment results to continually improve student learning. Each academic program is expected to engage in assessment activities each academic year. See section 1R2 for additional information on assessing program learning outcomes.

### **Five-Year Program Reviews**

Each academic program conducts a comprehensive review every five years. University Procedure 255 details the review process and provides guidelines to departments engaged in the process. (See 1I1 for discussion of a revision to this procedure that is currently underway.) The Office of Institutional Research provides a standard data set and analysis to each department as it begins the program-review process, as well as additional information as requested. Findings from the program review inform decisions about changes to courses and to the program as a whole. (4.A.1)

### **Program Accreditation**

The programs with specialty accreditation or certification are Nursing, Social Work, Urban Education, Law Enforcement, Advanced Dental Therapy, and Alcohol and Drug Counseling. Specialty accreditation requirements and processes are established by the accrediting or certifying bodies. For example, graduates of Advanced Dental Therapy, who enter as dental hygienists (licensed by the Minnesota Board of Dentistry), take a test to become dually licensed as dental therapists. After 18-24 months of practice, licensed dental therapy candidates are then eligible for an additional credentialing process in Advanced Dental Therapy. (See section 1P4 for program-specific external accreditation details.)

### **Community Faculty**

The use of accomplished practitioners as community faculty is arguably the way in which students most directly experience currency in their university education. The continuous engagement among community faculty and resident faculty also contributes to keeping programs current with changes in various fields and industries. (4.A.1)

**Advisory Boards** (See 1P3 above.)

### **Student Feedback**

Students provide feedback to instructors via surveys, focus groups, and the Instructional Improvement Questionnaire (IIQ). Surveys and focus groups are frequently used in the five-year program review process. The Nursing program also conducts focus groups each semester to learn about students' experiences in the program and their needs. The IIQ, which is administered in almost every course at the end of every semester, provides ongoing feedback that individual faculty members and departments can review for indicators of course effectiveness. (4.A.1)

### **1R3| Results for determining if programs are current and meet the needs of the institution's diverse stakeholders**

Evaluation of results within Program Design is at a reacting stage, with plans in place that will make gathering results more systematic. The record of creating new programs to meet relevant needs of the student population shows consistent use of a standard process and consideration of many stakeholders. The program review process, however, is under revision to reflect Metropolitan State goals and allow institutional level assessment of improvements and success.

*Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

An example of one college's schedule and completion status of program reviews since fiscal year 2010 is shown in Table 1-7.

College of Management	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14
Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) 0151		11/PA			14/IP
Accounting (BS) 0024			revised		
Business Administration (BS) 0025	10/C				
Economics (BS) 0026				13/IP	14/IP
Finance (BS) 0027				13/C	
Human Resource Management (BS) 0028					
International Business (BS) 0029	10/C				
Management (BS) 0030	10/C				
Management Information Systems (BS) 0031	10/IP	11/IP	12/IP	13/IP	14/IP
Marketing (BS) 0032				13/C	
Master of Business Administration (MBA) 0035	10/C				
Master of Management Information Systems (MMIS) 0088					14/IP
Master of Public and Nonprofit Administration (MPNA) 0096				13/C	

C=completed; IP=in process; NR=not required; PA=program approved

**Table 1-7.** Status of Program Reviews, College of Management

*Summary results of assessments*

As evidenced by Table 1-8, Metropolitan State adds programs when a strong need arises for specific skills in various careers. For example, in 2011 the Bachelor of Arts degree in Computer Information Systems was replaced with a more technical and focused Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Information Technology. In addition, the new (2013) Bachelor of Science degree in Supply Chain and Operations Management reflects the recognition of the complexity of this function and of the knowledge that is needed to efficiently manage an entire supply chain in globally integrated economies.

Year	Undergraduate Programs
2011	BA in Creative Writing
2011	BA in Technical Communication and Professional Writing
2011	BS in Computer Information Technology (replaced BA in Computer Information Systems)
2013	BS in Nursing (Minnesota Alliance for Nursing Education [MANE] Nursing)
2013	BAS in Computer Application Development
2013	BS in Chemistry
2013	BS in Supply Chain and Operations Management

Year	Post-Graduate Programs
2010	MS in Criminal Justice
2011	Certificate in Urban Education
2014	MS in Alcohol and Chemical Dependency Counseling
2014	Professional Science Master's (PSM) in Computer Science
2015	MS in Urban Education

**Table 1-8.** Approved Programs Since 2010

### *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

Metropolitan State sets internal targets as part of program design and program review processes. Results are compared to statewide results for standardized assessments in Nursing, Social Work, and other professional programs.

### *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

The data on new programs suggests that Metropolitan State is sensitive to the changing needs of society, particularly with respect to its mission. For example, new master's degree programs in Criminal Justice and Alcohol Chemical Dependency Counseling reflect the desire to train students to serve multiple diverse and underserved portions of the general population. Metropolitan State also recognizes changes in the nature and needs of evolving career areas with respect to innovations in technology and processes that have shaped many fields, including computer information technology, computer application development, and supply chain and operations management. The continued and expanded use of advisory groups across the university helps identify the emerging needs of the community.

### **113 Improvements that have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years**

For academic year 2014–2015, all university programs are being asked to conduct a guided program evaluation and planning exercise as part of the overall academic planning process. College deans are currently determining a list of requirements for a revised program review process. This process will not only provide input for academic planning, but will allow the institution to update its baseline profile of each academic program.

A part of revising the program review process, deans are defining the appropriate data set to be used in each program. Institutional Research now reports to the provost and vice president for Academic Affairs Office. This office is budgeting additional money for program review so that programs may engage outside reviewers and/or have support for other data collection methods and departmental work.

#### **Improvements completed since 2010:**

- The Academic Affairs Committee's process improvement has moved from a "one-shot" review and approval to a process that includes preliminary proposal review and discussion before a program proposal is actually submitted to the committee for approval. This change has been very successful in building strong program proposals.
- University Procedure 255 was updated in 2011 to clarify the process and required information.
- New programs were implemented to address the needs of Metropolitan State students. (See Table 1-8 in section 1.R.3)

#### **Improvements currently being implemented:**

- Academic Affairs Committee process improvements: Procedure 255 is under review with an aim to better coordinate the Metropolitan State approval process with MnSCU's Program Navigator system requirements.
- Program review process improvements. See section 1P5.
- New programs to address the needs of students: The Masters in Advocacy and Political Leadership (MAPL), which has been offered at the University of Minnesota Duluth since 2002 is now relocating to Metropolitan State. The program seeks to create a professional group of ethically grounded advocates and organizers.

**Planned improvements:**

- Several advisory groups are in the planning stage, including ones for the Master of Public and Nonprofit Administration (MPNA) program, the Masters in Advocacy and Political Leadership (MAPL) degree program, and the graduate certificate in the Arts and Cultural Heritage Management program.

**ACADEMIC PROGRAM QUALITY****1P4| Academic Program Quality focuses on ensuring quality across all programs, modalities, and locations**

*Determining and communicating the preparation of students for the specific curricula, programs, courses and learning they will pursue (4.A.4)*

Program faculty at Metropolitan State University determine the preparation needed for specific courses and programs. The same standards apply to courses offered to high school students through Minnesota's Post-Secondary Education Option (PSEO). Through the use of prerequisites, students are informed about the background needed to successfully complete a course or program. These preparation requirements are communicated through active advising, information on the university's web site, marketing materials, and other publications. (4.A.4.)

*Evaluating and ensuring program rigor for all modalities, locations, consortia and when offering dual-credit programs (3.A.1, 3.A.3, 4.A.4)*

Metropolitan State provides access to courses through face-to-face, fully online, and hybrid modalities. The university has been a leader in the development and delivery of online and hybrid options for our adult learner population. To ensure quality, a new peer review process has been instituted. In addition, significant resources are available to faculty through the university's Center for Online Learning (COL). COL provides training seminars as well as individual assistance to faculty throughout the developmental process. The funding for course development and the review is provided through a specific per-credit fee for all online courses. Faculty are provided funding to receive training, to serve as reviewers, and to develop courses through a Memorandum of Agreement between Metropolitan State, MnSCU, and the Inter Faculty Organization (IFO). As shown in Table 1-9, more than 35% of all credits enrolled in by Metropolitan State's students are delivered through an online or hybrid modality.

	<b>Sections Offered</b>	<b>Percentage of Sections Offered</b>
Independent Study	28	3%
On Campus	664	60%

**Table 1-9.** Course Delivery Modalities

The quality of all classes is assessed using our Instructional Improvement Questionnaire (IIQ) student surveys. Regular reviews of teaching quality are conducted during the tenure and promotion process for resident faculty. Recently, the university has initiated a requirement that all community faculty submit a Professional Development Report (PDR) once every two years for review by the dean of the college within which they teach. (3.A.1)

Metropolitan State's delivery of programs and courses are located at several site locations within the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area. Services and options for insuring program quality are the same at all locations and modalities for delivery, including PSEO and dual-credit courses. For example,

Metropolitan State University played a lead role in the Minnesota Alliance for Nursing Education (MANE), a consortium involving the university and seven community colleges. Beginning academic year 2014-15,

MANE began implementing a common curriculum, approved by the State of Minnesota that enables first- and second-year nursing candidates dual admission into the university's AA to BSN Nursing program.

(4.A.4) Likewise, the Dental Hygiene (BSDH) program has initiated a dual enrollment process with Normandale Community College. See section 1P3 for more information on the processes used for program quality assessment and review. (3.A.3)

*Awarding prior learning and transfer credits (4.A.2, 4.A.3)*

The awarding of transfer credit is facilitated through several processes. The Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC) applies to all colleges and universities in the MnSCU system, including Metropolitan State. (See Section 1P1.) The specific transfer policy for Metropolitan State is described in the university's Transfer Credit Policy 2120. (4.A.2, 4.A.3)

One of Metropolitan State's founding principles was the ability of students to apply and use prior learning to achieve their educational goals. Evaluators use established guidelines for assessment processes and evaluation criteria; these guidelines are consistent with both MnSCU and Metropolitan State policies and procedures, as well as with national best practices, such as those recommended by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL). The university also recognizes nationally and locally recommended exams for assessment, consistent with recommendations by MnSCU policies and procedures and by the American Council of Education (ACE). Information about assessment options, standards, and processes is available to students and the public on the university's web site. (4.A.3)

Numerous articulation agreements have been developed and implemented over the past 2 years, particularly with two-year partner institutions within the MnSCU system. These colleges provide our largest source of enrollment. Now numbering 214, articulation agreements provide a guide for students as they look to transfer from two-year institutions to Metropolitan State.

Students' credits, transferred or earned at Metropolitan State, are reflected in DARS, the degree-planning tool described in 1P1.

*Selecting, implementing, and maintaining specialized accreditations (s) (4.A.5)*

Listed below are programs that have specialized accreditation

- Baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral degree programs in nursing are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). In October 2013, the CCNE Board of Commissioners extended the accreditation of Metropolitan State's baccalaureate and master's degree programs for 10 years. The board also granted accreditation to the university's doctor of nursing practice (DNP) program for five years. These accreditation actions were effective as of April 8, 2013
- The Social Work program is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). CSWE first accredited the Social Work program in 1998, and the most recent reaccreditation was in October 2010
- The Urban Education program was granted initial and conditional approval to offer licensure programs by the Minnesota Board of Teaching in 2000–2001. Full approval was granted in 2006–2007 and reapproved in 2011–2012
- The School of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice is certified by the Peace Officer Selection Test (POST) as a Professional Peace Officer Education (PPOE) Program. The university was last certified in 2010 with renewal scheduled for 2015.

*Assessing the level of outcomes attainment by graduates at all levels (3.A.2, 4.A.6)*

The assessment of student learning outcomes is described for General Education in 1P1-1R1 and for academic program outcomes in 1P2-1R.

*Selecting the tools/methods/instruments used to assess program rigor across all modalities.*

The selection of tools, methods, and instruments used to assess program rigor across all modalities are discussed in 1P1-1R1 and 1P2-1R2. Additional peer review assessments are conducted for the university's online courses and program delivery.

**IR4| Results for determining the quality of academic programs**

The maturity level of determining the quality of academic programs would be considered systematic.

*Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized.*

Metropolitan State uses the Priorities Survey for Online Learners (POSL) to measure the satisfaction levels of online learners. This tool is specifically designed for online students and measures their overall satisfaction and issues important to them.

The IIQ is a student rating form designed to provide evaluative feedback to instructors about their teaching. The IIQ is provided to students in all classes, and is used as a tool by faculty to modify and improve their instruction. Aggregate information for each of the colleges and the university as a whole is provided after each semester.

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is administered by Metropolitan State to measure engagement of first-year and senior students.

*Summary results of assessments*

University Mean scores on following scale: 1-Always; 2-Usually; 3- Sometimes; 4-Seldom; 5-Never; NA	
The Instructor:	
1. Stimulated student thinking	1.5
2. Explained course objectives & outcomes	1.4
3. Explained course requirements and evaluation criteria	1.4
4. Presented material in an organized manner	1.5
5. Made good use of community resources	1.5
6. Spoke clearly and audibly	1.3
7. Encouraged questions and treated them respectfully	1.3
8. Created a classroom environment conducive to learning	1.3
9. Kept discussion on track	1.4
10. Was prepared for sessions with students	1.3
11. Demonstrated mastery of subject matter	1.2
12. Was fair and respectful with regard to age, gender, race ethnicity, religion, disabilities and sexual preference	1.1
13. Defined assignments clearly and carefully	1.5
14. Provided helpful written responses on student work	1.6
15. Informed students of their progress in time to correct deficiencies	1.6
16. Facilitated students' active involvement in learning	1.4
17. Designed assignments and tests to increase understanding and application	1.4
18. Held class as scheduled	1.2
1-Excellent; 2-Very Good; 3-Good; 4-Poor; 5-Very Poor	
19. How would you rate the overall performance of this instructor	1.6
1-Exceptional Amt; 2-Very Much; 3-Much; 4-Some; 5-Little	
20. How much have you learned in this course?	2.0
1-Yes; 2-No	
21. Did you receive a syllabus by the second meeting	1.0
1-Very; 2-somewhat; 3-Not Very; 4-Not at all	
22. How important was class attendance to understanding the subject?	1.3

**Table 1-10.** IIQ Results, Fall 2014

Results from the POSL, ALI and NSSE were contained in a report provided to the university by the VP for Student Affairs and the VP for Academic Affairs in 2014.

### **Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks**

The NSSE data above compares Metropolitan State data to benchmarks from other colleges and universities in Minnesota and those that have earned Carnegie classification. The IIQ data is only compared on an aggregate basis to different colleges and the university as a whole. The POSL provides comparative data to a national group of online learners. The ALI provides comparison to a national benchmark.

#### *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

The POSL results are used by Metropolitan State's Center for Online Learning (COL) to inform the university's internal review process about all online offerings. Feedback regarding this source of data has been provided to the university community through information sessions that included the POSL results as well as the NSSE results. In February 2014 the provost and vice president for Student Affairs office made several presentations of the data to groups across the university.

Faculty members, departments, and colleges use the IIQ data to inform teaching practices. The Center for Faculty Development has trained new resident faculty members in interpreting IIQs to improve their teaching and consulted with individuals upon request.

### **114| Improvements that have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years**

The university has created a new model for the Center for Faculty Development, led by a .7 FTE director (a resident faculty member) and .5 associate director (a community faculty member). The center prioritizes the use of survey data from community and resident faculty to plan programming and specific faculty training activities.

A new model for peer review of online course development has been initiated. This review incorporates some aspects of the Applying the Quality Matters Rubric (APPQMR), as well as data developed through the university's administration of the POSL.

The provost and vice president for Academic Affairs office has initiated a search for a full-time coordinator of assessment who will support the development and dissemination of data to more fully examine the quality of programs at the university.

## **ACADEMIC STUDENT SUPPORT**

### **1P5| Academic Student Support focuses on systems designed to help students be successful**

#### *Identifying underprepared and at-risk students, and determining their academic support needs (3.D.1)*

Metropolitan State University devotes considerable resources to academic student support systems, which include placement assessment services, library and information services, enrollment management processes, TRiO-SSS services, and tutoring and academic testing centers.

The Placement Assessment Office's key processes ensure that entering students are directed to courses and programs for which they are prepared. Underprepared and at-risk students are directed to developmental courses in content areas such as math and writing. Students receive a results letter immediately after completing the required placement tests; the letter instructs students to begin with the courses they are academically ready to take. Academic advisors work with students to help them understand placement information while choosing courses.



The university's key processes for academic advising also aim to identify underprepared and at-risk students and to determine their needs for academic support. Academic advisors identify underprepared and at-risk students at multiple points throughout the semester:

- Students who have not completed prerequisite course work have a hold placed on their registration. Students must contact their assigned advisor to determine if the prerequisite for the course has been met or if they should select a more appropriate course. Advisors also use course sequence checklists and/or visual charts to show students what prerequisite courses are necessary before the students can take the more advanced courses.
- Students who have not completed their required writing or math assessments have a hold placed on registration. Those students still in need of completing writing or math courses must undergo an assessment if they have not already taken one or if they have not completed prerequisite courses. Advisors work with students who have registration holds to determine what assessments are needed. When the assessment is complete, the advisors assist each student in choosing the level of writing or math courses needed for that student's major course sequence.
- Advisors work with assessment office to resolve confusion about prerequisite course completion.
- An "early alert" system is in place that allows faculty to identify students having difficulties in class. Their online reports generate an "early alert" e-mail to the student, the student's advisor and Student Affairs staff that outlines the areas that need to be addressed. Student Affairs staff reach out to the student via a phone call or e-mail to identify the issue and resources available for the student to be successful in his or her course.
- Students who are admitted on warning or who Fall below required academic progress standards are placed on registration hold and must contact their advisor after completing an Academic Success Workshop. The advisor reviews the areas of challenge with the student and determines an appropriate registration plan, as well as a plan of action to improve grades and completion rates for the next semester.
- In addition to having registration holds, which require students to contact their assigned advisor, advisors also initiate contact with their advisees and may identify an at-risk student through communications with that student before the issues are identified at a university level.

Advisors communicate with their assigned advisees through e-mail, phone, or in-person conversations to help the students determine what they need and find available resources. The Academic Success Workshop is also designed to help students reflect upon their challenges and determine what they need for academic support. Metropolitan State's advising web site and orientation web site also have a variety of URLs that students can link to for information and support.

The university's TRiO program supports academic success for underrepresented students who are first-generation college students, low-income students, and students with disabilities. (3.D.1) The TRiO program's processes include one-on-one assessment of ongoing needs, midterm monitoring of students' academic progress, tutoring and study skills assistance, and additional services tied to student needs. (3.D.2, 3.D.3)

Some students are admitted on probation due to a low GPA attained at a previous community college or other academic institution. Once the students are admitted to Metropolitan State, they are required to complete an Academic Success Workshop so that they are prepared for the academic rigor of the university. (3.D.2)

*Deploying academic support services to help students select and successfully complete courses and programs (3.D.2)*

The MnSCU system assumes responsibility for selecting the instruments used for placement assessment in order to ensure seamless transfer across the institutions in the statewide system. (3.D.2) MnSCU

Board Policy 3.3 (Assessment for Course Placement) outlines the system's approach to placement assessment tests.

A faculty work group is specifically responsible for the implementation of the MnSCU policy, with the help of the Placement Assessment Office. With the guidance of the Placement Assessment Workgroup, detailed procedures are established and published on the web site.

Newly matriculated students are supported by placement assessment processes, which have been designed and implemented to enroll students at appropriate course levels. (3.D.2) Students must take an Accuplacer® assessment for math and writing, which gives advisors information about the appropriate writing and math courses that students should pursue for both their general education and major requirements. If students start at the appropriate level and take the correct sequence of math and writing courses, they are more likely to complete those courses successfully.

For students enrolling at Metropolitan State for their first semester, the university offers an online orientation that includes college-specific program planning modules. In addition to the required online orientation, students have the option to attend an on-campus Group Advising and Registration (GAR) session. During this event, students attend a presentation for their college and then receive registration assistance from the college's advisors. Further, Welcome Day, provided the week before a semester starts, offers students student success workshops, academic advising, campus tours and answers to first-semester students' questions.

Undeclared or undecided students are assigned an advisor in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). This college houses most of the general education courses. As students are deciding which major they want to pursue, they can receive help from CAS advisors in completing their general education requirements.

All Metropolitan State colleges have both faculty advisors and full-time professional advisors. Generally, the professional full-time advisors will work with new students in their college until they have completed enough pre-major course requirements to declare a major. Professional and faculty advisors work with students to help them determine which programs and majors best fit their academic needs.

Advisors use the "early alert" system to help students make better choices in completing courses. The university's Satisfactory Academic Progress policies Academic Progress policies (Policy #2050, Undergraduate Academic Standing and Procedure 205, Undergraduate Academic Standing and Review) also assist students in determining their priorities and ability to complete courses and programs.

The Center for Academic Excellence's (CAE) tutoring and academic testing services develop and deliver academic support to students in multiple ways. CAE administrators and tutoring staff collaborate to determine and address students' learning support needs through regular communication with faculty stakeholders, academic advisors, and the vice president of Academic Student Success. CAE administrators and tutoring staff also solicit input from students regarding tutees' learning needs. (3.D.1) The center offers tutoring services at several campus locations (Saint Paul, Minneapolis, and Midway). (3.D.4) All members of the tutoring staff participate actively in rigorous on-board training; tutors also participate actively in ongoing training opportunities. (3.C.5) Writing Center tutors receive specialized training in working with multilingual/English as a second language (ESL) students. (3.C.5, 3.D.1)

Because Metropolitan State is recognized as an adult learner institution, the Writing Center's tutoring staff includes faculty tutors. (3.C.6, 3.D.1) All tutors are trained to provide academic support to students working on research projects. (3.D.5)

*Ensuring faculty are available for student inquiry (3.C.5)*

All faculty are expected to hold a minimum of 10 regularly scheduled office hours per week during each academic term as per the Inter Faculty Organization (IFO) contract. Faculty are also available to answer student inquiries by telephone and e-mail, as well as through discussion boards in the courses' D2L content management systems. (3.C.5)

*Determining and addressing the learning support needs (tutoring, advising, library, laboratories, research, etc.) of students and faculty (3.D.1, 3.D.3, 3.D.4, 3.D.5)*

Throughout a student's enrollment at Metropolitan State, advisors are available to meet with students to map out an educational plan and career goals. Advisors are available via e-mail, phone, and in-person. During these interactions, advisors ask questions to help the students determine what learning support services would benefit them. Early alert messages from faculty also help to determine specific learning support needs.

If an advisor determines that a student needs additional support beyond what an advisor can offer, that advisor will connect the student to appropriate university resources. These resources include Career Services, TRiO-SSS services, Disability Services, tutoring, the Math Center, the Writing Center, Library and Information Services, Counseling, Veterans services, multi-cultural support, International Student Services, LGBTQ support, Women's Services, the Student Parent Center, internships, and community engagement.

Advising at Metropolitan State is decentralized, which means advisors work within a particular college or school. Because the university's majors and programs have different requirements, having advisors assigned to a particular college or school gives them the opportunity to learn the breadth and the depth of that college's/school's requirements, policies, and processes. For example, the School of Nursing, the School of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, and the School of Urban Education all have very specific pre-major course requirements as well as specific acceptance criteria to be approved for the major. The certifications that are necessary in these career areas can require additional information and program guidance from the advisor. Advising has been identified through a Noel-Levitz survey as an important part of student success. Metropolitan State's target student population includes many who are highly at risk and need intensive individualized planning and assistance.

The CAE's tutoring and academic testing services develop and deliver academic support to students in multiple ways. (3.D.5)

Librarians collaborate with liaison departments to provide course instruction in support of research, as well as consultations with students doing in-depth course research. (3.D.4) Interlibrary loan is provided to students, free of charge, for items not available at the Metropolitan State University Library and Learning Center. (3.D.4) The library is open 95 hours per week during the academic year and 88 hours per week during Summer sessions. (3.D.1, 3.D.4) It provides 90 desktop PCs and four desktop Macs for student use, and laptop computers are available for students to check out; in addition, eight group study rooms are available for student use. (3.D.1, 3.D.4) The library provides approximately 170 online databases, including full-text access to about 35,000 unique journal titles, 13,000 e-book titles, and 10,000 streaming video titles. Off-campus access to these materials is available to all registered students. (3.D.4)

Librarians create research guides to support student research needs in various subject areas. These are available through the library's web site. (3.D.5) Librarians create handouts on general topics to assist students in the research process. (3.D.5) Professional librarians teach a two-credit course, INFS 115 "Information Access," in which students explore critical issues about information literacy and learn practical step-by-step techniques for discerning and analyzing information resources, including online databases and web sites. The application of these skills to any subject area is demonstrated through a final project requiring the development of a search strategy and the gathering of quality resources on a topic of academic or personal interest. (3.D.5, 3.D.6)

Professional librarians teach a four-credit course, INFS 315 "Searching for Information." This is a higher-level course in which students explore the process of finding, synthesizing, evaluating, and documenting sufficient and reliable information appropriate to a variety of purposes, including upper-division coursework, senior capstone papers, or professional writing and communication tasks. (3.D.5, 3.D.6)

Professional librarians provide reference assistance to students in person at the reference desk, as well as by phone, e-mail, and chat. This assistance serves the needs of students both on and off campus. (3.D.1, 3.D.4)

In addition, eight professional librarians provide liaison work with faculty and students in all departments to ensure relevant library materials are available to support the research of students. (3.C.6, 3.D.5)

Faculty are assigned responsibility for developing appropriate clinical practice sites in professional licensure programs including Nursing, Dental Hygiene, Law Enforcement, and Social Work. School of Urban Education faculty collaborate with a Field Experience Coordinator to oversee appropriate supervised teaching experiences. These site coordinators and Institute for Community Engagement and Scholarship share referrals as community opportunities emerge for practicums, internships and course-based project sites. (3.D.4)

*Ensuring staff members who provide student academic support services are qualified, trained, and supported (3.C.6)*

Academic advising is part of the faculty contract, and newly hired faculty advisors have training specific to academic advising. (3.C.6) This training, created and implemented through a joint collaboration with the university's coordinator of advising services and its Center for Faculty Development, is offered during the faculty's first semester. Training covers the basics of academic advising, including how to interpret important registration and enrollment policies and how to work with students who have academic difficulties.

The university provides general advising training, which new full-time professional advisors and faculty advisors are required to attend. Additional training specific to an advisor's role in his or her college is provided at the college level. (3.C.6)

Qualifications and position descriptions for professional advisors are vetted through human resources and the Minnesota State University Association of Administrative and Service Faculty (MSUAASF) union to ensure appropriately qualified advisors are hired. Qualifications and position descriptions for faculty advisors are vetted through human resources and the IFO union to ensure appropriately qualified faculty.

Ongoing professional advising development is offered through monthly National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) webinars, monthly Advising Council meetings, and an annual professional development day for academic advising. Funding is available for these activities. MSUAASF members, including academic advisors, receive an annual allocation to fund professional development activities.

The CAE's tutoring staff actively participate in 24 hours (three eight-hour sessions) of onboard training, as well as additional ongoing one-on-one training and monthly training enhancement opportunities. The CAE's tutorial staff includes undergraduate (peer) tutors, graduate tutors who possess a four-year degree, and faculty tutors who possess, at minimum, a master's degree. The CAE's director, associate director, and tutor coordinator/trainer possess doctorates. In 2014–2015, this team collaborated to create additional training materials and resources in its *Tutor Pedagogy, Guidelines, and Expectations* training manual. (3.C.6)

*Communicating the availability of academic support services (3.D.2)*

During new student GAR sessions, advisors provide information about advising resources and their availability for each college. Advisors also volunteer to provide similar walk-in advising help during the university's "Welcome Day" events. Each college has its own web site that publishes the advisors' contact information and, for some colleges, the advising center hours. (3.D.2)

Advisors located in the Minneapolis or Brooklyn Park locations have access to an advising room on the Saint Paul campus, where they schedule regular weekly hours to meet students for whom the Saint Paul location is more convenient. (3.D.2)

The CAE provides academic support services to students in its Writing Center, Math Center, Science Center, Testing Center, as well through Information and Computer Sciences (ICS) tutors. The CAE communicates the availability of its offerings to students on its web site, through a virtual tour of its Saint Paul (main campus) location, and through announcements in the *Catalyst* student newsletter.

Faculty members support the CAE's efforts by including information about its services in course syllabi. The CAE also communicates the availability of services at GAR sessions, at new resident and community faculty orientations, and at Welcome Day events. (3.D.2)

*Determining goals for retention, persistence and program completion (4.C.1, 4.C.4)*

The university's retention, persistence, and program completion goals are set annually by the provost and the vice president for Enrollment Management. Utilizing the Asmussen Retention Report and internal data, the university has set a goal to increase retention by 2% in fiscal year 2015. (4.C.1, 4.C.4)

*Selecting the tools/methods/instruments used to evaluate the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of support services*

The Advising Task Force, in consultation with the Advising Council (all advisers and cultural coordinators, chaired by the coordinator of advising and the dean of students), selected a Noel-Levitz survey and a university-created Advising Survey to measure advising effectiveness.

Student Counseling Services (SCS) uses the Counseling Center Assessment of Psychological Symptoms (CCAPS) measure and student surveys to evaluate the effectiveness of psychological services provided by Metropolitan State. The CCAPS measure used by SCS allows for benchmarking with other institutions across the nation. The College Student Health Survey (CSHS) designed by the Boynton Health Service compares Metropolitan State students with other postsecondary students in the state. Intake paperwork assesses the common presenting concerns of the university's student population. The survey itself provides data regarding several key areas of student health and health-related behaviors, including physical health, mental health, personal safety, stressors, and alcohol and drug use.

Metropolitan State uses numerous surveys to assess the quality of its academic support services, such as the Priorities Survey for Online Learning (PSOL), Adult Student Priorities Survey (ASPS), and the Adult Learner Inventory (ALI). These measures provide the university with internal benchmarks from previous surveys so it can gauge progress. The tools also serve as benchmarks against other institutions that complete the same surveys. (4.C.4)

Academic Services	6.22	5.62/ 1.10	0.60	6.20	5.45/1.18	0.75	0.17***
Registration Effectiveness	6.41	5.71/1.01	0.70	6.42	5.71/1.02	0.71	0.00
Campus Climate	6.37	5.61/1.10	0.76	6.43	5.63/1.08	0.80	-0.02
Academic Advising	6.43	5.58/1.29	0.85	6.47	5.66/1.23	0.81	-0.08

**Table 1-11.** Adult Student Priorities Survey (ASPS) Category Summary

Scale/Item	Metropolitan State University – ALI			National Four-Year Adult Learners			Difference
	Importance	Satisfaction/SD	Gap	Importance	Satisfaction/SD	Gap	
Scale #4: Assessment of Learning Outcomes	5.95	5.23/1.23	0.72		5.44/1.22	0.63	-0.21***
Scale # 6: Student Support Systems	6.09	5.30/1.23	0.79	6.22	5.52/1.24	0.70	-0.22***
Scale # 5: Teaching – Learning Process	6.27	5.55/1.17	0.72	6.35	5.79/1.11	0.56	-0.24***
Scale # 3: Financing	6.18	5.26/1.38	0.92	6.37	5.51/1.39	0.86	-0.25***
Scale # 7: Technology	6.13	5.54/1.17	0.59	6.30	5.82/1.08	0.48	-0.28***
Scale # 1: Outreach	6.42	5.47/1.21	0.95	6.52	5.77/1.13	0.75	-0.30***
Scale # 8: Transitions	6.17	5.23/1.31	0.94	6.26	5.57/1.23	0.69	-0.34***
Scale # 2: Life and Career Planning	6.30	5.05/1.37	1.25	6.41	5.43/1.31	0.98	-0.38***

**Table 1-12.** Adult Learner Inventory (ALI) Category Summary

Enrollment Services	6.29	5.81/1.04	0.48	6.54	6.04/1.09	0.50	-0.23**
Institutional Perceptions	6.26	5.40/1.24	0.86	6.56	5.87/1.20	0.69	-0.47***
Student Services	6.05	5.31/1.20	0.74	6.41	5.85/1.14	0.56	-0.54***

**Table 1-13.** Priority Survey for Online Learners (PSOL) Category Summary

### 1R5| Results for determining the quality of academic support services

Metropolitan State University has a history of serving underrepresented students and has developed programs and systems to support their learning. With assessment efforts that examine student satisfaction and engagement there is evidence of assessment that has moved the institution closer to the aligned position. Overall the academic student support results are clearly systematic with some limited alignment.

#### *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

The office of Strategic Enrollment Management routinely collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence and completion, and routinely shares this information at cabinet and president's council meetings.

Academic advising outcomes at Metropolitan State University are measured by using Noel-Levitz surveys, an internally created advising survey based on the National Academic Advising Association's (NACADA) Summer Institute project, and reports from the Advising Task Force.

Library services are assessed using a variety of tools. Information Studies (INFS) courses are assessed using student Instructional Improvement Questionnaires (IIQs), and courses are adjusted based on this feedback. Suggestion boxes are available on both floors of the university's library for patron comment. In addition, focus groups are used to assess student library needs, and the library's web team makes changes to the library's web site through usability testing.

CAE uses surveys from students who have been tutored to measure the quality of tutoring services. Students are asked to complete a survey at the end of each tutorial session. Students who use the Testing Center for make-up examinations, for independent study examinations, or for waiver examinations are also asked to complete a survey. Staff administrators review these surveys weekly and provide feedback to tutoring staff to ensure high-quality academic support services.

Summary results of assessments (4.C.2, 4.C.4)

Tables 1-14, 1-15, and 1-16 below summarize persistence, retention and completion data. (4.C.2)  
See 115 below for information on university practices for analyzing this data. (4.C.4)

Entering Status	Extent of Persistence							
	Continuous		Stopped Out		Dropped Out		All Students	
	Number	% of Status	Number	% of Status	Number	% of Status	Number	% of Status
PT Transfer	931	32%	834	29%	1160	40%	2,925	43%
FT Transfer	1,016	51%	461	23%	523	26%	2,000	29%
PT Other	87	7%	265	20%	948	73%	1,297	19%
All Other Students	96	15%	153	24%	380	60%	632	9%
New Undergraduates	2,130	31%	1,713	25%	3,011	44%	6,854	100%

**Table 1-14.** Extent of Persistence Over Six Years by Entering Status – for Students Entering in Fall 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005

Entering Status	Educational Outcome (%) After Six-Years				Number of Students
	Metropolitan State		Transferred Out	Graduate	
	Graduate	Retained			
PT Transfer	42%	7%	18%	33%	2,925
FT Transfer	63%	4%	13%	21%	2,000
PT Other	9%	4%	38%	48%	1,297
All Other Students	19%	9%	34%	39%	632
New Undergraduates	40%	6%	22%	33%	6,854

**Table 1-15.** Educational Outcomes by Entering Status – for Students Entering in Fall 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005

Entering Status					

**Table 1-16.** Educational Outcomes for Stop-out Students by Entering Status – for Students Entering in Fall 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005

As of February 2012, full-time professional academic advisors had, on average, 363 advisees, of which 340 were identified as active (enrolled) students. Surveys of students in 2010 reflect their feedback on academic advising:

Usefulness of Advisor (1792 responses)

70.1% "Very Useful" or "Somewhat Useful"    13.8% "Neutral"    16.1% "Not very useful" or "Not useful"

Total # of Advising Contacts in 1 year <i>(written, phone, email, in-person)</i>			Satisfaction with # of Advising Contacts in 1 year		
More than 10	13.5%	239	Response	Responses	Responses
3 - 10	55.3%	979	Too many	1.8%	31
1 - 2	23.1%	409	About right	73.5%	1281
None	8.1%	144	Not enough	24.7%	430
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1771</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1742</b>
<b>Expected Response Time (within 48 hours: 87.3%)</b>			<b>Actual Response Time (within 48 hours: 74.2%)</b>		
Over a week	0.5%	9	Over a week	9.8%	166
3-5 business days	12.2%	213	3-5 business days	16.0%	271
Within 1-2 business days	73.7%	1,282	Within 1-2 business days	51.3%	869
Less than a day	13.6%	236	Less than a day	22.9%	389
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,740</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1695</b>

**Table 1-17.** Advising Survey 2010 – Students’ Opinions of Advising

The CAE’s assessment results include client survey data. Table 1-18 shows client survey data from the last two fiscal years (FY2013 and FY2014). Table 1-19 shows the average number of minutes spent in tutorial sessions.

FY13			
Center	Evaluations Submitted	Tutor was “Helpful” or “Very Helpful”	Students Learned “Quite a Bit” or “A Lot”
<b>Writing</b>	3044	89%-96%	82%-94%
<b>Math</b>	3779	87%-95%	80%-93%
<b>Java</b>	727	88%-96%	85%-95%
<b>Science</b>	197	84%-93%	82%-94%
FY14			
Center	Evaluations Submitted	Tutor was “Helpful” or “Very Helpful”	Students Learned “Quite a Bit” or “A Lot”
<b>Writing</b>	2432	86%-94%	80%-91%
<b>Math</b>	2415	88%-94%	83%-93%
<b>Java</b>	535	89%-94%	86%-92%
<b>Science</b>	148	76%-91%	66%-89%

**Table 1-18.** Center for Academic Excellence Client Survey Results

Fiscal Year			
2010	3171	11245	90
2012	3257	11928	72
2014	2557	9788	69

**Table 1-19.** Center for Academic Excellence, Client Visit Data



#### *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks (4.C.4)*

The Priorities Survey for Online Learning (PSOL), Adult Student Priorities Survey (ASPS), and the Adult Learner Inventory (ALI) provide internal benchmarks from previous surveys and serve as benchmarks against other institutions that complete the same surveys. See Tables 1-11, 1-12, and 1-13. (C.4.C)

In addition, Metropolitan State routinely collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence and program completion. This data provides internal benchmarks and allows comparison to other institutions in the MnSCU system. See Tables 1-14, 1-15, and 1-16 for data regarding persistence and completion. (4.C.4)

An ACT survey identified a ratio of 300 students to one FTE professional advisor as a reasonable average advising load in four-year public institutions, noting that lower ratios are needed for students with “more extensive advising needs” (i.e., undecided, underprepared, adult, disabled, first generation, complex programs, transfer, academic difficulty.) (4.C.4)

#### *Interpretation of assessment results and insights gained. (4.C.2)*

A Retention Task Force is identifying and addressing obstacles that may prevent students from persisting and completing their degrees. The task force is addressing more effective and efficient assignment of advisors, a more streamlined major declaration process, and a newly revamped student orientation session. (4.C.2)

Based on the 2010 advising survey and in keeping with ACT recommendations, the Advising Task Force report recommended a student advisor ratio approximating 300:1. (4.C.2)

#### **115| Improvements that have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years (4.C.3)**

Using the above data, the university will focus on these improvement priorities:

- Advising coordination
- Making information more accessible to students through web site improvements, including implementation of a new customer relationship management system
- Development of strategic plans for online learning
- Continuing improvements in Gateway Student Services and the Center for Academic Excellence

Metropolitan State created a coordinator of advising services position in 2014. The coordinator is responsible for improving the university’s advising training and assessment, advocating for and enhancing advising services, coordinating advising processes throughout the colleges for more consistency and accuracy, and improving communication between Student Affairs, academic advisors and upper administration. (4.C.3)

Within the next one to three years, the professional advisor and faculty advisor training will be enhanced with more ongoing professional development, as well as more online training modules, which will streamline how, when, and where the training is received. Training will become more consistent across the university, while enabling each program to maintain its autonomy and uniqueness. (4.C.3)

Another area for implementing improvements is on Metropolitan State’s web site. A task force is currently working on developing the university’s next web site, which will have a more user-friendly content management system, as well as a better approach to organizing information. (4.C.3)

Metropolitan State has begun the process of implementing its customer relationship management system, RightNow, across the colleges. The university hopes to fully implement this system by mid-2016. Using it will increase the university’s knowledge of its students and of how effectively they are being served. (4.C.3)

An updated mission/vision statement for advising will be created, along with the first university-wide advising syllabus and curriculum. Some of Metropolitan State's colleges have already created their own advising syllabi, but the university intends to have a more universal syllabus that can be applied across all colleges. The curriculum will allow the university to have advising learning outcomes for students that can be assessed.

Based on the Library and Learning Center's assessment results, improvements—large and small—have been and will continue to be implemented in the next one to three years. The library's web site is in a continuous state of improvement as various usability studies are completed. Resources are added to the library collection based on user needs, and the library's hours have been extended. INFS online sections have been added to face-to-face offerings. In addition, INFS face-to-face courses, which are currently offered only on the Saint Paul campus, will be offered soon at the university's other campuses.

Plans are in development for a strategic plan for the library; currently, no such plan exists. (4.C.3) During academic year 2015–2016, Library Services will be administering the LibQUAL+ survey to track, understand, and adjust library services based on users' opinions of service quality.

The division of Student Affairs and office of Strategic Enrollment Management have also implemented improvements to guide degree planning. Two valuable tools are a strategic course calendaring program which offers information on course availability and newly developed program planning guides. The university also has hired additional staff in Gateway Student Services to increase service and minimize wait times. In addition, the major declaration and scholarship award processes have been updated and streamlined. Gateway Student Services communicates systematically with students through the Metro Announce System.

Several major improvements have been implemented in CAE, led by a new CAE director and interim associate director. In Spring 2015, the CAE began offering online appointment scheduling with a web-based system that enables students to schedule, modify, and cancel appointments. CAE has also improved its online presence and accessibility with a web site redesign. In Spring 2015, the Writing Center began offering online tutorials. CAE's interim associate director also collaborated with the university's Mathematics Department faculty to assess and coordinate future tutor hiring standards. CAE also developed a "tutor specialties" form for science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) subjects to better match tutee need with tutor proficiency.

CAE will continue its improvement efforts over the next three to five years with a new strategic plan that includes synchronous (real-time) online writing tutorials and video tutorials for mathematics courses (by expanding the use of embedded tutors in math, science, and statistics courses). These improvements will enable distance learners to access tutoring services more conveniently and consistently.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

### **1P6| Academic Integrity focuses on ethical practices while pursuing knowledge**

*Ensuring freedom of expression and the integrity of research and scholarly practice. (2.D, 2.E.1, 2.E.3)*

Metropolitan State University currently posts language about freedom of expression and the integrity of research and scholarly practice in its *Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities*, in the faculty contract (Article 4) and in the materials for the Human Subjects Review Board. Each of these documents includes a statement supporting academic freedom while balancing that freedom with other responsibilities, such as the responsibility of protecting the rights of human subjects during research or the rights of faculty when they are not officially representing the university. (2.D)

The university's Human Subjects Research Review Policy 2060, established in accordance with Code of Regulations Title 45, Part 46.102(g), assigns responsibility for the implementation of this federal policy to the office of the provost and vice president for Academic Affairs. Metropolitan State's Human Subjects

Review Board (HSRB) reviews the ethical design of both faculty and student research when humans are the research subjects. The HSRB has the authority to suspend or terminate approval of research that is not being conducted in accordance with the HSRB's requirements or that has been associated with unexpected serious harm to subjects. (2.E.1) Human Subjects Research is likewise subject to federal investigation and discontinuation, fines and elimination of future funding. (2.E.3) The HSRB is comprised of faculty from many different disciplines on campus. Board members are encouraged to stay on the board for a minimum of three years, as this commitment provides institutional memory and stability to the committee. The chair of the HSRB meets regularly with the university's provost to discuss topics of interest and concern from the HSRB. Metropolitan State is a member of the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI), which provides online instruction around ethical research practices that comply with Federal Policy §46.102(g) "Protection of Human Subjects."

Faculty, students, and staff are encouraged to review CITI training every two years at no cost to themselves or their departments. HSRB policy requires that all student research projects involving human subjects either be approved by the board or reviewed by a CITI-educated faculty member who takes formal responsibility for overseeing the student's research process. (2.E.1, 2.E.3)

*Ensuring ethical learning and research practices of students (2.E.2, 2.E.3)*

### **Academic Integrity**

The university believes that academic integrity violations create an opportunity to provide students further training in adhering to appropriate standards for academic work. Faculty and administrators cooperatively developed an entirely new Student Academic Integrity Policy (Academic Affairs Policy 2190 and Academic Affairs Procedure 219), adopted January 6, 2014. This policy represents a shift away from treating integrity violations as conduct issues toward a new emphasis on providing educational interventions. (2.E.3)

The new policy's responses to violations are administered at three levels depending upon the severity of the offense and whether it is a repeat violation. For first- and second-level offenses, students are required to complete the leveled online workshops created by faculty, which provide opportunities for self-directed learning, reflection, practice, and assessment. A successful demonstration of competency is required by those workshops for a student to avoid the application of a registration hold. (2.E.2, 2.E.3)

The online workshop and the newly developed *Student Guide to Academic Integrity* emphasize the importance of ethical scholarly practices; they also include Academic Affairs Policy 2190 and link students to important campus resources supporting their academic work (e.g., Center for Academic Excellence, the Metropolitan State University Library and Learning Center, counseling services, TRiO, cultural coordinators, and the vice president for Student Academic Success). These resources reinforce ethical scholarly practices, for example, by teaching students the proper use and referencing of research sources. (2.E.2)

Students may contact the student ombudsperson to appeal the charge on an integrity violation through an academic appeal (Academic Affairs Procedure 202), in which case the charge is adjudicated via the deliberations of the Academic Appeals Committee. Faculty training and outreach has also been emphasized in orientations and webinars. (2.E.3)

In 2015, the International Center for Academic Integrity (ICAI) honored Metropolitan State with the "Campus of Integrity Award." In selecting Metropolitan State, the ICAI considered the significant strides the institution has made in improving the climate of academic integrity university-wide and how the resulting policy is not simply punitive, but dedicated to educational intervention. (2.E.1, 2.E.3)

### **Student Code of Conduct**

The university's Student Conduct Code (Policy 1020) is administered by the Judicial Affairs Office (JAO). The mission of the JAO is to "balance the interests of promoting the safety, well-being and academic integrity of the entire university community with protecting individual student due process rights." The

office does this by consulting with the student and other appropriate parties on disruptive, dishonest, and violent behavior problems before they rise to the level of a student conduct code violation and by working to integrate restorative principles that balance student accountability with the opportunity for education and making amends. (2.E.2, 2.E.3)

In addition to the Student Conduct Code being posted in the policy section of the university's web site, the JAO officer has outreach activities that inform the faculty of his/her office's work. Ongoing activities include the following: presentations of a workshop entitled "Talking About Teaching Related to Student Conduct" (which are given virtually as well as in person at both the Minneapolis and Saint Paul locations); presentations at New Faculty Orientations; the leading of discussions of conduct issues at departmental meetings; and staffing a booth at the annual Fall Teaching Workshop. In addition, the JAO officer participated in a faculty book club meeting on restorative justice in Fall 2014.

The Student Conduct Code is distributed to Metropolitan State students through the *Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities* and the university's course catalog; it is also on the university's policies web site. Furthermore, the policy is described during new student orientations, and current students are notified of it by e-mail annually or whenever the policy is revised.

### **Behavioral Intervention Team**

Metropolitan State established a Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) in 2011 to handle cases referred by the JAO officer. BIT's membership includes the dean of students (chair), the vice president for Student Success, the JAO officer, the director of the Campus Safety and Security Office, both the director and a staff counselor from Student Support Services, one academic advisor, two faculty members, the director of Gateway Student Services, the director of the Financial Aid Office, the student ombudsperson, the registrar, and the director of the Admissions Office. BIT's approach is to be proactive in addressing potential student behavioral issues that may occur in classrooms or other campus facilities.

#### *Ensuring ethical teaching and research practices of faculty (2.E.2, 2.E.3)*

Although the HSRB is officially an administrative committee, the vast majority of its members are solicited through the faculty governance process, and the chair is always a faculty member. In addition to the policy and direction provided through the university's HSRB's web site, several members of the HSRB make presentations to interested faculty at the annual Spring faculty conference.

The Academic Affairs Policy 2160 (Assessment of Student Learning Policy) describes appropriate educational assessment responsibilities for both the faculty (at the student level) and the provost and vice president for Academic Affairs Office (at the program level). The program-level responsibilities include all credit-bearing programs and General Education and Liberal Studies (GELS) requirements. The faculty of each program is responsible for determining and communicating their student learning outcomes. The faculty assessment guidelines refer to the American Association for Higher Learning's (AAHE) "Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning." (2.E.2, 2.E.3)

The Student Affairs Policy 3030 (Student Complaints and Grievances) provides a process to investigate "improper, arbitrary, and unfair treatment" by any university "employee, department or service" through its accompanying Students Affairs Procedure 303 (Student Complaints and Grievances). Metropolitan State has a student ombudsperson whose job it is to be a neutral resource to students involved in filing a complaint. Responsibility for the administration of this process is shared by both the Student Affairs and Academic Affairs Offices. Both the policy and the procedure are published in the *Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities*, provided at new student orientations, and posted on university's web site.

#### *Selecting the tools/methods/instruments used to evaluate the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of supporting academic integrity*

As part of the recently revamped Academic Affairs Policy 2190, all instances of student dishonesty are reported by the faculty member through the online Maxient software program to the provost and vice

president for Academic Affairs Office. This central repository allows patterns to emerge for analysis in order to provide guidance to faculty at the institutional level.

### **1R6| Results for determining the quality of academic integrity**

In the area of academic integrity and the promotion of ethical practices, the university has instituted new processes for supporting students as they learn about ethical scholarly practices. This new academic integrity policy related to student performance and the procedures associated with implementation are aligned. The assessment processes associated with evaluating the direct impact of training on ethical teaching and research practices would place the university at the systematic level.

#### *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

See IP6. The Maxient on-line reporting system tracks charges, parties involved, students' ethnicity, types of conduct issues, the programs with which they are associated, findings (student is determined responsible or not for the charges), sanctions and actions taken to fulfill sanctions.

#### *Summary results of measures*

### **Student Conduct**

Student Conduct Code data was transferred from Student Affairs to Academic Affairs in 2014 with the adoption of the Student Academic Integrity Policy (Academic Affairs Policy 2190 and Academic Affairs Procedure 219). Beginning September 2014, the policy was administered by Office of the Provost. The Judicial Affairs Office (JAO), who is part of Student Affairs, continues to administer the Student Conduct Code (Policy 1020).

From January through August 2014, the JAO handled 22 student conduct cases of which 14 were academic integrity violations. See 2R2 for Student Conduct Code results.

### **Academic Integrity**

In academic year 2014–2015, academic integrity reports were centralized for the first time in the Academic Affairs Office. This centralization allows monitoring and response at the institutional level. Student registrations are held until students involved in academic integrity reports complete an online course and quiz addressing plagiarism and other academic integrity offenses. Table 1.20 summarizes academic integrity violations reported during the 2014 Summer and Fall semesters.

Term	Reported Cases	
Summer 2014	1	
Fall 2014	29	
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	

Reporting Infractions	Reported *	Percentage of all Reported Cases
Cheating	12	40%
Plagiarism	23	77%
Academic Misconduct	0	0%
Double Submission	0	0%
Academic Fraud	1	3%
Collusion	0	0%

\* some students had multiple violations

	Number of Students	Percentage
Students with only one infraction	25	83%
Students with more than one infraction	5	17%

Violation Level	Number of Cases	Percentage
Level 1	29	97%
Level 2	1	3%

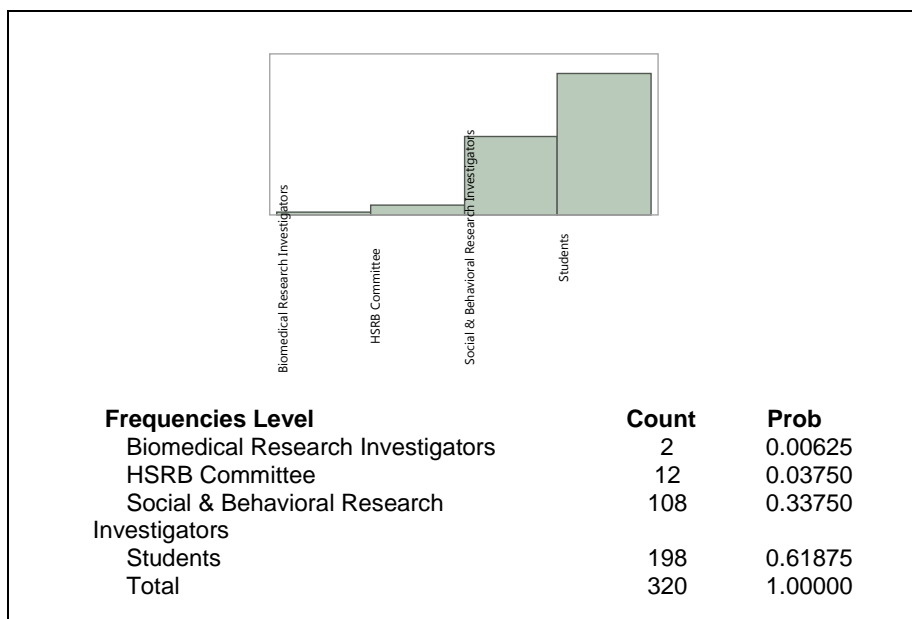
  

Completed Academic Integrity Workshop		
Total Enrolled	Total Completed Workshop	Percentage
30	19	63%

**Table 1-20.** Academic Integrity Violations Reports

### Human Subjects Review Board

In the last five years, Metropolitan State has established and grown two doctoral programs, both of which require CITI training for the doctoral students. Every year since 2011, the university has greatly increased the number of faculty and staff who have completed CITI training. Figure 1 shows the number of faculty and staff who enrolled in the CITI module training in FY14.



**Figure 1.1.** Enrollment in CITI Module Training

Metropolitan State has seen growth in its HSRB membership, from 10 members in academic year 2013 to 15 members in academic year 2015. The university's new science education center, is scheduled to open in January 2016, represents a new institutional emphasis on the sciences. At that time, the university expects to transition the HSRB into a full Institutional Review Board (IRB), which will review studies involving animals as well as humans.

*Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks.*

Following the initiation of the new process for handling violations of the academic integrity policy, the Provost's Office is collecting data regarding the number of reports, interventions, results and so on. See Table 1-20. This data will serve as the internal benchmark from which analysis and subsequent changes/improvements in the process will be conducted.

*Interpretation of results and insights gained*

As the initial data has just been collected for the academic year 2014-2015 the appropriate analysis and interpretation is in process. Anecdotally, there is concern that a significant number of violations have been reported for Metropolitan State's international students. Data will enable the university to better understand and respond to issues related to plagiarism for this group.

**116| Improvements that have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years**

We will continue implementation of the Maxient Student Conduct software in Student Affairs and Academic Integrity areas. Within the coming year we expect to input seven years of paper student conduct records (approximately 500-700 cases) into Maxient. Moving to this format will enable us to quickly query what type of cases we have investigated, the outcome, and what types of cases/incidents have been reported. Additionally, we expect our Maxient system to grow to include appeals related to Registration and Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic.

It is also clear from the HSRB and CITI numbers that the interest around primary research, and the ethics of that research, is growing in our university. Planning is in process to move to a full Institutional Review Board (IRB).

## AQIP Category 2: Meeting Student and Other Key Stakeholder Needs

### INTRODUCTION

Metropolitan State University creates a welcoming environment and develops appropriate support services for prospective and current students. The majority of nonacademic student support services are located within Student Affairs (see Table 2-1: Nonacademic Student Support Services). In FY12, Student Affairs created its first strategic plan. Directors in the division developed five key areas of focus: Foster Diversity and Inclusion, Drive Innovation, Create Exceptional Student Experiences, Invest in Employees, and Manage Enrollment.

At the beginning of the fiscal year, directors review the five key areas and develop 3 to 4 initiatives (per key area) to improve processes and overall student satisfaction. All staff members have an opportunity to participate on a strategic plan implementation team which helps build an understanding of the strategic objectives and outcomes.

To celebrate and acknowledge completed strategic planning initiatives, a “Legacy Poster” was created. The poster documented the processes that have become part of the day-to-day work as a result of the strategic planning.

Student Affairs has had stable department leadership. However, from 2011 to 2014, the division experienced recurring turnover in three senior administrator positions (See Table 4-2: Senior Administrator Transitions 2010–Present). Hiring was completed for the associate vice president of student affairs & enrollment management (2013), and the dean of students (2014). The vice president of Student Affairs reopened at the end of 2014.

With encompassing student support services, and a dedication to analyzing data for the development of a yearly strategic plan, the maturity level is aligned for meeting prospective and current student needs.

Metropolitan State University has long prided itself on being a community-based institution of higher education. The university engages the community through partnerships and programming created by departments or the Institute for Community Engagement and Scholarship. In 2015, the university received re-classification from the Carnegie Foundation's Classification for Community Engagement. The maturity level is aligned for meeting the needs of the community.

The university's alumni reflect the rich array of identities, professions, ages and perspectives of its students. Many alumni work in professions and citizen-volunteer roles that align with the university's mission. The university continues to develop ways to engage and build relationships with alumni. The maturity level is systematic for meeting the needs of alumni.

In FY2011, the university initiated plans for the construction of its first student center. The university's mission and personality required a fresh look at traditional university co-curricular space in terms of program, design, and operation. Students expressed a need for practical spaces and services that fit their lifestyle, such as meeting rooms, a playroom for children, convenient food service, and quiet study places. Students and the East Side St. Paul Community were involved in the design and development of the building.

In Fall 2015, the university will celebrate the grand opening of the student center. This building will address stakeholder needs in a way that has never before been possible. Current and prospective students, the East Side St. Paul community, and alumni will be able to enjoy the gathering spaces, programming and services that the building will offer.



**CURRENT AND PROSPECTIVE STUDENT NEED**

**2P1| Current and Prospective Student Need focuses on determining, understanding, and meeting the non-academic needs of current and prospective students**

*Identifying key student groups*

Metropolitan State University has identified the following key student groups. Basic demographic data is reported annually to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and IPEDS.

Key student characteristics	Common student characteristics
<b>Undergraduate (Fall 2014)</b> 87% transfer students 64% part-time students 36% full-time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undergraduate</li> <li>• Part-time</li> <li>• Transfer</li> <li>• Degree seeking</li> <li>• Adult learner</li> </ul>
<b>Graduate (Fall 2014)</b> 77% part-time 23% full-time	
<b>Undergraduate and Graduate Students (Fall 2013)</b> 56% female students 44% male students 38% students of color 2% international students 3% out-of-state students 31 average age of students	

**Table 2-1.** Key Student Groups

*Determining new student groups to target for educational offerings and services*

Metropolitan State’s mission statement continues to guide the university in targeting new students for educational offerings and services. The university is dedicated to serving its students and communities within the Minneapolis-Saint Paul metropolitan area with an emphasis on underserved groups, including non-traditional students (those aged 25 and older) and communities of color. Metropolitan State also targets new students based on educational needs and trends as identified by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) system.

The university’s three-year enrollment management plan contains specific strategies designed to meet its mission and to identify new students. The plan focuses on the following areas: prospects, applicants, newly admitted students, and yield rates. With the three-year enrollment management plan, Metropolitan State has increased marketing and recruitment efforts for Native American, Hispanic and undocumented Latino students. The university has experienced an average annual enrollment growth of 2% over the past three academic years.

The university also targets new students by responding to partnership requests from two-year institutions within the MnSCU system. Metropolitan State has degree completion partnerships with Normandale Community College, Inver Hills Community College, Minneapolis Community and Technical College, and starting in Fall 2015, North Hennepin Community College.

*Meeting changing student needs*

The majority of Metropolitan State’s students are not recent high school graduates who are attending a university for the first time. The average age of students is 31, and most do not take a full load of credits each semester.

These demographics present Metropolitan State with some significant challenges as it attempts to meet the current and future needs of its students. To identify those needs, the university relies on various sources. These include the Student Senate, internal surveys, campus forums, numerous student support services, multi-cultural coordinators, and the student complaint process. Metropolitan State routinely

administers national student satisfaction surveys, such as the Noel-Levitz Adult Satisfaction Priorities Survey (ASPS), the Priorities Survey for Online Learning (PSOL), the National Survey for Student Engagement (NSSE), and the Noel-Levitz Adult Learner Inventory (ALI).

The Student Senate is one of more than 30 registered student organizations recognized and funded by student activity fees. The Student Senate is an integral part of governance, university planning, and decision making, and its members participate in a monthly meeting with senior-level administrators to express student concerns, interests, and needs. The university is required to consult with students on issues that may impact them. Student representatives are members on all key university committees. The university's administrative team ensures compliance with system policy.

Meeting student needs is a focus for all divisions within the university. Student Affairs develops a yearly strategic plan to identify necessary improvements and future goals for the division. Some of the goal areas include "foster diversity and inclusion," "create exceptional student experiences," and "manage enrollment." Desired outcomes are established to measure the success of each initiative.

### *Prospective Students*

Metropolitan State recognizes the importance of developing relationships with and meeting the needs of students before they apply for admission. Relationships can begin years before a student enrolls. The university has representatives at various Minneapolis, Saint Paul, and metropolitan area events and activities, such as the Saint Paul Winter Carnival, the Twin Cities Pride Festival, and the Rondo Days Festival. The Institute for Community Engagement and Scholarship (ICES) conducts programming and events for future students and the community.

The Undergraduate Admissions Department plays a key role in creating relationships with students. Preview Days and individual campus visits offer prospective students opportunities to gather information about Metropolitan State and to experience the university firsthand.

Admissions counselors have permanent offices on the campuses of three MnSCU two-year and technical schools: Normandale Community College, Minneapolis Community and Technical College, and, starting in Fall 2015, North Hennepin Community College. Admissions counselors make regular visits to additional college campuses located in the metropolitan area.

Prospective students continue to expect more online support services and online course availability. Examples of the university increasing its online services include developing a new Web site, offering online assistance provided by Gateway Services and developing an online new student orientation. The university has increased its course offerings in hybrid and online formats.

### *Current Students*

Metropolitan State's "Welcome Day," held one week prior to the start of the Fall and Spring semesters, complements the university's onboarding program and continues the relationship-building process with entering students. Students are able to customize their "Welcome Day" experience by identifying their questions and then connecting with the appropriate campus resources and programs. Faculty members, student advisors, student support services staff, and representatives from student organizations are available to meet with the entering students. Various presentations are offered on such topics as student involvement, academic success, and resources for engaged learning. (3.D.2)

Students leave "Welcome Day" events well informed about the university. Of the students who filled out evaluations after the Fall 2014 and Fall 2015 "Welcome Day" events:

- 86% reported being "somewhat" or "very aware" of academic resources
  - 83% reported being "somewhat" or "very aware" of personal and social resources, and
  - 82% reported being "somewhat" or "very able" to identify resources if they have a problem.
- (3.D.2)

Faculty members play a critical role in continuing to build student relationships in classrooms and laboratories, and acting as sponsors to student organizations. Class sizes at Metropolitan State are traditionally small. According to Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA), the student-to-faculty ratio is 16 to 1, which enables the faculty to interact more closely with students. See Table 3-3 Student to faculty ratios and class size.

*Identifying and supporting student subgroups with distinctive needs (3.D.1)*

Metropolitan State students come from a variety of backgrounds and represent a wide spectrum of professions, cultures, ethnicities, and age groups. They are enrolled in many different undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

The university has identified several student subgroups with distinctive needs. These include, but are not limited to, students of color, military veterans, student who are parents, students with disabilities, limited-income/first-generation college students (TRiO program), international students, online students, and students entering college for the first time.

*Deploying non-academic support services to help students be successful (3.D.2)*

Metropolitan State offers a wide variety of non-academic student support services designed to help students be successful. These services include those shown in Table 2-2. (3.D.1)

Department		
Career Development Center	All undergraduate and graduate students, alumni	Career services (job search, resume building, interviewing skills); career workshops; career fairs; monthly newsletter; classroom presentations
Gateway Student Services	Prospective and currently enrolled students	A one-stop customer service model to help students requesting college information (mainly general information, registration processes, and financial aid)
International Student Services	Prospective and enrolled undergraduate and graduate international students who are on non-immigrant visa	Admission processing; visa status; federal regulations, compliance with visa rules; employment; health insurance; advising; referral services
Multicultural Affairs	Prospective and current students who are Pan Asian, African-American, Chicano/Latino and American Indian; primary focus on underrepresented and underserved students	Advocacy; transitional advising; cultural events and activities; student development; retention initiatives; cultural competency training
Counseling Services	All undergraduate and graduate students	One-to-one personal and group counseling; workshops and resources; referral services

Student Life and Leadership Development	Students involved in student government and student organizations; students wanting leadership development opportunities	New student orientation; Leadership Retreat; President's Leadership Awards; guidance to help student become leaders
Student Parent Center	Students who are parenting children of all ages	Advocating for student parents; assessing family needs and making referrals to outside programs; providing support services, including social, health, academic, and emergency financial assistance
TRiO	Undergraduate students who are from limited-income families, who are first-generation college students, and/or who have a disability	Academic support and enhancement services; tools for navigating the college environment; programs for improving retention and graduation
Veterans and Military Student Services	Students who have or are serving in any of the armed services or in a reservist or national guard unit. Includes prospective and currently enrolled students, re-entries, and their families	Pre-admission; advising of currently enrolled; benefits from state/federal sources; VA certification

**Table 2-2.** Non-Academic Student Support Services

*Ensuring staff members who provide non-academic student support services are qualified, trained, and supported (3.C.6)*

Staff members in non-academic support services go through a comprehensive interview process to ensure that they have the education, knowledge, and experience to be successful in their area of student support at Metropolitan State. That process often includes a telephone interview, a campus interview with the hiring committee, a campus interview with the hiring supervisor, and reference checks. Some university positions require potential candidates to make a presentation and engage in a Q&A with the university community. (3.C.6)

Metropolitan State staff are encouraged to continue their professional development. They are provided access to a variety of resources, including union professional development funds, and university-sponsored programming and workshops. In 2015, the university instituted a Staff Development Committee, which reviews requests for professional development funds, primarily for staff who do not have access to allocated union funds. In addition, professional development is integrated into yearly employee performance evaluations. (3.C.6)

The university's divisions and departments contribute to the development of employees. For example, Student Affairs includes professional development sessions in all of its division retreats and meetings. (3.C.6)

*Communicating the availability of non-academic support services (3.D.2)*

Metropolitan State uses a variety of tools and resources to communicate the availability of its non-academic support services. Campus visits and "Welcome Day" events include presentations, resource fairs, and printed materials that promote and support these services. Flyers and posters are routinely displayed on bulletin boards around campus. Information on support services is available electronically on campus television monitors, the university's Web site, as well as in the *Catalyst*, a student newsletter. The university's social media platforms promotes these services. (3.D.2)

*Selecting tools/methods/instruments to assess student needs*

Metropolitan State routinely administers nationally recognized surveys, including the Adult Student Priority Survey (ASPS), the Adult Learner Inventory (ALI), the Priority Survey of Online Learners (PSOL), and the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). These instruments are selected to assess the global needs of our student population.

Instrument			
Adult Student Priority Survey (Noel-Levitz)	Every two years (2009, 2011, 2013)	Students	Adult learners' expectations and level of meeting those expectations
Advising Survey	2010, 2013, and every other year thereafter	Undergraduate students	Use of and satisfaction with academic advising services
Graduation Follow-up Survey	Every year	Alumni	Preparation of career employment (outcome)
National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)	Every two years	Students	Students' overall experiences; students' engagement with university; students' engagement with peers

**Table 2-3.** Assessment Tools

Departments across the university often use internal tools to measure student satisfaction. These can include service and program evaluations, event tracking, intake and exit surveys, and needs assessments.

*Assessing the degree to which student needs are met*

Any student needs that are identified by surveys, student organizations, the Student Senate, or student support services are elevated to the appropriate decision makers and university governance groups. These include the Advising Council, Deans and Directors Council, Student Affairs Cabinet, Student Affairs Council, President's Cabinet, and President's Council.

The governance group(s), or an appointed subcommittee, reviews and discusses the identified student needs to create a course of action. This plan is then reviewed and approved by the appropriate decision makers before implementation. The course of action's impact is reviewed and adjusted as needed.

Metropolitan State recognizes the importance of engaging the campus community in conversations about the results of student assessment surveys. Results of the 2013 surveys (ALI, ASPS, and PSOL) were shared with the university during a multi-campus presentation by the provost and the vice president of student affairs and enrollment management. Conversations were held with the President's Council, the President's Cabinet, and Deans and Directors Council.

The associate vice president of enrollment management engaged students by holding focus groups based on the survey assessment survey results. The focus groups were designed to review the results and ask for further input on what the university was doing well and what areas needed improvement.

**2R1| Results for determining if current and prospective student needs are being met**

The university is systemic in maturity, with clear signs of moving toward aligned.

*Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

The ASPS is just one tool that the university routinely uses to measure and track the degree to which student needs are met. Survey results allow Metropolitan State to identify items that are important to students and then measure how satisfied students are with the university's performance.

The ASPS is comprised of 79 questions categorized into the following areas of measure:

Instructional Effectiveness  
 Academic Advising  
 Registration Effectiveness  
 Campus Climate  
 Service Excellence  
 Safety and Security  
 Admissions & Financial Aid  
 Academic Services

Students answer each question by 1) rating how important it is for the university to meet their expectation with each item and then 2) rating how satisfied they are that the expectation is being met. The resulting “performance gap” is the difference between rated expectation and rated satisfaction. The larger the performance gap, the more unsatisfied students are with a particular item. These results provide data to help Student Affairs with strategic planning.

#### *Summary results of measures*

A summary of the ASPS results is included in Tables 2-4 through 2-9. The tables include data for three years (2009, 2011, and 2013) of Metropolitan State survey results (internal targets) and data for one year (2013) of national adult student survey results (external benchmarks).

#### *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

The *ASPS Scales Report* provides a summary overview of Metropolitan State’s results in the eight ASPS categories. Results indicate that student satisfaction has improved in all categories between the 2011 and 2013 assessments. (See Table 2-4.) The results indicate that in six categories the university’s performance satisfaction is equal to, or higher than, than that of a national cohort of adult students.

ASPS Categories	National Adult Students Performance Gap 2013	Metropolitan State University Students Performance Gap		
	2013	2013	2011	2009
Instructional Effectiveness	0.76	0.76	0.85	0.83
Academic Advising	0.81	0.85	0.98	0.92
Registration Effectiveness	0.71	0.70	0.85	0.78
Campus Climate	0.80	0.76	0.87	0.84
Service Excellence	0.96	0.93	1.10	1.17
Safety and Security	0.63	0.81	0.98	0.69
Admissions and Financial Aid	0.90	0.77	0.88	1.11
Academic Services	0.75	0.60	0.74	0.74

**Table 2-4.** ASPS Scales Report

The 2009 ASPS results identified seven “challenges” for Metropolitan State, including issues having to do with registration, financial aid, course options, and communication. The 2013 ASPS results found, however, that student satisfaction had increased in all seven of those “challenge” areas. (See Table 2-5.)

	National Adult Students Performance Gap	Metropolitan State University Students Performance Gap		
	2013	2013	2011	2009
16. I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts.	0.92	1.15	1.38	1.26
29. I seldom get the "run-around" when seeking information at this institution.	1.12	1.18	1.24	1.34
49. There are sufficient options within my program of study.	1.02	1.06	1.16	1.24
23. Adequate financial aid is available for most adult students.	1.19	1.03	1.03	1.29
39. This institution responds quickly to my requests for information.	0.87	0.86	1.01	1.15
55. I understand how financial aid disbursement works and financial aid awards are announced to students in time to be helpful in.	n/a	0.74	0.83	1.47
48. I am aware of whom to contact for questions about programs and services.	0.92	0.93	1.13	1.15

**Table 2-5.** ASPS 2009 Identified Challenges

In the 2013 ASPS survey, Metropolitan State students rated 10 items as being “most important” to them. The university improved its student satisfaction ratings in all but one of the 10 items when compared to the 2011 results. (See Table 2-6.)

	National Adult Students Performance Gap	Metropolitan State University Students Performance Gap		
	2013	2013	2011	2009
35. The quality of instruction I receive in my program is excellent	0.92	0.97	1.01	1.04
42. Nearly all faculty are knowledgeable in their field	0.61	0.65	0.68	0.72
64. I can register for classes online without issues	n/a	0.52	0.77	0.35
4. The content of the courses within my major is valuable	0.81	0.90	0.97	0.96
16. I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts	0.92	1.15	1.38	1.26
19. My academic advisor is knowledgeable about requirements in my major	0.75	0.85	0.89	0.86
41. Major requirements are clear and reasonable	0.80	0.76	0.87	0.83
21. Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment	1.33	1.08	1.04	1.00
3. Classes are scheduled at times that are convenient for me	0.88	1.15	1.30	1.05
24. There is a commitment to academic excellence at this institution	0.84	0.88	0.91	0.99

**Table 2-6.** ASPS Top Ten Items of Importance 2013

In the 2013 ASPS survey, the 10 items that Metropolitan State students gave the lowest satisfaction ratings included issues of communication (such as timely responses to student complaints) and issues involving course scheduling, options, and availability. The university continues to work toward decreasing this gap in satisfaction. Between 2011 and 2013, the university improved student satisfaction for seven of these items. (See Table 2-7.)

	National Adult Students Performance Gap	Metropolitan State University Students Performance Gap		
	2013	2013	2011	2009
50. My advisor helps me apply my academic major to specific career goals	1.16	1.24	1.32	1.19
29. I seldom get the "run-around" when seeking information at this institution	1.12	1.18	1.24	1.34
3. Classes are scheduled at times that are convenient for me	0.88	1.15	1.30	1.05
13. The amount of student parking is adequate	0.95	1.15	1.25	1.11
16. I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts	0.92	1.15	1.38	1.26
46. This institution provides timely responses to student complaints	1.17	1.14	1.32	1.52
21. Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment	1.33	1.08	1.04	1.00
47. Bookstore hours are convenient for adult students	0.84	1.07	1.02	1.20
22. Security staff respond quickly in emergencies	0.97	1.06	1.00	0.71
49. There are sufficient options within my program of study	1.02	1.06	1.16	1.21

**Table 2-7:** ASPS Largest Satisfaction Gap 2013

The responses by Metropolitan State students to a sampling of ASPS questions related to building relationships indicate that the university increased student satisfaction on this issue between 2009 and 2013. On five of seven questions in this category, Metropolitan State students gave the university higher satisfaction scores than adult students in the national cohort gave their institutions. (See Table 2-8.)

	National Adult Students Performance Gap	Metropolitan State University Students Performance Gap		
	2013	2013	2011	2009
2. Faculty care about me as an individual	0.70	0.62	0.79	0.75
7. The staff at this institution are caring and helpful	0.67	0.68	0.77	0.84
14. Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students	0.79	0.61	0.76	0.79

**Table 2-8.** ASPS Building Student Relationships 2013

Of Metropolitan State's 10 "top strengths" identified by students in 2013, nine received higher satisfaction scores than in 2011. Students rated all items with higher satisfaction than did their peers in the national cohort. (See Table 2-9.)



	National Adult Students Performance Gap	Metropolitan State University Students Performance Gap		
	2013	2013	2011	2009
31. I am able to register for classes by personal computer, fax or telephone	0.39	0.11	0.27	0.17
9. Billing policies are reasonable for adult students	0.96	0.70	0.77	0.72
43. This institution offers a variety of payment plans for adult students	0.89	0.64	0.69	0.78
12. Computer labs are adequate and accessible for adult students	0.51	0.31	0.92	0.44
1. Adult students are made to feel welcome	0.30	0.13	0.32	0.32

**Table 2-9. ASPS Top Ten Strengths 2013**

### *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

As the ASPS results indicate, Metropolitan State continues to improve its performance in meeting the needs of its students, and its students often give the university higher student satisfaction ratings than a national sampling of students give their institutions. In addition, student satisfaction scores improved in all areas identified as “challenges” for the university during the last survey cycle (2011–2013).

Metropolitan State creates a welcoming environment and develops appropriate support services for all its students. For example, improving communication to students about their financial aid options was identified as a challenge in 2009. In 2013, the communication of financial aid services had moved into the “top 10” student-identified strengths of the university.

Offering support services to students who attend mostly evening classes at multiple metropolitan locations can be challenging. The university is working to offer extended office hours, online options, and support services at locations beyond the St. Paul campus.

The ASPS results identified that students need clarification on which department to contact when they have questions. They want departmental staff to be knowledgeable, helpful, and interested in their wellbeing.

### **211| Improvements that have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years**

The following improvements were implemented.

- Two new resources were developed to create a more systematic approach to collecting and sharing data regarding student support services: 1) Student Affairs compiles a monthly report that presents summary data for the services and resources being provided to prospective and current students. This report is shared at the Deans and Directors Council meeting. 2) In 2014, a sub-committee of the Deans and Directors Council created a five-year survey plan to track frequency and administration of recurring surveys. The final plan will be presented to

Deans and Directors Council and posted on the Office of Institutional Research Web page this year.

These resources demonstrate an increased emphasis on the importance of sharing data and of using the information to address student needs.

- In May 2014, Metropolitan State launched an Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) action project, “MetroAnnounce: Establishing an Effective Means of Communicating with Students.” At that time, the university had no coordinated effort to communicate with students, a factor that often resulted in multiple e-mail communications, from multiple departments, being sent to all students each day. Students reported that they had stopped reading e-mail communications because so many of the messages did not apply to them. See Table 6-1 Summary results for Key Initiatives. By creating a defined communication policy and procedure, and by implementing the necessary technology, the university increased its ability to effectively communicate with students. The action project was completed in June 2014. See Table 6-1 Summary results for Key Initiatives.
- In 2014, Student Affairs created an initiative to better serve students who do not attend classes at the Saint Paul campus. The first phase of this initiative was placing a Gateway associate at the Midway, Minneapolis, and Brooklyn Park locations. Gateway associates provide one-stop-services, including assistance with financial aid, registration appeals, official withdrawals, student complaints, and updating of student personal information.
- In February 2015, Food for Thought at Metropolitan State, the university’s food pantry, had its grand opening. Organized by the Student Parent Center, in partnership with the Student Senate and two community organizations, “Good in the ‘Hood” and “Second Harvest”, the food pantry is open to all university students.

The following improvements have been identified and will be implemented in the next one to three years.

- Student Affairs will continue to expand the locations of support services for assisting current students. The presence of the Undergraduate Admissions Office will be increased at MnSCU partnership institutions to assist prospective students in transferring to the university
- In August 2015, the university will open its first student center, a building that will provide students with a place for out-of-classroom interactions and social experiences.
- The Student Parent Center, which opened in 2011, is funded by a grant from the Minnesota Department of Health. The center has become a strong advocate and support system for student parents. The current grant period ends on July 1, 2017, and new financial resources must be identified to move the project from grant funding to full university sustainability
- The Dean of Students staff will complete an inventory of assessment tools currently used to measure student services. The goal is to develop procedures to systematically analyze data and standardize assessments.

## **RETENTION, PERSISTENCE AND COMPLETION**

### **2P2| Retention, Persistence and Completion focus on the approach to collecting, analyzing and distributing data on retention, persistence and completion to stakeholders for decision-making (4.C.2, 4.C.4)**

*Collecting student retention, persistence and completion data (4.C.2, 4.C.4)*

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) collects student retention, persistence, and completion data on behalf of Metropolitan State University. The “Persistence and Completion” option on the MnSCU Accountability Dashboard allows the user to view retention statistics based on the following:

- Entering cohort
- Student characteristics (gender, underrepresented, students of color)

- Admissions category (undergraduate/graduate, transfer/first year)
- Student load (full time or part time) (4.C.2 and 4.C.4)

#### *Determining targets for students' retention, persistence, and completion*

Metropolitan State's strategic planning process uses historical data to determine targets for student retention, persistence, and completion. Each year's goals are based on making year-over-year improvements. The goals are set and measured by the percentage of increases in current student retention and in the enrollment growth of new students. (4.C.1)

The strategic planning goals are reviewed and approved by the President's Council. (4.C.1)

#### *Analyzing information on student retention, persistence and completion*

The Retention Task Force, a cross-functional campus team, analyzes university processes and enrollment data to develop and make recommendations to increase retention, persistence, and completion. (4.C.2) Recent Retention Task Force recommendations include the following (explained further in explained further in 2I2):

- Develop and implement university process advisor assignments
- Develop and implement a process for major declaration completion
- Redesign student orientation and onboarding
- Establish an advising center

The associate vice president of enrollment management sends weekly enrollment update e-mails to the President's Council and union leadership. These updates include data on new and returning enrollments for undergraduate and graduate programs, as well as data on applications, admits, conversion rate, enrolled rate, yield rate, and total credits.

The enrollment updates provide information on the actions being taken to increase new enrollment and current retention initiatives. These actions and initiatives focus on three key areas: (1) current community college markets and how the university can better serve them; (2) untapped markets, especially the "some-college but no degree" working adult population; and (3) retaining current students at a higher rate. (4.C.2, 4.C.4)

The university leadership presents an annual Trends and Highlights report to MnSCU leadership and two peer institutions. This report includes goals for the year; progress made on the goals; and retention, persistence and completion ideas to be implemented during the next year. (4.C.4.)

#### *Meeting targets for retention, persistence and completion (4.C.1)*

Metropolitan State has developed multiple resources to help meet targets for retention, persistence, and completion. These resources, listed below, are in addition to the support services outlined in 2P1.

- **Call Campaigns:** Students who attended the previous semester but have not registered for the upcoming semester are contacted. Callers assist non-registered students by answering questions, discussing registration options, and providing resources to encourage students to return
- **Early Alert System:** The Early Alert System allows faculty to alert academic advisors about students who are struggling in class. Advisors contact students and offer assistance with the problems they are experiencing
- **Admits on Probation Process:** Any student who does not meet the minimum admissions criteria can be admitted on probation. Students receive customized communications and a special onboarding session at the beginning of the semester.

- **Academic Success Workshops:** Students on probation must complete this online workshop before meeting with their academic advisor for the first time. The workshop is designed to help students understand the significance of academic standing and guide them in creating an Academic Success Plan
- **Center for Academic Excellence:** Provides tutoring services for students at risk.

*Selecting tools/methods/instruments to assess retention, persistence, and completion (4.C.4)*

MnSCU's Accountability Dashboard is the fundamental tool used by Metropolitan State for evaluating retention, persistence, and completion of students.

In 2012, Metropolitan State contracted with Asmussen Research & Consulting LLC to study undergraduate student enrollment patterns at the university through an analysis of data on past graduates. The university sought information to identify the conditions under which students were vulnerable to both voluntary and involuntary departure before degree completion.

The study reviewed the following:

- distribution of graduates among the university's major fields of study
- extent of the graduates' pre-Metropolitan State educational experience and its effect on time-to-degree completion
- demographic characteristics of the graduates
- course-taking patterns associated with graduation

Asmussen Research & Consulting LLC conducted a series of data analyses and statistical tests to assess which factors had the most significant effect on student retention and degree completion. The university will use the information to initiate actions to improve degree completion rates for its students.

## **2R2| Results for student retention, persistence and completion**

The university is aligned in analyzing data in student retention, persistence, and completion.

*Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

The MnSCU Accountability Dashboard is the tool used by the university to evaluate retention, persistence and completion of students. The university is able to generate a variety of reports. Reports generated by the tool give the university the ability to monitor year-to-year performance (internal benchmarks) and to compare itself to the other state universities within the MnSCU system (external benchmarks).

*Summary results of measures*

Tables 2-10 ("Completion Rate by Sixth Spring") and 2-11 ("Second Fall Student and Persistence Completion Rate") were created by the MnSCU Accountability Dashboard tool.

*Comparison of results with internal and external benchmarks*

<b>MnSCU Universities</b>	<b>Fall 2003</b>	<b>Fall 2004</b>	<b>Fall 2005</b>	<b>Fall 2006</b>	<b>Fall 2007</b>	<b>Fall 2008</b>	<b>Change Fall 2003 to Fall 2008</b>
Bemidji State University	52.6%	54.8%	50.6%	50.1%	50.9%	50.2%	-2.4%
<b>Metropolitan State University</b>	56.1%	60.7%	66.1%	64.3%	69.3%	65.0%	8.9%
Minnesota State University, Mankato	55.2%	53.2%	54.2%	55.2%	52.2%	54.1%	-1.1%
Minnesota State University Moorhead	47.8%	49.3%	49.6%	50.3%	50.8%	47.3%	-0.5%
St. Cloud State University	53.5%	51.2%	52.8%	53.0%	52.1%	48.9%	-4.6%
Southwest Minnesota State Univ	45.0%	43.8%	43.0%	44.5%	46.0%	46.8%	1.8%
Winona State University	54.9%	56.1%	57.0%	55.4%	58.4%	59.4%	4.5%

**Table 2-10.** Completion Rate by Sixth Spring

Table 2-11 “Second Fall Student and Persistence Completion Rate” reports the rate at which students progress through their program at the university. The percentage reported is the measure of students still enrolled at the university one year after entering. The “Change Fall 2007 to Fall 2012” column measures the change in persistence during the six year period.

<b>MnSCU Universities</b>	<b>Fall 2007</b>	<b>Fall 2008</b>	<b>Fall 2009</b>	<b>Fall 2010</b>	<b>Fall 2011</b>	<b>Fall 2012</b>	<b>Change Fall 2007 to Fall 2012</b>
<b>Metropolitan State University</b>	86.1%	86.1%	83.7%	84.3%	84.9%	84.9%	-1.2%
Minnesota State University Moorhead	85.2%	82.9%	85.0%	82.0%	83.5%	82.2%	-3.0%
Southwest Minnesota State Univ	83.5%	84.3%	85.5%	87.4%	86.1%	86.5%	3.0%

**Table 2-11.** Second Fall Student and Persistence Completion Rate  
(End of Term Fall 2007 through 2012)*Interpretations of results and insights gained*

Table 2-10 reports that Metropolitan State increased the completion rate of students by 8.9% (56.1% in 2003, to 65% in 2008). A recent dip (69.3% in 2007, to 65% in 2008) can be attributed to the population of high risk students that the university serves. The majority of students attend on a part-time basis, taking 8.9 credits per semester. This would require that the students stay continuously enrolled. The university has the best completion rate among the state universities within the MnSCU system.

Table 2-11 reports that Metropolitan State has seen a -1.2% decline in student persistence, putting the overall university persistence at 84.9%. The decline can be attributed again to the high risk student population that the university serves. Since most students attend on a part-time basis and balance competing priorities such as careers and family obligations, students have a high propensity to stop-out at least one semester. This behavior impacts the overall persistence of the university. Despite this, Metropolitan State still has the third best persistence rate when compared to the other state universities within the MnSCU system.

Interpretations and insights gained from the report created by Asmussen Research & Consulting LLC include the following:

- Although students earned degrees in more than 50 different baccalaureate programs, 78% of the graduates earned their degrees in one of the top 15 producing programs and 66% earned their degree in one of the top 10 producing programs

- Graduates brought extensive prior educational experiences with them to Metropolitan State. A strong majority 80% had either earned a prior academic credential (most often an associate degree) or accumulated at least 60 credits at other colleges or universities prior to enrolling at Metropolitan State
- Median time-to-degree was 2.7 years, although that factor was dependent on prior educational experience
- MnSCU colleges in the Minneapolis-Saint Paul metropolitan area were the primary source of prior educational experiences for Metropolitan State graduates. Among students who had graduated from Metropolitan State (within six years) 69% had transferred to the university from one of the 10 MnSCU metro-area colleges.

Asmussen Research & Consulting LLC completed an additional analysis of 6,133 undergraduate students who attended but did not graduate (FY2005 to 2011). Two important insights gained from the analysis were:

- 53% of students encountered academic difficulty, indicating the importance of an early academic alert system
- 61% of students attended Metropolitan State for only one or two terms, indicating the importance of support services and guidance in degree completions.

## **2I2| Improvements that have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years (4.C.3)**

The following improvements have been implemented, or will be implemented, based on the analysis of retention, persistence, and completion data. (4.C.3)

- A Retention Task Force was developed after Metropolitan State reviewed data and identified a retention issue. The first recommendation was the implementation of an “early alert” system
- Welcome Day was established in response to the Asmussen data and trends observed from frontline personnel interactions with first-semester students
- An advising center for undecided or undeclared students will be created. Data indicates that students who select their program soon after they arrive at the university are more likely to be retained
- Efforts are underway to reformat the university’s major declaration process so that students can declare a major upon admission. An electronic form will increase efficiency in back-office tracking and processing
- The orientation process for new students will be redesigned to create customized onboarding experience for subgroups of students. For example, veterans, transfer students, and zero-credit students require different introduction to the university based on their needs
- In November 2014, the university started the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) action project, “Scholarship Cycle Review.” The action project will review, design, and propose a new scholarship cycle. The process will allow incoming students to be eligible for scholarships within their first year of attendance
- The addition of recruitment scholarships will begin in Fall 2015 for students who meet the following requirements: 1) Transfer directly from a community college partnership institutions, 2) Achieve minimum GPA of 3.0 and 3) Demonstrate financial need.

## KEY STAKEHOLDER NEEDS

### **2P3| Key Stakeholder Needs focuses on determining, understanding and meeting needs of key stakeholder groups including alumni and community partners.**

#### *Determining key external stakeholder groups (e.g., alumni, employers, community)*

After graduation, Metropolitan State University students become one of the university's key stakeholders. The alumni relations and annual fund director notifies recent graduates that they have complimentary one-year membership in the Alumni Association. Alumni play an important role in representing the university to employers and future students. The university's mission identifies the community as a key external stakeholder. Examples of community stakeholders include Central Corridor Funders Collaborative Anchor Partnership and Saint Paul's 7<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Revitalization Project.

#### *Determining new stakeholders to target for services or partnership*

The Institute for Community Engagement and Scholarship (ICES) leads partnership development at the university to support the alignment between academic programs and community-based applications in response to issues of public concern and common interests.

The university is a partner in several multilateral cooperative efforts, such as the East Side Economic Growth Initiative and the East Side Alive Promise Zone initiative. Through these networks the university identifies new opportunities to partner, as well as areas in which the university can provide services to support a broader, shared agenda.

#### *Meeting the changing needs of key stakeholders*

The Metropolitan State Alumni Association Board is comprised of 14 members who meet four times a year. Their main purpose is to build alumni relationships and support the Metropolitan State University Foundation Board's fundraising goals. The board plans alumni events, selects "Alumni of the Year" honorees, reviews the alumni communication plan, and advances alumni support for the university.

The university has recognized the importance of using multiple channels when communicating with alumni. These include a Facebook page, a LinkedIn group, an e-newsletter, and an award-winning alumni magazine.

In 2012, an internally developed alumni survey was administered. Questions were focused on alumni engagement, volunteerism, and financial support. Alumni are periodically polled using focus groups to measure satisfaction and feedback on programs/events.

The changing needs of the East Side Saint Paul community are identified through several channels. At all community outreach events, participants are asked to complete evaluations. The results are compiled and analyzed by ICES to inform programming revisions/needs, to improve participant outcomes, and to strengthen connections within the community and with co-curricular programming.

The Community University Action Team (CUAT) is another resource for measuring the changing needs of the community. This team serves as a communication channel between the university and the community for sharing information, concerns and opportunities. The team seeks out ways to take actions that benefit both the university and the community.

#### *Selecting tools/methods/instruments to assess key stakeholder needs*

The 2012 alumni survey was developed internally and is the most recent administered.

ICES has developed and maintains a set of internal evaluation tools to measure program and community engagement effectiveness among external partners, student participants, and faculty practitioners.

### *Assessing the degree to which key stakeholder needs are met*

ICES routinely analyzes survey data collected at community outreach events. Most community engagement assessment tools involve Likert-type scales by which stakeholders indicate the degree that their needs are being met. These results are tracked longitudinally.

Qualitative evaluation strategies are used by CUAT to assess the degree to which community stakeholder needs are met. The results of the evaluations are used to identify and align resources between campus and the community.

### **2R3| Results for determining if key stakeholder needs are being met**

The university is systematic in determining key stakeholder needs.

#### *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools*

The ICES participant evaluations are designed specifically for each community engagement outreach event. Typical evaluation measures include the “value” and “educational benefits” of the program.

The 2012 alumni survey measured satisfaction, engagement, volunteerism, and financial support for the university.

#### *Summary results of measures*

A summary of evaluation data from a community outreach film series indicated a strong satisfaction with such community outreach events, as shown in Table 2-12. These evaluations are tailored to fit the objectives of each event.

<b>“Created Equal” Film Series Participant Survey</b>	<b>Agree or Strongly Agree</b>
The experience I had was engaging	90%
I learned something new and valuable	89.40%

**Table 2-12.** ICES Participation Evaluation Example

The alumni survey was mailed to 27,015 graduates. Survey results, below, are based on the 1,308 respondents (approximately 4.8% of total alumni population).

- 94.8% of respondents reported being very satisfied or satisfied with their student experience
- 7.2% reported being very involved or involved with the university
- 41.8% reported having the strongest connection with the university as a whole versus individual programs or departments
- 85.8% reported not being members of the alumni Facebook page or the alumni LinkedIn group
- 91.1% reported liking the design of the alumni magazine, *Buzz*
- 73.4% reported attending career-related professional development events or lifelong learning lectures
- 72.8% reported significant interest in serving in a Metropolitan State-related community service project, as a career networking contact, or as a guest speaker
- 79.6% reported they were not looking for employment
- 68.8% rated the usefulness of Metropolitan State’s Career Development Center as excellent or satisfactory
- 57.2% give to Metropolitan State’s Annual Fund Drive because they value their degree, and 21.4% give because they want other students to have the opportunities they did.



### *Comparison of results with internal and external benchmarks*

In 2015, Metropolitan State once again received the Carnegie Foundation's Classification for Community Engagement. To receive this classification, institutions must provide data and documentation of important aspects of mission, identity, and commitments. The Carnegie documentation is reviewed to determine whether the institution qualifies for recognition as a community engaged institution. Carnegie defines *community engagement* as “collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.”

The Corporation for National & Community Service's President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll evaluates Metropolitan State each year on the depth and pervasiveness of its community engagement practices against national standards and the work of similar colleges and universities. Metropolitan State has met the qualifications for recognition through this program since 2008.

The 2012 alumni survey was the most recent to be administered by Metropolitan State. A standardized survey to provide comparison data is being considered for the next alumni survey. This will provide internal and external benchmarks.

### *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

Alumni place a significant importance on the value of their degree and have the strongest connection with the university as a whole. Alumni are lifelong learners who value professional development and community service as an expression of personal meaning and making a difference for others.

Opportunities identified in the alumni survey include the following:

- Engagement with university events and staff
- Communication through online social media
- Partnerships with Alumni Relations and Career Development Services.

Insights gained from the ICES participation surveys suggest that community partners are “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their relationship with the university. The university is meeting the objectives of its partnerships.

Evaluators from Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching reported that Metropolitan State, like most higher education institutions, would benefit from deeper and vigorous assessment strategies that isolate student learning outcomes as a product specific to community engaged learning.

### **2I3| Improvements that have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years**

In 2015, the Alumni Association Board and the Metropolitan State University Foundation Board implemented a change in membership structure by having one member participate on both boards. The purpose of this joint membership is to enhance communication and collaboration between the two boards.

The alumni relations and annual fund director position was filled. This position will work to enhance alumni engagement and contributions. A subcommittee of the Foundation Board was created to review alumni relations practices and to make recommendations.

In support of community engagement, an additional full-time employee was added to the ICES staff.

## COMPLAINT PROCESSES

### **2P4| Complaint Processes focuses on collecting, analyzing and responding to complaints from students or key (non-employee) stakeholder groups**

#### *Collecting complaint information from students*

Metropolitan State University provides an environment that promotes learning and protects the safety and well-being of students. The non-academic student complaint process is guided by the Student Complaints and Grievances policy, which is published in the *Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities* and available on the university's Web site.

The Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) action project "Unified Student Complaint Process" helped the university develop a procedure for reporting and tracking student complaints. Students can submit a complaint via an electronic form, which is received by Gateway Services. The director of Gateway Services reviews, tracks, and forwards the complaint to the appropriate university administrator.

The Student Code of Conduct balances individual student rights with the broader interests of the safety and well-being of the university community. Any member of the university community can report a Student Code of Conduct violation to the Judicial Affairs Office.

#### *Collecting complaint information from other key stakeholders*

The Community University Action Team (CUAT) is a standing committee of representatives from both Metropolitan State and the Saint Paul's Dayton's Bluff neighborhood. The team is designed to identify ways to engage the community and university to implement projects with a shared public purpose. The team addresses any university-related concerns brought forward by the community.

Alumni can submit a complaint to the Metropolitan State by e-mailing or calling the Alumni Relations Office. In addition, alumni and community members can use the online complaint form located on the university's Web site.

#### *Learning from complaint information and determining actions*

For Student Code of Conduct issues, the judicial affairs officer meets with faculty and departments to review code of conduct issues, trends within and between departments, and the effectiveness of sanctions.

#### *Communicating actions to students and other key stakeholders*

Students and alumni who submit complaints via the Web site are notified that their complaint has been received and forwarded to the appropriate area for resolution.

The judicial affairs officer works directly with all individuals involved with a Student Code of Conduct complaint.

CUAT communicates directly with community members. The university may hold public forums or develop subcommittees comprised of community and university members to discuss and resolve any concerns.

#### *Selecting tools/methods/instruments to evaluate complaint resolution*

The judicial affairs officer uses Maxient software to track all Student Code of Conduct violations. The Director of Gateway Services uses an Excel spreadsheet and RightNow to track complaints.

### **2R4| Results for student and key stakeholder complaints**

The university is in the beginning stages of systematic maturity for collecting, analyzing, and responding to student and non-employee complaints.

*Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

Maxient software tracks Student Code of Conduct violations by type, charge, sanctions, and academic program.

An Excel spreadsheet and RightNow is used to track student complaints by department and subject of each complaint.

*Summary results of measures*

The Student Code of Conduct summary results are included in the following tables:

Table 2-13 records the type and total of each case

Table 2-14 breaks down the cases into categories

Table 2-15 breaks down the actions assigned to students as a result of their case.

*Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

The Student Code of Conduct results shown in Tables 2-13 through 2-15 are from the 2013 and 2014 calendar year. Results were compiled using the Maxient software. More than one charge and one sanction can be applied to each conduct case.

	2014	2013
Conduct Cases	30	52
Formal Academic Conduct	12	10
Informal Academic Conduct	2	26
For Your Information (new category, September 2014)	2	0
Witnesses	5	0
Behavioral Intervention Team	1	0

**Table 2-13.** Metropolitan State Student Code of Conduct Cases

	2014	2013
Dishonesty (Cheating or Plagiarism)	14*	40
Disruption	3	8
Harassment	3	7
Unauthorized Use or Theft	1	2
Failure to Comply	2	2
Violation of Published Policies	18	54
Violation of Law at University-Sponsored Events	2	3
Drugs	1	1
Odd Behavior	1	0
Abuse of Computers	1	4
Student Organizations/Facilities/Public Expression	1	1
Disruption/Profanity/Defiance	5	8
Interference with Regular University Operation	2	8
Disorderly Conduct	0	3
Abuse of Student Judicial Systems	0	1
Alcohol	0	1
Solicitation	0	1
Damage to Property	0	1
Physical or Sexual Abuse	0	1
Dishonesty (changing MnSCU records)	0	1

\*The judicial affairs officer tracked academic integrity cases from January 2014 through August 2014. In September 2014, the Academic Integrity Policy went into effect.

**Table 2-14.** Code of Conduct Charges / Issues

	2014	2013
Apology Letter	4	4
Attend Anti-plagiarism Workshop	0	15
Community Service	1	0
Complete Online Plagiarism Tutorials	6	28
Counseling	0	7
Disciplinary Probation	8	12
Oral Warning	9	30
Paper	1	0
Referral	1	2
Restitution	0	1
Suspension	2	2
Work with Writing Tutor	6	26
Written Warning	7	12

**Table 2-15.** Sanctions Imposed

*Interpretation of results and insights gained*

The Student Code of Conduct data indicated a higher-frequency in formal and informal academic cases. In response, the Student Academic Integrity Policy was developed. The policy represents a shift from treating integrity violations as conduct issues and moves to educational interventions.

**214| Improvements that have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years**

Metropolitan State will continue to improve the student complaint process and will develop an annual student complaint report to be submitted for consideration in strategic planning.

The judicial affairs officer will continue to develop a restorative justice approach to the sanctions imposed. Current sanctions will be evaluated for effectiveness, and new sanctions will be developed when a need is identified.

The judicial affairs officer will implement the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination (SaVE) Act. This 2013 law increases transparency on campus about incidents of sexual violence, guarantees victims enhanced rights, sets standards for disciplinary proceedings, and requires campus-wide prevention education programs. Under the law, universities must provide “primary prevention and awareness programs” for new students and employees, as well as ongoing prevention and awareness campaigns.

Student Code of Conduct information will be featured more prominently on the university Web site. This will allow for accessible information and resources.

**BUILDING COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS**

**2P5| Building Collaborations and Partnerships focuses on aligning, building, and determining the effectiveness of collaborations and partnerships to further the mission of the institution**

*Selecting partners for collaboration (e.g., other educational institutions, civic organizations, businesses)*

The partnership selection process is based on a thorough assessment of the university’s intellectual, financial, and physical resources as they relate to the needs, challenges, and opportunities present among potential partners. Principles of reciprocity and mutuality underlie the formation of all university partnerships.

The quality and impact of long-standing partnerships have continued to produce positive outcomes for stakeholders. For example, the School and Youth Outreach program, which is a partnership between the university and the public school systems of Minneapolis and Saint Paul, has evolved to include significant roles in program coordination for university students.

### *Building and maintaining relationships with partners*

The East Side Prosperity Campaign, the Central Corridor Anchor Partnership, and the Love Grows Here Wellness Center are sustained and advanced by multiple, targeted projects that unite different sub-sets of constituents to achieve specific goals and objectives. The long-term commitment to these projects by the university and its partners builds greater stability and deepens trust.

The process to improve partnership practices and relationships includes a partnership agreement form and a community engagement site assessment. The partnership agreement form serves to clarify responsibilities for the university and partnering organization, to formalize recognition of partners, and to provide faculty a means to document their work in community for inclusion in annual reviews. The community engagement site assessment document solicits data to help faculty practitioners and the staff of the Institution for Community Engagement and Scholarship (ICES) to better understand the experiences of community engagement from the community agency's perspective and refine community engagement practices.

### *Selecting tools/methods/instruments to assess partnership effectiveness*

Partnerships are assessed through a variety of methods, which include routine evaluations of partnership project activity, periodic audits conducted by external evaluators, and faculty qualitative research done independently or with the support of students.

### *Evaluating the degree to which collaboration and partnerships are effective*

Assessment data is shared with partnership stakeholders, community engagement staff, and the ICES Faculty Work Group. Assessment results are used to refine partnership strategies and support partnership instruments, inform faculty development and scholarship, and support internal and external reporting purposes.

## **2R5| Results for determining the effectiveness of aligning and building collaborations and partnerships**

Building collaborations and partnerships to further the mission are systematic moving toward alignment.

### *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

The university tracks partnership effectiveness through the use of surveys that are administered directly to external university partners. Measures include the achievement of project-specific goals within the partnership, the satisfaction of the partner in its interactions with the university, and the partner's self-reported increase in partnership-attributable organizational capacity.

Through partnership with the University of Minnesota, Metropolitan State invited an external evaluation and audit of its community engagement and partnership practices. The most recent audit was conducted in 2012.

### *Summary results of measures*

The individual measures of how a partnership impacts Metropolitan State and its community are specific to the projects and objectives of each university-community partnership and, do not lend themselves to summary measurements. However, the following information for each partnership is tracked.

- Community partner
- Institutional partner
- Purpose of partnership
- Length of partnership
- Faculty involvement
- Student involvement

- Grant funded (yes/no)
- Institutional and community impact resulting from partnership.

#### *Comparison of results with internal and external benchmarks*

Metropolitan State uses two external sources to benchmark its community engagement and partnership performance. Partnership data practices and processes are reviewed by the Corporation for National and Community Service through the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. The university has been a member of the honor roll since 2008.

The New England Research Center for Higher Education administers the evaluation protocol for the Carnegie Community Engagement classification. In 2015, Metropolitan State received re-classification.

#### *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

The following results and insights were gained from the community engagement and partnership practices audit that was completed in 2012:

- Nearly all community-based organizations in the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood surrounding Metropolitan State claim some level of partnership with the university
- Community partners are aware of the university's engagement programs and projects with agencies other than their own
- Community partners report that their needs are very frequently accommodated in the process of creating community-based academic course projects
- Community partners express a high level of comfort in reaching out to someone on campus to initiate a project
- Community partners were able to identify multiple individuals by name at Metropolitan State who they would feel comfortable contacting
- Community partners report serving with university faculty and staff on community based-committees and neighborhood coalitions.

#### **215| Improvements that have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years**

The ICES Faculty Work Group is redesigning the community partner assessment survey tool and the community partnership agreement form to reflect changes in university practice in partnership codification, to make the tools available for electronic implementation, and to reintroduce the tools in concert with a university effort to prioritize assessment.

The university is poised to expand its physical presence in other parts of the Minneapolis-Saint Paul metropolitan area.

## AQIP Category 3: Valuing Employees

### INTRODUCTION

The Human Resources (HR) department engages in activities to recruit, retain, and develop a diverse and competent workforce that will contribute to the mission and goals of the university. It makes strategic choices to ensure the organization effectively utilizes employees to provide an exceptional educational experience for students and a positive work environment for employees. In addition, the HR department ensures compliance with State regulations, MnSCU policy, and employment laws.

The Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) and Human Resources staff consists of 10 full-time employees to support the following areas for all employees: benefits, insurance, union contracts/plans, labor relations, development, performance, recruitment, hiring, and payroll.

Metropolitan State University employees are represented by five different collective bargaining units: the Inter-Faculty Organization (IFO); the Minnesota State University Association of Administrative and Service Faculty (MSUAASF); the Minnesota Association of Professional Employees (MAPE), Middle Management Association (MMA); and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), and two plans: Commissioners Plan and the MnSCU Personnel Plan for Administrators.

Resident (full-time) faculty are responsible for curriculum coordination, educational planning, and academic advising, as well as teaching. The university has a large group of community faculty (adjunct) instructors who often work outside the university in their areas of expertise.

Twenty five administrators provide senior-level leadership to the university. On July 1, 2014, Metropolitan State University welcomed an interim president who will serve a two year term. Reporting to the president is the provost and vice president for academic affairs, vice president for student affairs (currently vacant), vice president for finance and administration, and vice president for communication and advancement. Also reporting to the president is the chief human resources officer, affirmative action officer, the executive assistant and director of governmental relations, and the assistant to the president.

Based on the recommendation from the Strategic Positioning Team and the departure of the vice president for student affairs, the interim president has proposed an organizational realignment for the university. The decision to finalize the realignment will be made in June 2015 with the recommended new structure in place on July 2015.

Several key factors affect Metropolitan State's organizational structures and how it organizes its human resources: its divisional structure, the five different unions representing its employee base, its heavy reliance on community (adjunct) faculty, its diverse and nonresidential student population, its commitment to diversity, its commitment to civic engagement and community-based learning, its multiple teaching sites dispersed across the metropolitan area and four primary locations: the St. Paul Campus, Management Education Center (Minneapolis) Midway Center (St. Paul) and the Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Education Center (Brooklyn Park).

For a period from 2009 to late in 2012 the chief human resources officer (CHRO) and staff began to build a culture of improvement in the HR department which was demonstrated by the CHRO's participation:

- As a member of Academic Quality University Improvement Steering Committee (AQUISC)
- In leading the Category 4 "Valuing People" category for the 2010 Systems Portfolio
- In co-facilitating Systems Appraisal Feedback sessions for the President's Cabinet
- As a member of the team attending the Strategy Forum in November 2011.

During this time from 2009 to early 2012 the maturity level for valuing employees was systematic with incremental movement toward alignment.

Over a short period of time from late 2012 to the end of 2014, Metropolitan State University sustained significant turnover in human resources leadership and staff. The HR department experienced turnover in its chief human resources officer (CHRO) position (see Table 3-1), with four interim and permanent CHRO's in just over two years. During that same time from May 2013 to September 2013, Metropolitan State lost its entire HR management and transaction level staff. Only three of its eleven employees remained.

In August 2013, errors in faculty and staff payroll were discovered. The Inter-Faculty Organization (IFO), filed grievance directly with the system office. The situation called for immediate resolution and remediation. An independent MnSCU Payroll Review team was established to review and fix payroll for resident and community faculty. In addition to and independent of the payroll review, an interim CHRO was appointed and charged by the MnSCU vice chancellor of human resources to rebuild the HR department. The rebuilding plan included process review, staff hiring, training, and changes to various HR functions.

During this time of significant staff turnover and issues with processing payroll the maturity level was reacting.

In December 2014, a permanent CHRO was hired and the interim CHRO remained in place for several months to assist with the leadership transition and orientation to Metropolitan State and MnSCU.

Examples of improvement activities are demonstrated by:

- Ongoing analysis of HR processes, policies and procedures
- Cross training for all HR staff
- Development of systematic methods to gather employee satisfaction feedback
- Leading Category 3 “Valuing Employees” for the 2015 Systems Portfolio
- Collaboration with MnSCU staff to formalize system-wide strategies and common business practices around staff turnover and payroll complexity for faculty.

During the past year and specifically in the last six months HR related functions across the institution are beginning to improve. The administration of a satisfaction survey and methods for providing employee feedback are in development. The maturity level during this time is in the early stages of systematic.

Process Maturity	SYSTEMATIC				REACTING				EARLY SYSTEMATIC														
Evidence of process maturity	CHRO member of AQUISC	CHRO Cat 4 Leader Systems Portfolio (2010)	Co-facilitated SP feedback session with Pres.	"Valuing People" is selected as a priority for improvement	CHRO attends the Strategy Forum	CHRO begins to report to the President	CHRO resigns	Interim CHRO begins	CHRO hired	HR management and transaction level staff resign (8)	Discover errors in faculty payroll	Phase 1: Analyze and stabilization of records (payroll)	Interim CHRO hired	Rebuild staff and HR processes	Phase 2: External payroll audit (complete May 2014)	CHRO hired	Interim CHRO stays on to assist with transition	Interim CHRO Cat 3 Leader for Systems Portfolio 2015	Action Project: Mapping the hiring process for Community Faculty (CF)	Ongoing cross training for all HR staff	Common business practices system-wide	Ongoing analysis of HR processes	
	Challenge 1								Payroll Issue	Phase 1	Phase 2												
	Challenge 2								Staff departure	Rebuild HR													
	CHRO Tenure	3 years/ 3months CHRO			8 months Interim CHRO		4 months CHRO		1 year/ 3 months Interim CHRO			CHRO		Interim CHRO									
	Year	Jan-2010	Jan-2011	Jan-2012						Jan-2013				Jan-2014							Jan-2015		

**Table 3-1.** Valuing Employees Maturity Level 2010 to 2015



## HIRING

### **3P1 Hiring focuses on the acquisition of appropriately qualified/credentialed faculty, staff, and administrators to ensure that effective, high-quality programs and student support services**

#### *Recruiting, hiring, and orienting employees*

The university follows processes that support recruiting and hiring qualified and diverse candidates. As the needs of the university change, positions change and fluctuate to meet those needs. The Position Request process identifies the need for additional positions, current vacancies and to verify the availability of financial resources needed to support a new hire.

The university recruits applicants to its faculty, staff, and administrative positions using a variety of methods, including:

- National higher education and professional association publications
- Local and regional publications, including those whose target markets are specific industry sectors or specific diverse populations
- University, MnSCU, and the State of Minnesota career opportunities web sites
- Networking, social media, and word of mouth
- Employing search consultants for some administrative positions.

Orientation for new employees is conducted on several levels. There is a one-on-one first day orientation of new employees by HR staff where new employees receive an orientation packet of pertinent information. HR staff conducts group orientations quarterly with presentations from:

- Academic Affairs
- Student Affairs
- Administrative Affairs
- Affirmative Action Director.

Orientation includes core information on the university's mission, vision, history, accreditation process, key policies, organizational structure, required training, and employee benefits. The employee's supervisor has a checklist of items to cover in the orientation to their position and department.

All new faculty have an academic orientation led by the Faculty Development Center. New resident faculty receive one credit for participation in the orientation and monthly professional development meetings during their first year of employment. University-wide community (adjunct) faculty orientation is held every semester.

#### *Designing hiring processes that result in staff and administrators who possess the required qualification, skills, and values (3.C.6)*

The university has local control in the development of each individual position description. The skills, credentials and experience required for non-instructional positions, covered by classified bargaining agreements, are established by the State of Minnesota. (3.C.6). The position description for a given job classification includes the minimum qualifications. The hiring manager and HR staff work together to determine the required credentials, skills and job duties. Job audits are conducted at both the campus level and system level to ensure that position descriptions accurately reflect actual job duties and that the position is assigned to the appropriate classification.

The process for faculty, staff, and administrator hires are outlined in university policies #5010 and #5020 are designed to ensure that employees have the appropriate credentials, skills, and values. (3.C.2) Policies #5010 and #5020 were reviewed and updated in 2012 and supporting procedures #501 and #502 were updated in 2014.

Although there is considerable variation due to the variety of positions, searches are generally conducted by committees comprised of at least one employee from the hiring department as well as employees from other departments. The Human Resources staff conducts appropriate training for search team members. The hiring manager makes the final decision after a process that includes screening for minimum qualifications, preliminary interviews, on-campus interviews, and reference checks.

MSUAASF is the professional unit that represents the service/non-teaching faculty. For positions that are covered by the MSUAASF collective bargaining agreement a list of required skills is maintained and the positions are approved through processes and procedures established by MnSCU. The skills required for the positions are determined by a process that is described in both the MSUAASF agreement and the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) administrative procedure. When hiring student support services staff and non-teaching faculty, candidates must meet the specified minimum qualifications in order to be considered for the position. (3.C.6)

For excluded administrator positions (ones not covered by collective bargaining units or the state civil service classification system), the hiring manager determines the credentials and skills needed for a particular position. The hiring manager, in consultation with Human Resources (HR) Office, develops administrator position descriptions and submits them to the MnSCU system office for salary range assignment. IFO and MSUAASF bargaining units designate search committee members for academic and student affairs administrator searches.

Instructional faculty (IFO) plays the primary role in the hiring processes for both new resident and community faculty. The required and preferred qualifications are developed by the departmental faculty and approved by the dean and provost. Faculty search committees recommend candidates for hire to the dean, who is the hiring manager for faculty within the college he/she oversees. (3.C.1)

All searches are conducted in close cooperation with the Human Resources Office and the Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Office. The applicant pool is reviewed at several stages of the process to ensure that the pool is reflective of the university's commitment to diversity and its affirmative action plan. As a public, urban university in a diverse metropolitan area, it is the expectation that all prospective employees have familiarity with culturally, ethnically, and/or linguistically diverse communities. These qualities align with the mission, vision, and values of the university.

*Developing and meeting academic credentialing standards for faculty, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortia programs (3.C.1, 3.C.2)*

Metropolitan State's resident faculty is responsible for curriculum coordination, educational planning, and academic advising, as well as teaching. The Notice of Vacancy, with the required degree level and years of experience is developed by the members of the search committee, in consultation with the dean and provost. The Notice of Vacancy is subject to approval from HR.

The Master Agreement between the Inter-Faculty Organization (IFO) and MnSCU stipulates that an earned doctorate or other appropriate degree is required for appointment as an assistant professor; higher ranks require designated years of experience. Official transcripts showing degree conferral must be submitted prior to hire and are maintained in the faculty member's personnel file. Part-time community faculty, in addition to their educational degree, are often hired based on their expertise in a specialized field, business experience, and leadership in the community. (3.C.2). Credentialing standards for faculty teaching in dual credit programs are the same as requirements for other IFO members. (3.C.2) There are no contractual or consortia programs currently at Metropolitan State.

HR uses the system-wide College and University Personnel Payroll System (SCUPPS) to provide information for resident, community and non-tenure-track faculty. The report includes data on major, highest degree, tenure and faculty position. The HLC requirement for reviewing faculty credentials provides an opportunity for expansion of this report and for the development of a systematic process to review faculty qualifications and credentials. This work will be completed by January 1, 2016. (3.C.3) (5.A.4)

*Ensuring the institution has sufficient numbers of faculty to carry out both classroom and non-classroom programs and activities (3.C.1)*

Schedule planning begins at least a year in advance of publication and student registration. Departments, in consultation with their deans plan the schedule; faculty request course assignments but deans ultimately make assignments. Department chairs and curriculum coordinators are responsible for contacting and scheduling community faculty. Prior to the start of each term, Deans and Department Chairs review course enrollments to determine if additional faculty are needed. Planned staffing changes due to retirements and sabbaticals are reviewed when a faculty member applies for either. Provisions in the IFO contract provide an incentive for faculty to provide notice of retirement a year in advance. The use of community faculty provides a great degree of flexibility to meet enrollment demands and Metropolitan State University faculty make use of alternative learning strategies such as faculty designed independent studies (FDIS) and student designed independent studies (SDIS). At the start of each fiscal year, the provost asks deans to submit requests for new faculty lines along with supporting data. Deans align budget considerations, institutional objectives, the continuance of quality teaching and class size in their decision making (3.C.1) By contract, resident faculty are expected to advise students, maintain disciplinary and pedagogical expertise, serve on department and university committees, contribute to student growth and development, engage in scholarly activities and provide service to university and community; they are responsible to make available 10 office hours a week to assist students.

Jointly, resident faculty and MSUAASF (service faculty) professional advisors provide a wide range of advising services to students. (3.C.6) By contract, instructional faculty are generally limited to 45 advisees, unless they are provided additional workload credit. In determining MSUAASF professional advisor loads the university's goal is to adhere to NACADA standards.

The university uses multiple strategies to attract and retain faculty such as:

- Access to professional development funds as provided in the IFO bargaining agreements
- Assignment of mentors
- A faculty development program which offers specific orientations for new resident and community faculty, training for new department chairs, and ongoing workshops and programming
- Tuition waiver and tuition remission policies
- A strong benefits package which includes health, dental, life and other optional insurances; sick and vacation leave, an employee assistance program, retirement plans, and numerous voluntary benefit options
- Opportunities for participation in campus projects, initiatives, and in decision-making committees (3.C.6).

Community (adjunct) faculty are limited to teaching 10 credits during the academic year but the IFO contract provides flexibility in allowing community faculty to augment their instructional load with faculty designed and student designed independent studies, supervision of practica and internships, assessment of prior learning and supervision or participation in thesis committees.

Community faculty are members of the bargaining unit and thus have access to professional development funds, rights to representation at department meetings and are compensated for attending professional development days in the Fall and Spring. These benefits and rights help to attract and retain qualified community faculty. (3.C.6)

*Ensuring the acquisition of sufficient numbers of staff to provide student support services*

To ensure there are sufficient numbers of staff to serve our student population, and to meet existing goals, planned personnel changes are reviewed by the President's Council each year during the planning and budgeting process. (3.C.1).

The university uses multiple strategies to attract and retain employees such as:

- Access to professional development funds specifically for non-instructional staff
- Access to professional development funds through MSUAASF bargaining agreements
- Opportunities for sabbaticals for MSUAASF employees
- Tuition waiver and tuition remission policies
- A strong benefits package which includes health, dental, life and other optional insurances; sick and vacation leave, an employee assistance program, retirement plans, and numerous voluntary benefit options
- Opportunities for employees to participate in campus projects, initiatives, and in decision-making committees. (3.C.6)

### **3R1| Results for determining if recruitment, hiring, and orienting practices assure effective provision for programs and services**

The maturity level for the acquisition of qualified faculty, staff and administrators, as well as effective recruitment, hiring, and orientation is systematic.

#### *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

Measures tracked to determine appropriate staffing levels include: headcount for faculty, administrators, and staff. Also tracked are FTE of community faculty, the ratio of credits/courses taught by resident vs., community faculty, and credits generated per FTE faculty member. The tools used are the Integrated Statewide Record System (ISRS) and system-wide College and University Personnel Payroll System (SCUPPS)

#### *Summary results of measures*

As of June 2014, there were 1190 total employees and 174 full-time (resident faculty) and 750 part-time (community faculty). The number of tenure-track faculty has increased by 23 over that past three years.

Students in the Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) Program (dual credit) receive both high school credit and college credit for completed courses. The PSEO participant count was 46 in Fall 2013 and 66 in the Fall of 2014.

In alignment with the mission, Metropolitan State University strives to reflect the diversity of our students in our employees. Trend data since 2010 show an increase in the diversity of our employees and students of color. See Table 3-2. Employees & Students of Color.

#### *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

Data from other MnSCU institutions indicate a 1.3% average increase in employees of color compared to 5.2% at Metropolitan State University (Table 3-2).

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Employees of Color					
MnSCU	10.6%	10.7%	11.3%	11.4%	11.9%
Metropolitan State	23.8%	23.3%	25.3%	24.9%	24.4%
Students of Color					
MnSCU	12.0%	12.7%	13.5%	14.0%	15.0%

**Table 3-2.** Employees & Students of Color. Comparison (data from Trends and Highlights)

The university strives to keep class size small to support student success. Compared to four other MnSCU institutions, Metropolitan State ranks first in student-faculty ratios, classes with fewer than 30 and classes with fewer than 50 students. The comparison data is from the Volunteer System of Accountability (VSA) web site.

Measurement	Students-Faculty	UG Classes < 30	UG Classes < than 50
Bemidji State	*	*	*
<b>Metropolitan State University</b>	16 to 1	86%	100%
Minnesota State University Moorhead	17 to 1	71%	94%
Minnesota State University, Mankato	30 to 1	66%	91%
St. Cloud State University	19 to 1	73%	96%
Southwest Minnesota State University	*	*	*
Winona State University	20 to 1	62%	89%

\* data not available

**Table 3-3.** Student to faculty ratio and class size (VSA web site)

#### *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

Over the past three years, the institution has experienced the benefit of consistency and growth in the number of resident faculty. Resident faculty members provide stability for students and play a key role in the university's strategic vision. Metropolitan State's model has always relied on a relatively small core of resident (tenure/tenure track) faculty, augmented by a substantial number of well-qualified community faculty. There has been a steady increase in the number community faculty hired, a practice that models the national trend.

The data confirms what we already recognize; the number of employees and students of color are higher at Metropolitan State University than at other MnSCU institutions. (Table 3-2)

### **3I1| Improvements that have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1-3 years**

Many improvements involving the hiring process have been implemented:

- Content update for the new employee orientation
- Comprehensive resident and community faculty new employee orientation
- Deployment of a new applicant tracking system (NeoGov) for unclassified positions
- Updated and expanded search committee training
- Expanded faculty development programs with ongoing learning opportunities
- Deployment of the new dean's orientation course developed by MnSCU.

Many opportunities for improvement have been identified and plans are being formulated for implementation now and in the next few years including:

- Development of a comprehensive staffing plan in conjunction with strategic and budget plans
- Comprehensive tracking and analysis of HR data
- Implementation of an online exit interview/survey
- Mapping the hiring process for community faculty

- Implementation of an integrated onboarding process
- Simplifying the faculty workload assignment process
- Instituting a 30-60-90 day retention plan.

## EVALUATION AND RECOGNITION

### **3P2 Evaluation and Recognition focuses on processes that assess and recognize faculty, staff and administrators' contributions to the institution**

#### *Designing performance evaluation systems for all employees*

Faculty members are individually accountable for their performance as effective teachers, their continuing professional growth, and their activities on behalf of student academic success. The five key criteria that must be addressed in the faculty development plans are:

- Demonstrated ability to teach effectively and/or perform effectively in other current assignments
- Scholarly or creative achievement or research
- Evidence of continuing preparation and study
- Contribution to student growth and development
- Service to the university and larger communities.

All other employees are expected to receive annual performance evaluations during their employment with the university. The evaluation forms for nonexempt and exempt employees are reflective of the primary responsibilities and goals of each position. Evaluations are conducted by the employee's immediate supervisor with discussions about their performance including areas for improvement, areas of strength and goals to attain. Employee evaluations may be conducted more frequently depending on job performance or changes in job duties.

Administrator annual evaluations are tied to the institutional strategic initiatives and the divisional/departmental level objectives.

#### *Soliciting input from and communicating expectations to faculty, staff, and administrators*

Employees and supervisors work together to develop a plan for professional growth and establish individual goals that support the departmental objectives and the employee's career plans. In addition to employee/supervisor discussions during evaluation process, supervisors regularly meet and communicate with employees about their individual or departmental performance expectations. (3.C.6)

#### *Aligning the evaluation system with institutional objectives for both instructional and non-instructional programs and services*

The university employs a variety of methods to align evaluation systems to the institutional objectives of delivering academic excellence and responding to student needs. Some of these methods include campus forums and internal surveys which are routinely completed to connect with students and collect feedback to help inform the improvement of programs and services. Evaluation forms are often completed after visits to student service units, such as Student Counseling Services, Disabilities Services, and the Center for Academic Excellence. Career fairs provide useful data and feedback from students, alumni, and employers. Other channels of information come through programs and activities sponsored by Student Life and Leadership, Student Senate and comments left in the suggestion box in the library.

The "Instructional Improvement Questionnaire" (IIQ) is the main method and evaluation system to provide instructors with student feedback from the courses they teach. Students complete a paper or online IIQ, depending on how the course was delivered. Forms are returned to Institutional Research (IR) and sent to an off-site vendor for processing. Returned data is analyzed using course, college, university-

level statistics and results are shared with the individual instructors. (3.C.3). Individual faculty members and departments can review this ongoing feedback for indicators that courses are effective and align with departmental and institutional objectives.

*Utilizing established institutional policies and procedures to regularly evaluate all faculty, staff, and administrators (3.C.3)*

Each bargaining unit agreement and each plan addresses the need for regular evaluation. (3.C.3) Divisional strategies and plans are considered as supervisors conduct performance evaluations along with discussion on past performance, strengths and area for improvement.

A new stipulation for community faculty was added to the IFO bargaining agreement in 2014. Article 22, Section B which requires a report documenting achievements be submitted to the Dean at the end of each term. This report will aid in assessing and evaluating community faculty and their contributions to the institution. (3.C.3)

In 2013, the MnSCU chancellor tied presidential annual performance evaluations to their institution's performance using the MnSCU Strategic Framework Performance Measurements for comparison. (3.C.3). The framework includes performance measures to track historical trends, anticipated trajectories and improvement goals for each campus. The four broad goals in the framework are:

- Ensure access to an extraordinary education for all Minnesotans
- Be the partner of choice to meet Minnesota's workforce and community needs
- Deliver to students, employers, communities and taxpayers the highest value/most affordable higher education option
- Collective Success of the MnSCU system in serving the State & Region.

*Establishing employee recognition, compensation, and benefit systems to promote retention and high performance*

Union	Recognition	Rewards and Compensation	Benefit Systems
AFSCME	None		
MAPE	Team/Individual Achievement Award	Up to \$1000 or 1 step	No more than 35% of all MAPE employees each fiscal year
MMA	Achievement Award	\$1600 or 1 step	No more than 40% of all MMA employees each fiscal year
MSUAASF	Exceptional Achievement Incentive Program	Lump Sum up to 5% of the employee's base salary	Demonstrated exceptional performance in one of five criterion
Administrators Plan	Exceptional Performance Award	No more than 1% of the aggregate base salaries as of July 1st	Nominations received by the president and determined by the president
Commissioner's Plan	Achievement Award	No more than \$2,000 per fiscal year per person	Limit of \$500 x # of eligible employees per fiscal year.

**Table 3-4.** Recognition and Rewards by Union

Union	Recognition	Rewards and Compensation	Benefit Systems
Institutional Recognition	Years of Service Award	Non-monetary gift	Length of service awards in five year increments, Spring celebration
Institutional Recognition	Ambassador Award	Non-monetary gift	Outstanding service to students or to the public
Institutional Recognition	Behind the Scenes Award	Non-monetary gift	Outstanding service to co-workers and/or colleagues
Institutional Recognition	Innovator Award	Non-monetary gift	Outstanding ideas that save time or money or make a task or project more interesting
Institutional Recognition	Measureable Difference Award	Non-monetary gift	Implementation of a results-oriented process improvement by an employee or team
Institutional Recognition	"Metromorphosis" Award	Non-monetary gift	For flexibility, creativity, patience, perseverance, and good humor in the midst of change
Institutional Recognition	Student Worker Supreme Award	Non-monetary gift	Outstanding service provided by a student worker for faculty, staff, and/or students
Institutional Recognition	Elizabeth Shippee Award	Non-monetary gift	Outstanding service to the special needs of women students, faculty, and staff
Institutional Recognition	Community Engaged Scholarship Award	Non-monetary gift	Outstanding service and demonstrated involvement in community-based learning or civic engagement
Institutional Recognition	Open Category	Non-monetary gift	For any type of outstanding achievement in job-related activity; nominator creates the award, lists criteria, and names the award
Institutional Recognition	Anti-Racism & Diversity Leadership Award	Non-monetary gift	Outstanding leadership in these areas
Institutional Recognition	Anti-Racism Legacy Award	Non-monetary gift	History of leadership in anti-racism efforts

**Table 3-5.** Recognition by the University

Union	Recognition	Rewards and Compensation	Benefit Systems
Center for Faculty Development	Excellence in Advising/Outstanding Advisor Awards	One or more awards given each year	Nominations made by students. Awards may be given to faculty or to professional advisors.
Center for Faculty Development	Excellence in Teaching/Outstanding Teacher/Lifetime Achievement	Given to resident and/or community faculty each year	Nominations are made by students; Awards are given out at the Fall Faculty Conference
Center for Faculty Development	Length of service (teaching) awards in 5 year increments	Given to both resident and community faculty	Presented at the Spring Faculty Conference annually

**Table 3-6.** Recognition for Teaching, Advising and Length of Service (teaching)

Employee compensation systems and benefits are set by collective bargaining agreements, which are either system-wide or state-wide. Salary upon hire is determined by a combination of factors including education, years of experience, and market conditions. Annual pay increases, which are set by the collective bargaining process, are based on evidence of satisfactory performance. MnSCU administrator's annual pay increases are entirely based on merit.

Table 3-7 gives an overview of employee benefits by job classification. Overall, as employees of the State of Minnesota, the benefits available to full-time employees are competitive and comprehensive.



Benefit	Resident Faculty	Community Faculty	All Staff	Administrators
Insurance (Health, Dental, Life)	√		√	√
Opt-in Insurance (Child Life, Spouse, AD&D, Long-term, Short and Long Term Disability, etc.)	√		√	√
Health Savings Account	√		√	√
Retirement Funds (Mandatory and Voluntary)	√	√ (depending on workload)	√	√
Vacation Leave	√		√	√
Sick Leave	√		√	√
Personal Leave	√	√	√	√
Paid Holidays			√	√
Tuition Waiver	√	√ (depending on workload)	√	√
Tuition Remission			√	
Sabbatical	√		√ MSUAASF Only	

**Table 3-7:** Employee Benefits by Job Classification

### *Promoting employee satisfaction and engagement*

Faculty and administrators are called on to provide leadership and support for many MnSCU-wide initiatives designed to enhance student success. Examples for 2013/2014 include the following initiatives:

- “Graduate Minnesota” 2014 Adult Learner Institute
- “Credit When It’s Due” project
- Adult Education and Degree Completion
- Multicultural Education
- Prior Learning Assessment.

Employees are given a variety of opportunities to provide input and cultivate leadership skills by participation on university and MnSCU projects. One current project is the chancellor’s initiative “Charting the Future for a Prosperous Minnesota”. Charting the Future is a system-wide, multi-year strategic effort to help MnSCU institutions collaborate on recommendations to prepare students for success. Thirteen members from Metropolitan State University are participating or leading teams.

### **3R2| Results for determining if evaluation processes assess employees’ contributions to the institution**

Each bargaining unit agreement and each plan has a process for employee evaluation to measure their work contributions. Multiple awards for excellence and service are evident. Evaluation and recognition are in the systematic stage of maturity.

#### *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

Exceptional achievement awards are available through three unions and two employee plans.

Metropolitan State uses a tracking module in SCUPPS, the Personnel Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) survey and achievement awards to measure employee contributions to the university.

Union	Recognition	Compensation
MAPE	Team/Individual Achievement Award	Up to \$1000 or 1 step
MMA	Achievement Award	\$1600 or 1 step
MSUAASF	Exceptional Achievement Incentive Program	Lump Sum up to 5% of the employee's base salary
Administrators Plan	Exceptional Performance Award	No more than 1% of aggregate base salaries as of July 1st
Commissioner's Plan	Achievement Award	No more than \$2,000 per fiscal year per person

**Table 3-8.** Achievement and Performance Awards by Union

### *Summary results of measures*

The “Valuing People” survey was used in 2006 and again in 2009 to measure employee satisfaction and perception of the university climate. The “Valuing People” survey previously supported by MnSCU was discontinued in 2011. Selecting a replacement survey was scheduled for 2012/13. The project was postponed with the CHRO transition.

In February 2015, the university participated in the Personnel Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) survey from the National Initiative for Leadership and Institutional Effectiveness. Surveys were emailed to 1028 employees. Results from the PACE survey will be available in July.

### *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

The PACE survey will provide data to compare Metropolitan State to 15 MnSCU institutions and other higher education institutions across the country.

### *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

Results from the PACE survey will be available in July. The PACE reports will provide a comprehensive picture of campus climate. Thorough analysis of the survey results will occur by December 31, 2015 and will provide data for institutional strategies and improvement opportunities.

## **3I2| Improvements that have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1-3 years**

Opportunities for improvement have been identified and plans are being formulated for implementation now and over the next several years

- Supervisor training for preparing performance evaluations and development plans
- Fully implement the data module to track employee evaluations
- Develop a process to send performance evaluation reminders to supervisors
- Analyze PACE survey results, share data across the university and plan projects for improvement.

## **DEVELOPMENT**

### **3P3| Development focuses on processes for continually training, educating, and supporting employees to remain current in their methods and to contribute fully and effectively throughout their careers within the institution**

*Providing and supporting regular professional development for all employees (3.C.4, 5.A.4)*

The Human Resource Division sponsors a variety of on-campus training sessions available to all employees. Additionally, from 2007 to 2013, the HR Division hosted an annual Professional Development Day for all staff. Examples of recent training/workshops include: (5.A.4)

- LEAN 101

- MSUAASF Campus Evaluation Committee Training
- Diversity – Discover your Potential
- Evaluating Job Applicants
- The Science of Supervision
- General Investigation Training for Supervisors
- Budget Reporting
- Strengths Finder
- Ally Training

All faculty, staff and students have access to the training library of lynda.com for online training. Various university units, in partnership, purchased full access to the library of over 1200 courses and 73,000 tutorials. Examples of online training include: business skills, communication, project management, software technology and data analysis. (5.A.4)

*Ensuring that instructors are current in instructional content in their disciplines and pedagogical processes (3.C.4)*

The Center for Faculty Development provides programs, activities and resources designed to support resident and community faculty. These include:

- New faculty orientation
- Programs to support scholarly or creative achievement, research, contributions to student growth and development, and service to the university and community
- Seminars, confidential consultations, in-class observations and feedback
- Presentations on teaching and learning, workshops, brown bags and conferences
- Faculty resource centers with work space, equipment, and teaching resources
- Book clubs on teaching and learning offered every term
- A Center for Faculty Development web site that contains many resources on learning theory, inclusive education and diversity, conferences, and teaching tips
- Bi-weekly teaching tips sent to faculty
- Peer mentoring program starting in Fall 2015
- Teaching Academy starting in Fall 2015. (3.C.4)

Faculty members in the IFO bargaining unit, and employees covered under the MSUAASF bargaining unit have professional development funds available to them as provided in the agreement. These funds are available to keep them current in their field and support travel and professional study. Additionally, both units have sabbatical leave and tuition waiver available to them to enhance professional development, support departmental goals, and/or meet instructional, service or research priorities of the university. (3.C.4)(3.C.6)

*Supporting student support staff members to increase their skills and knowledge in their areas of expertise (e.g. advising, financial aid, etc.) (3.C.6)*

Student support staff members are encouraged to continue their professional development and are provided access to resources, including union professional development funds, the annual MSUAASF professional development day, and university-sponsored programing and workshops. (3.C.6)

In 2015, the university instituted a Staff Development Committee, which reviews requests for professional dev funds, primarily for staff who do not have access to allocated union funds (3.C.6).

A Coordinator of Advising was hired in October 2014. The development of this position was the first priority from the 2012-13 advising task force. Plans for an advising center, are included in the interim president's reorganization design. The Advising Council meets monthly to collaborate, share best practices and address issues that impact student advising.

### *Aligning employee professional development activities with institutional objectives*

Staff training needs and individual professional development are determined and aligned with divisional objectives by the supervisor and employee, as part of each employee's annual performance evaluation. Discretionary funds are budgeted to support training, professional development and tuition waiver or tuition reimbursement. (3.C.6)

Three MnSCU professional development activities for academic deans that align with MnSCU objectives:

- eLearning course to support onboarding
- annual Academic & Student Affairs Leadership Conference used to strategize improvements for services and programs
- newsletter used to communicate information about projects, events and meetings. (5.A.4)

### **3R3| Results for determining if employees are assisted and supported in their professional development**

Shared responsibility for supporting employees in their training and professional development belongs to HR, Academic Affairs (Center for Faculty Development), Student Affairs, Unions and Commissioner's Plan. All these provide a foundation of employee support that is systematic.

#### *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

Employee evaluations, budget spreadsheets and SCUPPS tracking module are the tools track professional development details.

Each department/unit is allocated funds for professional study and travel for IFO members. These funds are tracked at the unit level.

#### *Summary results of measures*

Since June 2013 employees have accessed and viewed over 1,800 separate courses from lynda.com.

Four MSUAASF employees have been granted sabbatical leave. (2010-2014)

The Faculty Development Center tracks attendance at teaching workshops and collects check-in data at the faculty centers. 430 faculty members used the center workspace, met with colleagues or students from June 4, 2014 to April 9, 2015.

Attendance at Teaching Workshops sponsored by the Faculty Development Center

Fall 2013	97
Spring 2014	242
Fall 2014	134
Spring 2015	196

#### *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

Metropolitan State compares itself to MnSCU system as a whole. A 2014 MnSCU Staff Development Survey reported that 81% of employees had attended one or more professional development activities compared to the MnSCU average of 78%.

#### *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

The "do more with less" environment has taken a toll on employees and supervisors. Supervisors must increase the number of employees who have and complete development plans. A 2014 MnSCU Staff Development survey indicated that 42% of non-faculty employees had a development plan and discussed it with a supervisor.

Because of multiple data sources, there is a need to coordinate and increase the capacity to provide aggregated summary reports concerning employee development. Areas providing data need to increase the capacity to analyze and use data to inform decisions.

### **3I3| Improvements that have been implemented or will be implemented in the next 1-3 years**

The following opportunities for improvement have been identified and implemented:

- Expanded faculty development program with orientation for new resident and community faculty, training for department chairs, and ongoing workshops and learning opportunities
- Online learning through lynda.com for all employees and students
- Professional development funding for employees in AFSCME, MAPE, MMA, and the Commissioner's Plan.

Many opportunities for improvement have been identified and plans are being formulated for implementation now or in the next several years: They include:

- A resident faculty needs assessment survey in the Spring of 2015
- Plans to align employee training to support the strategic direction of the university
- Supervisor training: preparing employee development plans, understanding union contracts and tools for positive supervision
- Increase participation in the MnSCU Luoma Leadership Academy and the Executive Leader Development Program
- Analyzing the PACE survey results and developing action steps based on the results
- Sending updates to employees for training and development opportunities
- A system for tracking employee learning and development

## AQIP Category 4: Planning and Leading

### INTRODUCTION

Since the 2010 Systems Portfolio was submitted, changes in leadership and focus have occurred at both Metropolitan State University and at the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU). In October 2011, MnSCU hired a new chancellor, who proposed a new strategic framework adopted by the board of trustees in January 2012. The chancellor then initiated a strategic planning initiative known as “Charting the Future.” Engaging participants across system institutions, the initiative’s recommendations focused on increasing access, affordability, excellence, and service by forging deeper collaborations among colleges and universities to maximize collective strengths, resources, and talents. Metropolitan State has participated in this process, and the institution’s leadership is ensuring alignment and implementation as appropriate for the university.

In 2011, Minnesota’s government shut down from July 1-20 due to a lack of a budget bill to fund state operations. While the shutdown did not close the university, preparing for a possible shutdown distracted leadership focus. From May through June, time, effort, and resources were spent to develop contingency plans for operations and pending summer sessions. The university was directed to prepare for layoffs to be effective June 20, 2011.

In addition, over the past four years there have been several leadership transitions at the university. Table 4-1 shows the length of service for current President’s Council members. Table 4-2 shows that 35 people have held 13 senior administrator positions, including interim appointments and current openings, in the last five years. Table 4-3 shows that 22 people held the seven dean positions during this same time period. In June 2012, an academic reorganization created two new schools (Urban Education and Law Enforcement/Criminal Justice) from existing programs and brought several academic departments, including the School of Nursing, into a new College of Health, Community & Professional Studies (CHCPS).

Metropolitan State’s former president retired on June 30, 2014, and an interim president was appointed to a two-year term beginning July 1, 2014. The chancellor charged the interim president to build a solid foundation and to pave the way for a successful search for a permanent president.

<b>President’s Council – As of January 1, 2015</b>	<b>Length of Service</b>
Interim President	6 months
Provost	30 months
VP Student Affairs	Open
VP Admin & Finance	60 months
VP Advancement & Communication	4 months

**Table 4-1.** President’s Council

	President	Provost	Vice Provost or VP Student Success	VP Student Affairs	VP Univ. Adv. or VP Univ. Planning & Adv. or VP Adv. & Communication	VP Admin & Finance	AVP Admin & Finance	AVP Enrollment	Dean of Students	CHRO	AVP IT Services	AVP Building Services	Exec Asst to Pres & Dir Govt Rel
2010-2011	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1
					2								
2011-2012		2		2	3			1					
2012-2013		3	2	3							2		
										2	3		
2013-2014			3					2	2	3	4		
										4			
2014-2015	2				4				3	5			
				4 Open			2 Open						
# of transitions	1	2	2	3	3	0	1	1	2	4	3	0	0
Yellow = interim													

**Table 4-2. Senior Administrator Transitions 2010 – Present**

	College of Management	Arts & Science	Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice	Individualized Studies (First College)	Professional Studies	Nursing	College of Health Community & Professional Studies	Urban Education	Library and Information Services
2010-2011	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1
2011-2012	2							2	
2012-2013			2		Restructured	Restructured	1	3	
					Became part of	Became part of			
2013-2014	3		3	2	College of Health/	College of Health/		4	2
		2			Community/	Community/			
2014-2015	4				Prof. Studies	Prof. Studies	2	5	
# of transitions	3	1	2	1	1	1	1	4	1
Yellow = interim									

**Table 4-3. Dean Transitions 2010 – Present**

In 2009, the maturity level for planning was systematic, moving toward alignment. Due to the high number of transitions occurring during 2010–2014, the maturity level became reactive. Currently, the maturity level for planning is systematic. We are moving towards alignment as a strategic plan is developed. Leadership is beginning to stabilize and is moving toward becoming systematic as a cohesive senior leadership team is built.

**MISSION AND VISION**

**4P1| Mission and Vision focuses on how the institution develops, communicates, and reviews its mission and vision**

*Developing, deploying, and reviewing the institution’s mission, vision, and values (1.A.1, 1.D.2, 1.D.3)*

In 1971, Metropolitan State University was established to serve adult students, particularly those whose formal education may have been interrupted by work and family and/or whose educational needs were not being met by other higher education institutions. Since then the university’s mission (see Institutional Overview) has been reviewed and refined several times, using a collaborative approach among faculty, staff, and administration. In Fall 2005/Spring 2006, the provost and the president of the faculty association led the President’s Task Force on the University Mission. In March 2006, the existing mission statement was reaffirmed, after adding the word “graduate” to reflect the university’s growing commitment to graduate education. Similarly, a Values Task Force was created in 2008 to develop a university values statement. During this process, the mission and vision were again reaffirmed. In 2014,

the university participated in campus-wide appreciative inquiry (AI) sessions as a new approach and beginning for strategic planning. Building on the AI process, the interim president commissioned a Strategic Positioning Team (a cross-divisional group co-led by the provost and the president of the Inter Faculty Organization [IFO]). (1.A.1) As part of developing the draft strategic positioning statement, the mission and vision were again reviewed and reaffirmed, and the following draft strategic positioning statement was created:

Metropolitan State is the public, urban, university of the Twin Cities. The diverse faculty and staff of the university transform lives by empowering our diverse learners and providing the academic and holistic support students need to achieve their aspirations for work, service, and leadership. Through academic excellence in undergraduate, graduate and continuing education, and integrated community engagement we prepare students to be lifelong, self-directed learners and educated citizens in a globally interconnected society. We strive to create an inclusive, respectful, non-repressive environment by embracing students' cultural identity and valuing their life experiences as well as their prior learning. As educational innovators and partners, we provide accessible, flexible and affordable options, excellence in transfer practices, and represent the most direct path for degree completion. (1.D.1, 1.D.2, 1.D.3).

*Ensuring that institutional actions reflect a commitment to its values*

In 2008, the interim provost and IFO president co-led a university-wide process that produced a list of "core values dimensions" (Table 4-4). The core values are an expression of how the university aspires to live its mission and vision. The President's Council is the forum where major institutional actions are reviewed by the senior leadership team. During those discussions, alignment with mission, vision, and core values are considered as decisions are made. Under the interim president, this commitment to core values has been reinforced by expansion of the President's Council to include the director of the Institute of Community Engagement and Scholarship (ICES), the director of Affirmative Action, Equal Employment and Diversity, the interim vice president for Student Academic Success, along with the associate vice presidents for financial management, facilities, enrollment and the Foundation.



<b>Core Values Dimensions</b>
Excellence (we define this as...) High quality educational experiences Innovation, including both pedagogical and technological Scholarly work linking theory and practice Intellectual rigor
Diversity and Inclusion Valuing Diversity through Inclusion Access Adult and traditional students; lifelong learning
Engagement Local Regional Global Community-based Student-based partnerships/Student-centeredness
Open, respectful climate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acceptance of a range of values, diverging points of view</li> <li>• Encouraging difficult dialogs</li> <li>• Engaging diversity</li> </ul>
Integrity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Honesty</li> <li>• Ethical behavior</li> <li>• Transparency of operations</li> <li>• Accountability</li> <li>• Shared governance</li> </ul>

**Table 4-4.** Core Values Dimensions (1.D.3)

*Communicating the mission, vision, and values (1.B.1, 1.B.2, 1.B.3)*

Metropolitan University's mission, vision, and values are communicated university-wide through display on the university's web site, in documents, and as a backdrop for planning exercises and presentations. (1.B.1, 1.B.2, 1.B.3) On the web site, clicking on each of the values causes a definition to pop up, providing more clarity. Communication of the mission, vision, and values begins at the time of hire through mission-related interview questions and during orientation sessions. ICES serves as an important mechanism for transmitting this information to our surrounding communities. Furthermore, in their public roles, administrators, faculty and staff serve as liaisons with the communities, providing additional opportunities for demonstrating the university's mission, vision, and values.

Over the past year, several processes, such as the AI sessions, the strategic positioning formulation, and the web site redesign, as well as reorganization discussions and branding conversations, have kept the university's mission, vision, and values in the forefront of campus deliberations.

*Ensuring that academic programs and services are consistent with the institution's mission (1.A.2)*

Several processes help ensure that the institution's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission. For example, the university's Policy 2070 (New Program Approval), which governs the approval of new or revised academic programs, specifically requires consideration of how the proposal meets the specific college and overall university mission and vision. ICES engages a faculty workgroup to infuse community engagement, one of Metropolitan State's core mission commitments, throughout the curriculum. Recent new program developments (Table 4-5) are responsive to the needs of the Minneapolis-Saint Paul business and non-profit community and reflect mission commitments to serve the underserved. (1.A.2)

<b>New Program Development</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Science Education Center: biology; chemistry; environmental sciences (undergrad &amp; PSM in development; enrolling a highly diverse student population: 47% students of color; 13% veterans; 61% female)</li> <li>• Masters degree in urban education; reflects the needs of urban school districts for teachers of color and teachers well prepared for working in multicultural, urban districts (mission of School of Urban Education)</li> <li>• Nursing program (Minnesota Alliance for Nursing Education) developed with two year college and health care partnerships focuses on preparing nursing workforce with BSN and for community based nursing</li> <li>• Advanced Dental Therapy (M.S.) is the first in the country to prepare new oral health care professionals, who under the supervision of a dentist may provide routine oral health care; the university played a role in getting the legislation enacted which requires ADTs to devote a percentage of their practice to serving low-income individuals without access to dental care</li> <li>• Graduate Certificate in Arts and Cultural Heritage Management: In 2008 the state of MN created a Legacy fund to preserve, among other things, the history, arts and cultural legacy of the state, resulting in a dramatic increase in community arts and history organizations. This certificate has been created to fill the knowledge / skill gap in non-profit management and cultural legacy preservation</li> <li>• B.S. in Computer Applications Development: Research shows a significant labor shortage; without skilled workforce companies would leave the state, having a significant economic impact.</li> </ul>

**Table 4-5.** New Programs Reflecting Mission

Processes for reviewing and developing student support services examine the particular education and support needs (Table 4-6) of Metropolitan State’s adult (aged 25 and older) and traditionally underrepresented students. For example, the provost and vice president of student affairs convene a monthly meeting of the Deans and Directors Council. At these meetings, academic and student affairs program leaders discuss data about students, received in a variety of ways, to determine how to develop and adjust services to best meet the students’ educational needs.

<b>Student Centered Approaches Supporting Academic Programs</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most courses meet once per week; many meet in the evenings or on Saturdays</li> <li>• Orientation is provided on Saturday and online</li> <li>• A variety of support is available to students (see Category 2)</li> <li>• DARS (degree audit report system) is a degree-planning tool for students that include both transfer and Metropolitan State coursework. It’s critical for determining what courses students need to register for.</li> </ul>

**Table 4-6:** Student Centered Approaches Supporting Academic Programs

Recruiting targeted to adults with some college and no degree and to students enrolled in community colleges within the MnSCU system assures that Metropolitan States is attracting the students the university is best aligned to serve: working adults and those traditionally underrepresented or not well served by traditional institutions.

*Allocating resources to advance the institution’s mission and vision while upholding the institution’s values (1.D.1, 1.A.3).*

Developing an integrated process for planning and budgeting to support the achievement of the Metropolitan State’s mission and vision (1.A.3) is a top priority of the university’s interim president and his cabinet. In Spring 2015, the interim president asked the Strategic Positioning Group to continue on as the institutional Strategic Planning Advisory Committee (SPAC). In addition, the interim president created a Budget Advisory Committee to be chaired by the university’s chief financial officer (CFO) and a member of the faculty bargaining unit. The SPAC will meet at least twice a year to assure that strategic priorities are understood and integrated into the budget allocation work.

For the last two to three years, the connection between planning and budgeting was made at the level of the Presidents' Council, which comprises the university's president and divisional vice presidents. While budgeting has been an incremental process during this time, strategic needs were discussed and funded as additional funds became available. Major strategic investments are shown in Table 4-7.

<b>Strategic Investments</b>
• Addition of 10 faculty lines in FY2014
• Addition of 5 professional advisors
• An investment to increase marketing efforts and develop a new web site
• \$200,000 for curriculum development and equipment purchases in FY2014
• Established the Faculty Development Center and hired a director and associate director
• Compensation to community faculty for participation in faculty development conferences
• Hired a coordinator of advising
• Authorized an assessment coordinator position
• Addition of a partnership coordinator to work with community colleges
• Piloting an employee suggestion system for collaboration/prioritization of improvement projects
• Increased DARS and Gateway Student Service staff.

**Table 4-7.** Strategic Investments

#### **4R1| Results for developing, communicating, and reviewing the institution's mission, vision, and values**

The maturity level is systematic with strategic planning being deployed consistently across the university. A replicable process is being established, helping to move the university toward alignment.

##### *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

Metropolitan State uses the MnSCU Enrollment Analytic tool to measure how it is achieving the university's mission. Other tools include:

- Adult learner-focused institutional surveys:
  - Preference Survey of Online Learners
  - Adult Learner Inventory
  - Adult Preference Survey
- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) data
- Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE), which will be administered in Spring 2015
- Advising survey (Metropolitan State)
- Personal Assessment of College Environment (PACE) survey, which was administered in February 2015
- MnSCU "Accountability Dashboard"
- "Trends and Highlights" data
- Campus Climate Survey (Diversity)

##### *Summary results of measures*

Table 4-8 shows results for "...continued emphasis on underserved groups, including adults and communities of color" by showing enrollment for adults over age 25 in the following categories: "Students of Color," "Pell Eligible," "First Generation," and "Underrepresented." Table 4-9 provides results in relationship to each part of Metropolitan State's mission.

##### *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

Metropolitan State compares itself to other MnSCU institutions and the system as a whole on enrollment data. From Fall 2011 to Fall 2014, Metropolitan State consistently enrolled at least 26% more students of color over age 25 than the system as a whole. (See Table 4-8.) The university does not currently compare this data against external benchmarks.

*Interpretation of results and insights gained*

After reviewing enrollment results (Table 4-8) it is clear Metropolitan State is achieving its mission to serve those students not traditionally well served in higher education.

<b>Student of Color+ 25</b>	FALL	2011	2012	2013	2014
	Metropolitan State University	71%	71%	71%	69%
	MnSCU System	45%	45%	44%	42%
<b>Pell Eligible +25</b>	FALL	2011	2012	2013	2014
	Metropolitan State University	72%	73%	72%	70%
	MnSCU System	46%	46%	46%	45%
<b>First Generation +25</b>	FALL	2011	2012	2013	2014
	Metropolitan State University	80%	78%	77%	75%
	MnSCU System	52%	51%	50%	48%
<b>Underrepresented +25</b>	FALL	2011	2012	2013	2014
	Metropolitan State University	75%	75%	75%	73%
	MnSCU System	46%	46%	45%	44%

Note: MnSCU definitions are used for Student of Color, Pell Eligible, First Generation, and Underrepresented.

**Table 4-8.** MnSCU Enrollment Analytic Tool

<b>Results on Achieving Mission</b>
<b>Below is the Mission Statement with Results Inserted for Each Concept</b>
<p><b>Metropolitan State University is a comprehensive urban university committed to meeting the higher education needs of the Twin Cities and greater metropolitan population.</b></p> <p>RESULTS: Have added 11 majors, seven minors and seven graduate certificates or degrees in high demand fields:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• B.S. Computer Applications Development (growing field with shortage of talent)</li> <li>• B.S.N. Minnesota Alliance for Nursing Education (collaborative, joint enrollment BSN program with seven community colleges, designed to meet the growing demand for BSN prepared nurses)</li> <li>• B.S. Supply Chain Management (undergrad major &amp; minor)</li> <li>• Chemistry B.S. &amp; Chemistry Teaching B.S.</li> <li>• B.A. in Fine Arts</li> <li>• M.S. in Urban Education including specialized tracks in Special Education, ESL, Literacy</li> <li>• Graduate Certificate in Design of User Experience</li> <li>• Graduate Certificate in Arts &amp; Cultural Heritage Management (will provide management skills to the community arts and heritage groups being created and funded by the State of Minnesota's Legacy funds)</li> <li>• Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP)</li> <li>• M.S. Alcohol and Drug Counseling</li> <li>• MMIS Graduate Certificate in Health Information</li> </ul> <p><b>The university will provide accessible, high-quality liberal arts, professional, and graduate education to the citizens and communities of the metropolitan area</b></p> <p>RESULTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Note the creation of new degrees above</li> <li>• Added Racial Issues graduation requirement</li> </ul> <p><b>The university will build on its national reputation for innovative student-centered programs that enable students from diverse backgrounds to achieve their educational goals</b></p> <p>RESULTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant in CAEL/LUMINA grant on Competency Based Education</li> <li>• On average approximately 1100+ students choose Individualized Studies as a major. Individualized Studies is built on principles of adult learning and incorporates a spectrum of opportunities for crediting prior learning. Approximately 200 – 400 undergraduate students have participated in some form of Prior Learning Assessment each year since 2012; plans are underway to increase that number</li> <li>• Planning is underway to establish a system wide PLA Center and become a resource for MnSCU institutions</li> <li>• First dual admission program in the country in Dental Hygiene (partnership with Normandale Community College)</li> <li>• Unique dual enrollment nursing program (MANE), which allows students to complete a BSN on their home campus. Provides an option for a Baccalaureate nursing program in more rural areas of the state, which has a shortage of BSN prepared nurses</li> <li>• Baccalaureate degree completion programs currently offered on four community college campuses in Twin Cities Metro area with plans to expand these offerings over the next several years</li> </ul> <p><b>The university is committed to academic excellence and community partnerships through curriculum, teaching, scholarship and services designed to support an urban mission."</b></p> <p>RESULTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Received Carnegie designation as Engaged Institution, first earned in 2008 (1.D.3), and one of five to earn reclassification in 2015</li> <li>• ICES is the largest and most active unit of its kind within MnSCU. Community engagement is central to Metro State's urban mission and in the proposed reorganization the director will have "dotted line" reporting to the President in addition to current direct reporting to the Provost</li> </ul>

**Table 4-9. Results on Achieving Mission**

## **4I1| Improvements that have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years**

Improvements to be implemented:

- Increase and systematize review and analysis of data
- Use data analysis to develop and refine mission driven plans
- As an adult learner-focused institution designated by the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning, benchmarked against national comparators regarding effective practices for enrolling and serving adult students and communities of color
- Develop an improved budgeting process in which the allocation of funds is guided by the university's strategic plan
- Develop a strategic enrollment plan
- Initiate and sustain programs to improve employee morale and commitment to the university's mission and vision.

### **STRATEGIC PLANNING**

#### **4P2| Strategic Planning focuses on how the institution achieves its mission and vision**

*Engaging internal and external stakeholders in strategic planning (5.C.3)*

Planning at Metropolitan State University takes place at the system, university, division, college, and departmental levels. (5.C.3) At the system level, the key planning processes are the annual President's Work Plan, the Facilities Master Plan, and "Charting the Future," the system-wide strategic planning effort. The Metro Area Baccalaureate Plan is a separate strategic initiative of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) system; it aims to substantially increase the conferral of baccalaureate degrees within the Minneapolis-Saint Paul metropolitan area. All of these planning processes are tools for achieving MnSCU's three-point strategic framework. At the university level, the key planning processes are strategic planning and budget planning. Divisions (Academic, Student Affairs, Human Resources, Administrative Affairs, and University Advancement and Communication) develop and implement their own planning processes in alignment with the President's Work Plan.

#### **President's Work Plan**

The annual President's Work Plan is developed jointly by the MnSCU chancellor and Metropolitan State's president. (5.C.3) This plan outlines anticipated major activities and projected institutional outcomes relating to system goals and specific measures for the university. Progress toward goals and actual results are shown online as part of MnSCU's "Accountability Dashboard" and include comparisons with other system institutions. The President's Work Plan aligns with MnSCU's Strategic Framework. The three major tenets of this framework are the following:

1. Ensure access to an extraordinary education for all Minnesotans.
2. Be the partner of choice to meet Minnesota's workforce and community needs.
3. Deliver to students, employers, communities and taxpayers the highest value/most affordable option.

The core of the President's Work Plan evolves from year to year as goals are achieved and new ones are added.

In fiscal year 2013, the President's Work Plan was expanded for campus use to include the categories "Division Goals" and "Initiative Plans." (5.B.3) The fiscal year 2013 year-end report included the following categories: "Strategic Goals," "Leader Responsible," "Progress Indicator," "Actions to Be Taken in 2012-2013," "Desired Outcomes," and "Actual Outcomes." The President's Work Plans for fiscal year 2013 and fiscal year 2014, as well as the fiscal year 2013 year-end report, were developed by a small group of administrators, and the resulting divisional plans were shared with constituents in divisional forums. These plans were unevenly distributed, however, and many people across the institution did not become aware of their content.

## Facilities Master Planning

Facilities master planning is conducted every five years and is used to update MnSCU's 30-year facility plans. The 2009–2010 facilities master planning process produced a bold proposal to position the Metropolitan State's physical presence in a substantially new way. After neighborhood groups raised concerns regarding the impact of the planned university development, the university collaborated with the neighborhood to re-design the size and placement of the new Student Center and parking ramp on its Saint Paul campus. (5.C.3) The university administration also re-engaged the community and developed a Community-University Action Team to continue the work of joint discussion of university plans. As a result, the university's Saint Paul campus is currently undergoing a major physical transformation. The construction projects include the following:

- **A Science Education Center.** This \$39 million, 67,500-square-foot, three-story facility is scheduled to open in January 2016. As Metropolitan State's first science facility, the center will offer students access to the same high-quality lab facilities that are available to students of other four-year MnSCU institutions (5.C.2)
- **A parking ramp.** This \$20 million, four-and-a-half-story ramp with 764 stalls will greatly increase parking on the Saint Paul campus. Another 124 stalls will be available in adjacent surface parking lots. The ramp will provide a safe, all-weather facility for students, faculty, staff, and visitors; it will also offer large-event parking without impinging on the neighborhood
- **A Student Center.** This \$12 million, 27,000-square-foot facility will offer student activities, studying and meeting spaces, and dining. Soil contamination delayed construction on this facility, which will open in October 2015.

The Facilities Master Plan aligns with Metropolitan State's heritage and its role as an urban university serving non-traditional adult students. The next Facilities Master Plan will be developed in 2016.

## “Charting the Future”

In Fall 2013, MnSCU established a system-wide planning initiative, “Charting the Future for a Prosperous Minnesota.” Phase One of this process, which is designed to implement MnSCU's Strategic Framework, identified emerging challenges, such as changing demographics, the changing nature of work, resource pressures, and technology shifts. All MnSCU stakeholders were given opportunities to provide input and feedback. Phase Two of “Charting the Future” involved the creation of eight system-wide implementation teams charged with developing specific recommendations for achieving system-wide goals. Metropolitan State has 12 people from cross-functional areas, including administration and all unions, participating on these teams. (5.B.3) This participation is a marked improvement over the university's participation in Phase One of the process, during which it had no representatives on any of the “Charting the Future” teams.

## Metro Area Baccalaureate Plan

A key planning initiative of MnSCU, the Metro Area Baccalaureate Plan aims to substantially increase baccalaureate degree conferral in the Minneapolis-Saint Paul metropolitan area. Given that Metropolitan State is the area's only four-year MnSCU university, this process has a significant impact on the university's planning. Since 2013, key university administrators have participated with MnSCU in developing plans for presentation to the Board of Trustees. As a result, the system-wide plan has evolved to recognize the significant role that Metropolitan State must play in achieving its objectives.

*Aligning operations with the institution's mission, vision, values (5.C.2)***Real-Time Strategic Planning**

In Spring 2009, the President's Cabinet and the Planning and Budget Committee adopted "real-time strategic planning" to improve the university's ability to respond rapidly and strategically during unexpected changes in the external environment or in internal capacities. Real-time strategic planning was used to guide the President's Cabinet's strategic planning retreat in May 2011, which led to the university-wide initiative to seek a West Metro campus and to the 2011–2015 Academic Plan developed by the interim provost and the academic deans.

**West Metro Planning**

During the real-time strategic planning process, a need for the university to have a presence on the west side of the metropolitan area was identified. In addition to facing expiring leases on space in the Midway complex and in Minneapolis, a West Metro campus was needed "to fully meet Metropolitan State's mission to serve the entire metropolitan area." A planning task force was convened. The site selection process yielded no acceptable location, and the university revisited its options. After evaluating alternatives, decisions were made to expand and renew the university's lease at the Midway location, enter negotiations to continue co-location with Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC), and work more closely with the community colleges in the West Metro area, including Normandale Community College and North Hennepin Community College.

**Process Change**

In February 2012, Metropolitan State's president created a new position and appointed a vice president of university planning and advancement (UPA, formerly the University Advancement and Foundation Division). This action shifted leadership for strategic planning from the provost to the newly appointed vice president for UPA. Institutional Research (IR) and the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) coordinator were also moved from Academic Affairs to UPA. The Planning and Budget Committee, which had been in place since 2001, was disbanded, leaving its subcommittees (Continuous Improvement Coordinating Team, or CICT; Safety, Sustainability, and Facilities; Budget; Strategic Enrollment and Retention Management) intact but unclear as how to proceed with planning and accreditation. In August 2012, the new provost re-convened CICT as the Academic Quality and University Improvement Steering Committee and assumed primary responsibility for AQIP work. In September 2014, the interim president realigned UPA, hired an interim vice president, and moved IR back to Academic Affairs. During this period, strategic planning was guided by the president's work plan for each year.

*Aligning efforts across departments, divisions, and colleges for optimum effectiveness and efficiency (5.B.3)***Appreciative Inquiry**

While the vice president of UPA maintained responsibility for the creation of the President's Work Plan for fiscal years 2014–2017, the provost was asked by the MnSCU chancellor in January 2014 to lead a process to confirm and refine Metropolitan State's vision for the future. The provost introduced appreciative inquiry (AI) as the approach to lead a series of campus-wide sessions involving more than 300 faculty, staff, and administrators between February and August 2014. (5.C.3) The campus community engaged in facilitated conversations about the university's identity, its strengths, and its hopes and dreams for the future. It became apparent during these sessions that internal barriers to achieving the campus' goals needed to be discussed and acknowledged as well. In addition to leading a planning effort, the provost was charged with leading a transition team process, to include the creation of a "Strategic Audit," a "Future Challenges Report," and a "Relationship Map" to help guide the incoming interim president.



*Capitalizing on opportunities and institutional strengths and countering the impact of institutional weaknesses and potential threats (5.C.4, 5.C.5)*

The presidential transition team conducted a SWOT analysis with input from all divisions in June 2014. (5.C.4, 5.C.5) The result was a “90-Day Action Plan” to guide the new president. The resulting reports from the AI sessions augmented the SWOT analysis, and the action recommendations from the strategic positioning team were delivered to the interim president in December 2014. (5.C.1, 5.C.3, 5.C.4, 5.C.5) The AI process has proven to be a good fit for the university’s culture and has been adopted by other campus groups (the Anti-Racism Learning Team and a faculty summit on competency-based education) seeking to develop concrete plans aligned to university priorities.

### **Strategic Positioning Team**

In September 2014, the interim president established a cross-divisional group to create a clear, concise, and compelling statement that sums up the university’s strategic position. (5.C.3) The team was co-led by the provost and the president of the Inter-Faculty Organization (IFO). The university’s mission and vision were reviewed and used to guide the development of the positioning statement; discussions helped clarify the meaning of concepts such as “urban” and “student success.” (5.C.2) In December 2014, as requested by the interim president, the team delivered a report, which included a draft strategic positioning statement and a description of implementation actions needed to achieve the mission and vision (5.C.2)

Due to the team’s collective success, the interim president invited the members to form the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee, a standing committee, which will oversee and facilitate the development and monitoring of the university strategic plans. (5.C.3)

*Creating and implementing strategies and action plans that maximize current resources and meet future needs (5.C.1, 5.C.4)*

### **Interim President’s 90-Day Action Plan (see Table 4-10)**

The interim president “hit the ground listening,” as outlined in the 30-60-90-Day Action Plan for fiscal year 2015 prepared by the Presidential Transition Team. (5.C.1, 5.C.4) At the suggestion of the transition team, four of the five campus unions surveyed their members to gather input on recommended actions. After reviewing the results of those surveys, the IFO also endorsed the findings as representative of the views of their membership. The interim president met with membership of each union and followed up with a report to the campus community. The information-gathering process informed the development of the President’s Work Plan, which highlighted 13 short-term goals, most of which emerged from the listening and learning he had engaged in during his first two months on campus. The departure of the vice president of student affairs and enrollment management in December 2014 triggered a recommended review of organizational capabilities and structure. After proposing a restructure, which involved four divisions of the university (Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, Administrative Affairs, and the Office of the President) the interim president initiated an information and feedback process through meetings and campus forums, as well as anonymously through a special e-mail account. The Strategic Planning Advisory Committee served as a sounding board to help ensure that the proposed structure aligned with the strategic positioning statement before making recommendations to the interim president. (5.C.3) The restructure will be further developed and supported through development of a new Strategic Plan, which will begin with development of a new Academic Plan. The planning sessions, scheduled for summer and Fall 2015, will be guided by the data and results of current plans. Both the Academic Plan and the Strategic Plan will integrate current goals and priorities with newly identified opportunities, aligned with a clear statement of strategic positioning. The result will be a single guiding document, which will be fully distributed to the campus community. During this process, Metropolitan State will also begin transitioning to a more strategic and coherent budgeting model to meet strategic and operational goals for effectiveness. The Strategic Planning Advisory Committee will oversee the process for campus-wide participation and will make recommendations to the President’s Council regarding the strategic action plan. In accordance with its

charter, the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee will meet with the Budget Advisory Committee to assure that action plans and budgets are aligned. In preparation for the Academic Plan, each academic department will be reviewing data regarding the operations and positioning of the department and its programs, including the instructional cost study, enrollment and student success data to develop data informed recommendations. The academic affairs leadership team will develop the final Academic Plan, seeking input along the way. Various data from other MnSCU institutions will be used to guide planning.

The interim president and provost model an open and transparent culture by encouraging input and feedback on major decisions. They are learning from the past and moving forward with input from all areas of the university.

### **Academic Planning**

The current Academic Plan, covering the fiscal years from 2012 through 2015, was developed using the real-time strategic planning process. In addition, a Reorganization Task Force considered the creation of new academic units (colleges and schools) that would reflect academic priorities and be more nimble for executing the plan. Implementation of the academic plan was delayed until fiscal year 2013, when the university hired a permanent provost. Since then, the plan has been used to guide budgeting, hiring, and program development decisions. Deans are in consultation with department and program chairs and share responses and concerns with the provost at the weekly Deans' Council and with academic and student affairs leadership during monthly Deans and Directors Council meetings. Some priorities have shifted as a result of this consultative structure.

### **Budget Planning**

The budget planning process is evolving. During the last few years, while enrollment was growing, an incremental budgeting approach was used. Beginning in fiscal year 2015, and coinciding with the arrival of the interim president, a more strategic budgeting process emerged, driven primarily by the president, vice presidents, and chief human resource officer, and advised by the associate vice president for finance and the budget director. The group has used materials provided by the Educational Advisory Board to review various best practices in higher education budgeting, and is developing its own set of budgeting principles. Over the next two to three years, the institution will transition to a more strategic and responsibility-centered budgeting model. A Budget Advisory Committee has been established by the interim president. The committee will meet at least twice a year with the Strategic Planning Committee to assure that the budget is aligned with, and will support, strategic priorities. (5.C.2)

Implementation of a systematic budget process for fiscal year 2016 is underway. During this budget development process, information on personnel costs and a three-year spending history for non-personnel will be distributed to divisional vice presidents, who will then distribute the budget request forms to their budget directors. Personnel will be verified, and known salary savings or additional expenditures identified. The budget directors will prepare their non-personnel requests based on their review of the three-year history of expenditures and their anticipated needs for the fiscal year. Vice presidents will meet to review and discuss the need for adjustment in the budget and recommend a budget to the president, who will make the final decision. (5.B.3)

## **4R2| Results for communicating, planning, implementing, and reviewing the institution's operational plans**

Currently, the maturity level for planning is systematic with movement towards alignment as a strategic planning process is institutionalized.

### *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

The interim president's 90-Day Action Plan and 2014-15 Action Plan serve as the tracking tools (see Tables 4-10 and 4-11, respectively).

Scope	30 Days – Hit the ground listening		60 Days – Hit the ground clarifying		90 Days – Hit the ground running		Actual Outcomes & Progress toward goals
	Action	Key Outcomes	Action	Key Outcomes	Action	Key Outcomes	
Key Messaging Communication Plan	Prepare and review key messaging documents	Tailor key messaging with stakeholders, special edition of Calendar to commence regular communication	Prepare communications plan based upon Dr. Malhotra's direction	Institutional communication on clarifying messages with stakeholders through array of vehicles	Further refine communication plan based upon positioning of the university work	Institutional communication on positioning the university	Increased transparency & timelines of info. Sharing through intentional communication planning & collaboration. Reinforcing consistent key messaging
University Community	Meet with university community via transition itinerary	Listening & learning through exchange & conversation	Meet with university community via transition itinerary	Establish working relationships within the university	Meet with university community via transition itinerary	Ongoing relationship building on way forward	Established/reinforced consultative structure through regular meeting with new & existing committees & communications with key stakeholders
MnSCU Community	Meet key MnSCU stakeholders	Build strategic relationships for advancing the university and its sphere of influence	Meetings with Key MnSCU stakeholders	Framing accord, alliance, partnerships & support toward university planning	Ongoing meetings & interactions of planning with key MnSCU stakeholders	Securing accord, alliance, partnerships to support University Strategic plan	Actively represent the University at MnSCU leadership team meetings & informal networking
Extended Community	Meet key external stakeholders via the transition itinerary	Establish relationships	Meet key external stakeholders via the transition itinerary	Establish relationships	Meet key external stakeholders via the transition itinerary	Build relationships for advancing the university's positioning	Ongoing introductions & relationship building with neighborhood regional & state stakeholders (elected officials, community forums, govt. entities, & donor-organization & individuals).
Positioning the University: Mission, Vision, Values and Culture	Obtain input from university community, review institutional documents	Develop understanding of the purpose, values & culture that promote institutional work and success	Continuous conversations	Gain clarity on key elements of purpose, mission, values & culture of the university that invite belonging & success	Include in planning review & engagement on purpose, mission, values, & culture	Re-creating purpose, mission, values & culture of the university that invites belonging, nurtures change & builds success	Consistent use of key messages that reinforce the public, urban, comprehensive mission of Metropolitan State University in both internal & external communications.

Positioning the University: a new strategic plan	Gain in put on key action items for planning. Continuation of SWOT analysis	Formulate key planning items resulting in a plan to position the university for long-term success	Campus consultation on a planning structure & process	Adopt the structure & process	Begin process development of plan to position the university for long-term success	Ongoing process established	Appointed Strategic Positioning Task Force that drafted a Strategic Positioning Statement for the university as well as prioritized action steps based on AI sessions with faculty & staff.
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**Table 4-10.** Interim President’s 90 Day Action Plan

*Summary of results of measures*

The interim president’s 90-Day Action Plan includes actual outcomes (see Table 4-10). It and the interim president’s 2014-15 Action Plan outline the agreed upon goals between the interim president and the chancellor (see Table 4-11). The President’s Work Plan for fiscal year 2015 outlines the agreed upon goals between the MnSCU chancellor and the interim president (see Table 4-12). These goals are tracked, and progress is reported to the chancellor. While divisions did not prepare explicit written plans for fiscal year 2014-2015, the restructured weekly meeting schedule of (vice-presidents, the expanded President’s Council, and the president with vice presidents) has helped align divisional action plans with the interim president’s plans.

<b>OVERVIEW OF PRESIDENT’S ACTION PLAN:</b>
This action plan serves to reaffirm the identity of Metropolitan State University as Minnesota’s public urban university. This identity and the resultant institutional positioning will be anchored in its history of serving post traditional students with flexible and innovative academic programs, and its evolving urban mission, which broadens its original mission, ensuring its centrality for the accomplishment of the Charting the Future vision and to the goals embedded in Metro Baccalaureate Completion Strategy.
The next two years will focus on identifying strategies, which will enable us to scale up Metropolitan State’s current work and broaden its portfolio of programmatic offerings and student success pathways. The goal is to integrate student’s educational experience across all institutions he/she attends to fulfill their academic and career aspirations.
<b>SCOPE:</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete Planning and Strategic Positioning With External and Internal Stakeholders</li> <li>2. Deepen &amp; Enhance Partnerships With Metro Colleges and Four-Year MnSCU Institutions</li> <li>3. Monitor Closely Progress of Construction &amp; Mitigation Of Environmental Concerns</li> <li>4. Improve External &amp; Internal Communication To Be More Strategic and Effective</li> <li>5. Enterprise Risk Management.</li> </ol>
<b>KEY OUTCOMES AND PROGRESS TO DATE:</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Convened Strategic Positioning Team in Fall and then commissioned group to serve as Strategic Planning Advisory Committee beginning in Spring 2015</li> <li>2. Implemented recommendation for an “All Hands on Deck” continuous improvement process to focus on organizational solutions to internal process issues</li> <li>3. Supported the work of Academic and Student Affairs in deepening and extending relationships with Metro Alliance colleges through advocacy in the Metro Alliance President’s Meeting and at the System wide Leadership Council.</li> <li>4. Maintained oversight of three major construction projects</li> <li>5. Conducted organizational review and developed and shared a proposed reorganization plan with campus constituents.</li> <li>6. Modeled transparency and inclusiveness on major university initiatives such as the proposed university reorganization plan, the mid-year review of the FY15 budget and the FY16 budget planning, soliciting feedback from all faculty, staff</li> <li>7. Re-energized university Foundation Board regarding work as advocates for the university and as fundraisers</li> <li>8. Has actively raised profile of the university in the community, with legislators and with the system office through increased communication and engagement.</li> </ol>

**Table 4-11.** Interim President’s 2014-2015 Action Plan

*Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

The interim president’s first year action plan contained broad goal statements and was not supported by explicit written divisional plans. Nonetheless, frequent, focused communication by the executive

leadership team resulted in achievement of important actions that led to desired results. (See Table 4-12) For example, a new CHRO was hired; the payroll audit was successfully concluded; partnerships with Metro Alliance colleges were increased, and a strategic planning mechanism was institutionalized. In addition, the three major building projects described in the plan will be completed during the 2015 calendar year. As the interim president begins his second year and leadership is more settled, the university will identify internal targets and external benchmarks for comparison.

*Interpretation of results and insights gained*

Metropolitan State is in a time of transition and change. After a period of shifting leadership, things are stabilizing around a clear focus on the public, urban, student-centered, engaged, and innovative character of the institution. As one faculty group, which organized a Spring 2015 faculty summit on competency-based education put it, the university is “updating Metro’s heritage.” The challenge will be to stabilize and improve processes as the university prepares for the next surge of opportunity, while developing strategic, disciplined uses of limited resources.

<b>Division plans are based on the Interim President's FY14–15 Work Plan, which is aligned with MnSCU's overall strategic framework. Outcomes include recommendations made in the Report on Implementation Actions presented to the Interim President in December 2014 by the Strategic Positioning Team.</b>		
<b>INTERIM PRESIDENT'S 2015-16 WORK PLAN</b>	<b>DIVISION</b>	<b>KEY OUTCOMES</b>
Reaffirm identity of Metropolitan State as Minnesota's public, urban university	Advancement & Communication	Execution of strategic marketing plan with a refreshed and fresh urban look, development of an undergraduate view book and collateral materials for academic programs Development and launch (PHASE 1) of a complete redesign of the university's web site which incorporates an urban university image
Broaden the portfolio of programs & student success pathways	Academic Affairs	In accordance with 2011-2015 Academic Plan added 11 majors, 7 minors and 7 graduate certificates or programs
	Academic Affairs & Student Affairs/ Enrollment Management	Launched a Retention Council which has identified three key processes which interfere with student success and developed plans for implementing process improvements
Deepen and enhance partnerships with Metro Alliance colleges and MnSCU universities	Academic Affairs	Worked with Metro Alliance colleges to identify programs for degree completion and substantially increased programs offered at four community colleges Initiated or updated and renewed nearly 150 articulation agreements including a statewide agreement for the B.A. in Individualized Studies Collaborated with two MnSCU universities in developing or bringing new majors to the Twin Cities Metro area (Exercise Science and Computer Applications Development) Implemented dual admission program in Nursing with seven community colleges and dual admissions in Dental Hygiene with one.
Explore joint marketing & recruiting, student support systems w/Metro Alliance colleges	Student Affairs	Hired a partnership coordinator and developed a Memorandum of Agreement with community college partners on data sharing and student services
Collaborate on Metro Baccalaureate planning	Academic Affairs	Works with Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs and with Metro Alliance to develop comprehensive plan for increasing baccalaureate degree conferral in Twin Cities
Complete three construction projects	Administrative Affairs	Oversee the completion of three major building projects: a Student Center, Parking Ramp and Science Education Center
Develop processes for strategic and effective internal and external communication	Advancement & Communication	Increased transparency and timeliness of information sharing through intentional communications planning and collaboration.
Improve organizational climate and morale	Human Resources	Developed and is implementing a "Framework to Effect Change" which emphasizes professional development of all employees from leadership down to direct service staff
	Academic Affairs	Sponsored membership in National Coalition Building Institute, a train-the-trainer model for Prejudice Reduction workshops and campus climate activities
	Advancement & Communication	Implement a planned, comprehensive, internal strategic communication plan regarding major events and university operations
Successfully conclude the payroll audit	Human Resources	Examine and implement new procedures relating to workload entry and verification Hired a permanent CHRO Rebuild HR capacity by recruiting, hiring and training new HR personnel
Establish the mechanisms for institutional strategic planning	Academic Affairs	Provides leadership for strategic and academic planning through Appreciative Inquiry process, Transition team planning, Strategic Positioning Team and Strategic Planning Committee

Organizational review & reorganization	All divisions	Led divisional conversations on reorganization proposal and provide feedback to the President. implemented the “All Hands on Deck” project to identify areas of needed process improvement and to convene project teams to take on identified improvement projects. One of the CI pilot projects is “Organizational Process Understanding”. The preliminary goal will be to establish a baseline understanding of the many processes and related interdependencies within the university. capabilities will be mapped, processes can be documented and examined for effectiveness.
	Advancement & Communication	Led internal communications to promote transparency and openness for input into proposal restructuring
Develop a transparent and open budget process which aligns with strategic priorities	Administrative Affairs	Provide budget reports and support for budgeting process
	All divisions through VP Council	Study and discuss best practices in higher education budgeting and collaboratively develop a strategic budgeting model and process
Re-energize the Foundation Board for advocacy on behalf of the university and fundraising	Advancement & Communication	Supported Foundation Board in organizing subcommittees focused on fundraising and advocacy

**Table 4-12.** Division’s Key Outcomes for 2014-15

**4R2| Improvements that have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years**

The following improvements have or will be implemented at Metropolitan State within the next three years:

- Development of campus-wide strategic planning and budget advisory committees to guide university planning
- Implementation of a budget model that aligns with institutional strategic priorities
- Continuation of systematical gathering of relevant input and data to guide overall planning and to ensure continued focus and alignment with our mission and vision.

**LEADERSHIP**

**4P3| Leadership focuses on governance and leadership of the institution**

*Establishing appropriate board-institutional relationships to support leadership and governance (2.C.4)*

The state statute authorizing the establishment of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) Board of Trustees enumerates the board’s powers in setting admission requirements, tuition, and fees; approving programs of study and requirements for completion of academic awards; entering into contracts; and adopting policies to govern the system’s institutions. The statute further requires that “to the extent practicable in protecting statewide interests, the board shall provide autonomy to the campuses while holding them accountable for their decisions.” (2.C.4) MnSCU Board Policy 1A.1 (Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Organization and Administration) outlines the legal authorization for the board and MnSCU, as well as the board’s vision and mission for the system. It also defines the board’s policy-making authority. The board meets seven times a year and conducts an annual retreat. An examination of the board’s agendas and meeting materials shows that it focuses its work on strategic and financial issues of the system as a whole. For example, in the past four years, the agendas for the annual board retreat have focused on developing a strategic framework for the system (2011), identifying questions and challenges facing MnSCU (2012), reviewing the “Charting the Future” system-wide strategic planning document (2013), and implementing the recommendations of the “Charting the Future” initiative (2014).

Campus leaders participate in MnSCU system-level meetings and activities to assure that campus perspectives inform the work of the MnSCU staff and the board. The president/interim president attends a monthly Leadership Council meeting with the MnSCU chancellor, vice chancellors, and other MnSCU university and college presidents. The provost participates in Fall and Spring leadership retreats involving Academic Affairs and Student Affairs staff and a winter conference for chief academic officers, as well as the monthly meetings of the Metro Alliance Chief Academic Officers and University Provosts. All vice presidents attend similar system meetings with their peers.

*Establishing oversight responsibilities and policies of the governing board (2.C.3, 5.B.1, 5.B.2)*

MnSCU Board Policy 4.2 (Appointment of Presidents) establishes the duties and responsibilities of the university/college presidents, which include “adhering to Board policies and system procedures” and “implementing the Board’s strategic plan.” Presidents are responsible for “developing and implementing the college or university mission, consistent with the Board’s mission and goals. Several processes implement this policy directive. Each year the president of Metropolitan State University must develop an annual work plan that outlines anticipated major activities and projected institutional outcomes in relationship to MnSCU’s strategic framework and in alignment with system goals. These activities include input from the entire university community. (5.B.1)The plan is shared with the chancellor, and, once approved, is used to evaluate the president’s performance at the end of the year.

The MnSCU Board of Trustees uses the internal audit process to maintain oversight. (2.C.3) The board has established an Office of Internal Auditing, whose executive director reports directly to the board through the chair of the board’s Audit Committee. One of the primary roles of the internal audit function is to provide “assurance services.” These assurance audits check that MnSCU’s colleges and universities are in compliance with the policies and regulations of the board and that the institutions are effective in meeting their goals and objectives. The internal audit staff also provides professional advice to assist colleges or universities to understand and properly implement board policies and procedures, as well as to share best practices in management and organizational development. (5.B.2)The Office of Internal Auditing’s annual work plan, presented to and approved by the board, focuses on areas of high need for consultation and compliance checking across institutions within the MnSCU system.

The Office of General Counsel (OGC) provides legal guidance to MnSCU’s colleges and universities. The OGC also offers training on legal matters to MnSCU employees, such as the 2014 Legal Institute seminar on “Legal Issues for Administrators” and monthly webinars on topics. Past topics have included electronic signatures (policy updates and best practices), religion on campus, study abroad, contracts, and experiential learning. Each webinar is recorded, and the presentation and related materials are archived on the MnSCU web site. In addition, labor relations counsel provides assistance in implementation of collective bargaining agreements.

Board Policy 1C.1 (Board of Trustees Code of Conduct) describes how trustees are subject to the state’s stringent rules designed to minimize undue influence. Under the policy, trustees must disclose all potential conflicts of interest and abstain, if possible, from voting on the related issue. The policy specifically prohibits use of the trustee’s position to secure personal benefit, the disclosure of confidential information, and the use of influence to secure employment or the awarding of contracts or consulting work.

The university has several processes codified in bargaining agreements and in policies and procedures that require it to engage its internal constituencies. Employees of the university are represented by two MnSCU specific unions (IFO, MSUAASF) and three statewide unions (MMA, MAPE and AFSCME). Confidential employees are part of the Commissioner’s Plan. Each of these collective bargaining agreements and employee plans contain provisions for meeting and conferring before implementing policies or procedures. In addition, Metropolitan State’s Procedure 100 (University Policies and Procedures) requires that the vice president responsible for policies in their scope of responsibility “will consult with faculty, staff, or student end-users as needed to ensure that policies and procedures are as user-friendly, practical and effective as possible.” These consultations occur through monthly or quarterly meet-and-confer meetings with the president and vice presidents. The policy also requires consultation



with the MnSCU office to “ensure compliance with Board policy, law, regulations, and collective bargaining agreements.” MnSCU Board Policy 2.3 (Student Involvement in Decision-Making) provides that students must have “the opportunity for representation on system, college and university committees involving or affecting student interests and shall have the opportunity to review or be consulted on issues that have significant impact on students.” Each Spring the Student Senate sends a letter to the chancellor regarding the consultation processes.

*Maintaining Board oversight, while delegating management responsibilities to administrators, and academic matters to faculty (2.C.4)*

MnSCU Board Procedure 1A.2.2 (Delegation of Authority) outlines the delegation of authority from the board to the chancellor and to the chancellor’s designees, including campus presidents. The chancellor is delegated authority by the board to “sign all documents on behalf of [MnSCU], its colleges or universities, the system office and/or its Board of Trustees” without limitation. In turn, the chancellor “may delegate to the presidents of institutions authority that relates to their institutions. The presidents may delegate to their respective subordinates specific delegation of authority according to their scope of responsibility.” Board Policy 1A.3 (System Administration, Chancellor) outlines the chancellor’s duties and responsibilities as the chief executive officer of MnSCU and provides for delegation of authority and responsibility. Board Policy 4.2 (Appointment of Presidents) specifies the duties and responsibilities of college or university presidents. The MnSCU Board Policy Governance Framework, updated in October 2012, lists the specific financial actions retained by the board, the actions delegated to the chancellor, and the actions delegated to the presidents.

Under the terms of the IFO Master Agreement between the MnSCU Board of Trustees and IFO (latest contract dated 2013–2015) the faculty association has the right to statewide meet-and-confer sessions with the chancellor to make policy recommendations on budget planning and allocations, programs and program development, long-range planning, and the development of campus facilities. Similarly, the local IFO faculty association has the right to monthly meet-and-confer meetings with the president and his/her designees to make policy recommendations on curriculum, evaluation of students, graduation requirements, admissions policies, budget planning and allocations, the reallocation of vacant positions from one department or program to another, programs and program development, long-range planning, development of campus facilities, and procedures for the selection of personnel. The president and his leadership team meet monthly during the academic year with the executive council of the local IFO chapter. The president, provost, and chief human resource officer meet with the president and vice president of the faculty association a week in advance of the scheduled meet-and-confer meeting to set the agenda and discuss matters of mutual concern. When possible, the provost meets and works collaboratively with governance committees to seek mutually satisfactory solutions to issues of concern in advance of presenting policies or proposals at the formal meet-and-confer. University policies on new program approval (University Policy 2070), baccalaureate degree requirements, modification of student degree programs and graduation requirements (University Policy 2020), transfer credit policy (University Policy 2120), course prerequisites (University Policy 2130), and assessment of student learning (University Policy 2160) clearly establish the delegation of academic matters to the faculty. (2.C.4) For example, Policy 2070 on new program approvals lays out the steps in the well-established approval process as follows:



**Table 4-13.** New Program Approvals

After all campus-level approvals are complete, the program is submitted to the MnSCU director of academic programs for approval and entry into the program inventory.

### *Ensuring open communication between and among all colleges, divisions, and departments*

Metropolitan State uses several formal methods of communication across campus:

- The President's Council meets weekly, and the president also meets weekly with the vice presidents
- The provost chairs a weekly vice presidents–only meeting
- The President's Cabinet, which includes all administrators at the vice president, associate vice president, executive director, and dean level, meets monthly
- Academic deans meet weekly with the provost. The Academic Affairs leadership team, including all direct reports to the provost, meets once a month
- Deans and directors from Academic Affairs and Student Affairs meet monthly (co-chaired by the provost and the vice president of Student Affairs)
- The Advising Council monthly and includes an academic dean, advisors from all of the colleges, the dean of students, the director of admissions, and the admission counselors
- Meet-and-confer sessions with IFO and MSUAASF occur monthly. Meet-and-confer sessions with the bargaining units of MMA, MAPE, and AFSCME are held quarterly
- Deans and department chairs meet twice a semester and once during the summer.

Metropolitan State is currently examining ways to make meetings more productive and engaging so that all constituents feel they have input and the opportunity to be involved with university issues.

### *Collaboration across all units to ensure the maintenance of high academic standards (5.B.3)*

Metropolitan State has several processes in place to assist in maintenance of high academic standards. For example, the Advising Council, which includes both admissions counselors and academic advisors, discusses student performance issues, exchanges information on best practices, and develops recommendations for consideration by the provost. The university has established a Retention Council, which is chaired by the interim vice president of student academic success and the associate vice president of enrollment management. The group focuses on identifying process improvements that will support students in achieving their education goals while allowing the university to maintain academic standards. Faculty governance committees of the IFO, including the General Education/Liberal Studies Committee, the Academic Affairs Committee, the Graduate Council, and the Student Affairs committee, consider issues of appropriate student support to meet high academic standards. Tutors in the Center for Academic Excellence are well trained in methods for coaching students to improve academic performance. The Academic Standing Committee enforces the Academic Standing Policy (University Policy 2050) and Procedure (University Procedure 205) and includes representatives from each college, a representative of the provost, and either the dean of students or a representative. The university also has a comprehensive faculty development program, and through the development process emphasizes the importance of maintaining appropriate academic standards. (5.B.3)

### *Providing effective leadership to all institutional stakeholders (2.C.1, 2.C.2)*

Membership of the 15-person MnSCU Board of Trustees is specified by Minnesota law and is representative of institutional stakeholders. Members, appointed by the governor, must include a student from each type of MnSCU institution: community college, technical college, and university. The board must also include at least one resident from each of the state's congressional districts and a representative of labor. The governor is required to consider the balance of the board in terms of its labor and business, racial, gender, geographic, and ethnic composition.

A clear example of the board's leadership on behalf of all institutional stakeholders can be found in the deliberations on the system-wide strategic planning process known as "Charting the Future." Three strategic workgroups composed of college and university presidents, faculty, staff, students, and trustees

developed a set of recommendations around the themes of “Education of the Future,” “Workforce of the Future,” and “System of the Future.” Statewide listening sessions included bargaining units, student associations, campus communities, MnSCU’s Leadership Council, and the board. The board challenged itself to consider the recommendations of the report by asking the following questions:

- Is it better for students and the education they receive?
- Does it advance our partnerships with businesses and communities?
- Does it improve our stewardship of resources?
- Is it fair to employees?

By asking these questions, the board demonstrated its consideration of all stakeholders. (2.C.1, 2.C.2) Furthermore the board’s Strategic Framework, adopted in January 2012, has three points that recognize the importance of the multiplicity of institutional stakeholders:

- Ensure access to an extraordinary education for all Minnesotans
- Be the partner of choice to meet Minnesota’s workforce and community needs
- Deliver to students, employers, communities and taxpayers the highest value/most affordable option.

#### *Developing leaders at all levels within the institution*

Metropolitan State recently adopted a new structure for leadership meetings that provides opportunities for growth and development of all supervisors. Monthly meetings of all 67 supervisors, chaired by the chief human resource officer, focus on engaging the supervisors in a variety of skill-building activities, including in such areas as continuous improvement, change management, data analysis, running effective meetings, and coaching employee behavior.

All supervisory employees are required to attend and participate in e-learning and face-to-face courses in the “art and science of supervision.” The “science” elements of these courses provide new and experienced supervisors with basic information on policies, procedures, and labor contracts, while the “art” elements help individuals identify their leadership style and focus on how to build workplace relationships, manage employee performance, and lead change and innovation. Optional courses include sessions on effective coaching and performance reviews. A session for new administrators offers orientation and coaching for those in administrative roles. Other opportunities include the Luoma Leadership Academy is a cohort-based, year-long development program for aspiring leaders and an Executive Leader Development program.

Metropolitan State’s commitment to equity, inclusion, and building an anti-racist society is realized through processes to develop the skills and knowledge for navigating a multi-cultural institution and community. The university is a member of National Coalition-Building Institute (NCBI), “an international, non-profit leadership development network dedicated to the elimination of racism and other forms of oppression.” The core of the NCBI model is a train-the-trainer process, which develops a team of campus leaders who can provide prejudice-reduction workshops. To determine the campus’ readiness for membership, a team from the national organization provided a daylong training for 20 members of the President’s Cabinet. A subsequent train-the-trainer session included approximately 35 faculty and staff. A core team of 10 participants is providing further trainings for faculty, staff, and students, and assists with addressing difficult situations as they arise. Another train-the-trainer session is scheduled for Fall 2015, and will increase the size of the leadership group.

The Faculty Development Center was created in 2013 as an institution-wide function, supported and reporting to the provost’s office. It provides a variety of development programs for faculty. In addition to two daylong conferences each year, the center has also developed department chair training (instituted in Spring 2014) to prepare chairs for their duties.

*Ensuring the institution's ability to act in accordance with its mission and vision (2.C.3)*

The MnSCU Board of Trustees uses the internal audit process to maintain oversight. **(2.C.3)** One task undertaken by the interim president has been an organizational review and proposed reorganization. In an effort to find more effective means of serving students and promoting their educational success, a campus discussion was sparked by the reorganization proposal. Open forums with the president, provost, and chief human resource officer, as well as solicitation of input through a dedicated e-mail, has produced a number of ideas for reorganizing the university in ways that will serve its mission. The interim president expects to make his final decision about institutional reorganization by June 1, 2015, and the conversations will be ongoing.

The interim president and his executive leadership team are studying alternative budget models, seeking one that will best position Metropolitan State to serve the core elements of its mission. As previously noted, the Budget and Strategic Planning Advisory Committees now meet together each year. The president has created strategic funds for both the president and provost so they can take advantage of strategic opportunities that will serve the university's mission and advance its vision.

Efforts are underway to provide development and support to the extended management team and cabinet-level leadership. These actions are intended to promote continuity in leadership so that there is both capacity and knowledge to act in accordance with the university's institutional mission and vision.

The creation of a Strategic Positioning Team, which has now become the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee, is a commitment to the ongoing processes for strategic planning aligned with the mission and vision.

During the appreciative inquiry and presidential transition processes, feedback from campus stakeholders indicated that many university processes needed attention in order to equip the university to achieve its mission. The Strategic Positioning Team endorsed the "All Hands on Deck" proposal for promoting continuous improvement initiatives, and the president authorized it in January 2015. One project from this initiative seeks to document all university processes and the means of improving them using a capabilities framework.

**4R3| Results for ensuring long-term effective leadership of the institution**

Leadership is beginning to stabilize and move toward becoming systematic as the university builds a cohesive senior leadership team and prepares for a permanent president.

*Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

In February 2015, Metropolitan State conducted a Continuous Improvement Readiness Survey to assess its current culture of quality and the extent to which employees at all levels are 1) committed to quality improvement, 2) believe they are capable and empowered to participate in improvement efforts, 3) are provided with the tools and resources needed to implement improvements, and 4) are recognized for their efforts. The results provide a baseline and first set of data points upon which to build.

*Summary results of measures*

The Continuous Improvement Readiness Survey's Continuous Improvement (CI) Index provided the following results for leadership:

- 63% of respondents agree that senior leaders believe improving process and program quality and efficiency is very important
- 46% of respondents agree that senior leaders demonstrate the important of improving process and program quality and efficiency
- 42% of respondents agree that senior leaders value critical feedback from staff.

### *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

The Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) survey was administered for the first time in February 2015. Metropolitan State has conducted other surveys in the past; however, those were limited in scope and did not provide an overall picture of the campus climate. The PACE survey includes a racial diversity subscale. Responses to this additional survey will help the university enhance efforts to create a more inclusive and engaging work environment for its diverse workforce. The survey results are expected summer 2015 and will provide national comparisons. The survey's 13 questions relating to the effectiveness of institutional leadership will provide information for developing leaders.

Table 4-14 shows attendance numbers for training sessions on 1.B.1 (Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination in Employment and Education). Metropolitan State made this training a requirement in 2012. The goal is to have all employees attend every two years. In fiscal years 2012 and 2013, 579 employees, or about 70 percent of all employees, attended the training. While many employees may complain about being required to attend training, requiring and tracking attendance substantially increases participation.

1B.1 Training		
Year	Session	Attendees
FY10	2	39
FY11	1	21
FY12	3	145
FY13	13	434
FY14	5	122

**Table 4-14.** Training on Board Policy 1B.1 (EEO & Nondiscrimination)

### *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

The CI Readiness Survey, administered as a pretest to the “All Hands On Deck” action project, shows that with very few exceptions, senior leaders and supervisors/managers feel much more positively about Metropolitan State’s capacity for improvement than faculty and staff. It may be that faculty and staff have not yet experienced the positive changes seen by senior leadership. Accountability and data-driven decision-making may be particular areas for improvement. Majorities of all groups at Metropolitan State, including senior leaders, do not agree that senior leaders hold employees accountable for making improvements, and less than 40% of respondents agreed that customer satisfaction information and data are used to improve.

### **4I3| Improvements that have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years**

The following improvements have or will be implemented at Metropolitan State within the next three years:

- A systematic process of identifying and nominating high potential individuals for inclusion in appropriate leadership development programs
- Implementation of the Framework to Effect Change for improving morale
- Attendance of the President’s Cabinet in a customized, two-day “Leading Change” workshop
- Implementation of a new structure for leadership meetings designed to keep institutional leaders focused on strategic goals; break down information silos; engage all levels of institutional leadership in strategy development, implementation and evaluation of outcomes; and develop a high performance team approach to problem solving.
- The initiation (in early Fall 2015) of a presidential search
- The hiring (in fiscal year 2016) of a permanent vice president for university advancement and communication
- A requirement that new deans participate in a MnSCU online orientation
- The ongoing administration of PACE survey (every three years).

## INTEGRITY

### **4P4 Integrity focuses on how the institution ensures legal and ethical behavior and fulfills its societal responsibilities**

*Developing and communicating standards*

#### **Affirmative Action Plan**

Metropolitan State University's Affirmative Action Plan for 2014–2016 was approved by the Minnesota Department of Management and Budget. The university's affirmative action officer oversees development and communication of the plan. Faculty and staff are annually notified of the plan's location on the university's intranet and reminded of their responsibility to read, support, and implement the plan.

As a public institution, Metropolitan State must follow policies for operations and employees developed both by the State of Minnesota and by Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU). All university policies and procedures are published on the university web site, which also contains links to MnSCU and Minnesota Management and Budget policies. MnSCU notifies campuses when changes are made to either state or MnSCU policies so that the colleges and universities can update their own policy manuals. In addition, all plans, policies, and procedures relating to legal and ethical behavior are communicated to faculty and staff during orientation. Campus-wide notices are released by the president's office when a change is made to either a policy or procedure.

*Training employees for legal and ethical behavior*

There are four mandatory training sessions for all university employees (Employee Code of Conduct, Public Jobs: Private Data, Employee-Right-To-Know, and Sexual Harassment). These sessions are designed to train MnSCU employees on their responsibilities with regard to ethics, data privacy, and security and to inform them of related laws, board policies, and system procedures. Training is completed within the first 30 days of employment. In addition, any individual serving on a university search committee must attend search committee training covering the legal and ethical issues related to confidentiality of information and non-discrimination in employment before receiving access to application materials.

*Modeling ethical and legal behavior from the highest levels of the organization*

Members of the President's Cabinet are expected to maintain the highest standards of ethical and legal behavior. In particular, this leadership group is expected to model open, respectful communication with the campus as it provides opportunities for input on issues that may be controversial, such as the budget or reorganization. Cabinet members listen and respond after considering all the input received. They work within the governance processes established by the employee unions to discuss issues of mutual interest and to seek solutions. All cabinet members are held to the same standards of behavior expected of other employees of the institution, and care is taken to make sure that all contract provisions are followed.

#### **Diversity Plan**

In Fall 2012, Metropolitan State's former president issued a Diversity Plan designed to meet MnSCU's system-wide diversity objectives. A Diversity Council was established with two subcommittees (Diversity Learning and Anti-Racism Education). The plan's four overarching goals address an array of diversity dimensions; the fourth goal explicitly focuses on issues of racism and antiracism strategies, consistent with the university's vision statement. The Diversity Council continues to work with existing groups to support and systematize implementation of the plan.

*Ensuring the ethical practice of all employees (2.A)*

In addition to the four required trainings, new employees are also informed about Metropolitan State policies at orientation and during their first few months on the job by their supervisors. In addition, the

collective bargaining agreements contain provisions relating to ethical standards. For example, the Inter Faculty Organization (IFO) contract (Article 27, Sec. C) specifies that faculty may not accept employment that conflicts with their regular duties; it also prohibits conflicts of interest and imposes duties of confidentiality. The Minnesota State University Association of Administrative and Service Faculty (MSUAASF) contract has similar provisions. These contractual provisions provide a basis for progressive discipline if violated. (2.A)

*Operating financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions with integrity, including following fair and ethical policies and adhering to processes for the governing board, administration, faculty, and staff (2.A)*

Several processes assure institutional integrity in financial, academic, and operational activities at Metropolitan State. For example, University Procedure 414 (Travel Procedures – General) requires advance authorization of travel at university expense by an employee’s supervisor. Actual receipts are required for expense reimbursements other than meals, which are reimbursed at an established per diem rate. All expense reimbursements are also checked and approved by the employee’s supervisor. (2.A)

Before incurring expenses, funds must be encumbered, and if outside services or goods are being purchased, a contract must be executed. A request exceeding the supervisor’s delegated spending limit must be approved by the divisional vice president. When approving final payment, the person with budgetary authority verifies that the goods or services have been received. If an obligation is incurred without encumbering funds or completing a contract, the responsible person must file a Form 16A.15 to explain why the rule was violated and to indicate what corrective action will be taken to prevent future violations. Each 16A.15 form must be signed by the employee’s vice president and the chief financial officer (CFO). (2.A)

Human Resources staff are required to complete payroll reconciliations, and Financial Management staff are required to file quarterly reports with MnSCU. In these reports, they must indicate if they have reconciled the General Fund and completed bank reconciliations in a timely manner, and if the institution has had an overdraft of a local bank account. In addition, at the end of each fiscal year the institution’s Composite Financial Index (CFI) must be calculated and submitted to the MnSCU for review. In fiscal year 2014, the university had a significant deterioration of its CFI due to unexpected environmental remediation for its construction sites. The president, CFO, and provost were required to develop a financial recovery plan and present it to the MnSCU Board of Trustees for approval. Monitoring reports will be submitted semi-annually until the CFI improves to an acceptable level. As previously noted, internal audit has a yearly audit work plan that detects weaknesses in campus internal controls and assures management attention to issues. (2.A)

When adding someone to the payroll, generating pay, or making changes to faculty workload, documentation must be signed by the vice president of the division and submitted to the Human Resources Department. MnSCU is rolling out a new faculty workload management system, which will compare the course schedule to faculty workload entries in the payroll system to assure that faculty pay is supported by appropriate work assignments. (2.A)

As discussed under “Category One,” the university takes academic integrity seriously. The student academic integrity policy adopts an “education first” approach to insure they know the implications. The structure of the policy encourages faculty to report violations to the provost. (2.A)

*Making information about programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships readily and clearly available to all constituents (2.B)*

Metropolitan State participates in the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) College Portrait, which provides information on many aspects of the university, including the following: admission requirements, student characteristics, costs of attendance, financial aid information, a personalized net price calculator, popular majors, average class size, and campus safety. (2.B) University Procedure 257 (Updating Academic Content in Catalogs) provides for the annual updating of academic information in the catalog.

Changes in program or university requirements must be published by July in order to be effective in any Fall semester. All academic content must be reviewed annually to assure it remains accurate, even if no program changes are being made. All catalog material is available on the university's web site. Gateway Student Services is the "one-stop" office for student information.

## Safety

The Safety and Security Office provides a safe-secure environment for all members of the university community. Policies and procedure are in place to deal with emergency situations, if they should arise. All emergency related information is available on the university web site and includes:

- Emergency procedure book, which outlines a variety of non-emergency and emergency procedures and policies
- Class Cancellation Emergency Closing outlines the closure process for students and employees
- University Procedures on Evacuations outlines evacuation procedures in case of fire
- Lock Down and Active Shooter outlines steps to follow if a lock down is necessary
- Bomb Threats outlines steps to follow in the event of a bomb threat
- Assisting Students in Crisis outlines techniques and suggestions on how to cope with distressed students.

Emergency Public Address Notifications outlines steps for notifying the university before, during, or after an incident. Communication methods used to issue notification through the university in the case of emergency or urgent situation are:

- Announcements on the portal and university web site
- Announcements via the Safety Public Address (PA) system
- Announcements via broadcast media (radio and television)
- E-mail messages to students, faculty, and staff
- Notice on the university emergency RU Ready web site
- Mass notification announcement on the STAR Alert system via text message.

The STAR Alert and Safety PA systems are tested periodically to ensure their viability. Security services are contracted from professional security agencies. Security officers respond to immediate needs and can be consulted on an as-needed basis. They are authorized to take appropriate action to assure the safety and security of all students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

## 4R4 Results for ensuring institutional integrity

The maturity level is systematic for academic integrity. The maturity level is beginning to be systematic for operating financial, personnel, and auxiliary function integrity.

### *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

The measurement tools and outcomes tracked by Metropolitan State to ensure institutional integrity include the following:

- The filing of 16A.15 forms
- Payroll and bank reconciliations
- External independent audit of financial statements
- Student complaints received
- Student conduct incidents and violations reported
- Incidents and sanctions for academic integrity violations
- MnSCU internal audit reports
- Attendance at search committee training by search committee members



- Delegations of authority in accordance with board policy
- Reports for crime statistics

### *Summary results of measures*

Table 4-15 shows the number of process noncompliance incidents for encumbering funds for contracts.

Fiscal Year	Number
2011	85
2012	109
2013	78
2014	46
2015	33

**Table 4-15.** 16A Violations

Table 4-16 shows the numbers of completions by users for the search committee D2L training.

Quizzes	FY13	FY14	FY15*
Affirmative Action	168	85	109
Confidentiality	180	88	110

\* as of 5/20/2015

**Table 4-16.** Number of completions by users for search committee D2L training

Each October 1, MnSCU institutions are required to report crime statistics to MnSCU. It is important to note that Metropolitan State is situated in an urban setting with a mix of residual and small businesses in close proximity.

### *Outcomes*

Crime Statistics Reported for St. Paul Campus			
Incident:	2011	2012	2013
Robbery	0	0	0
Aggravated Assault	1	0	0
Burglary	0	1	1
Motor Vehicle Theft	0	3	0
Forcible Sex Offenses	0	0	0
Nonforcible Sex Offenses	0	0	0
Domestic Violence	0	0	0

**Table 4-17.** Crime Statistics

Hate crimes by prejudices (racial bias, ethnic bias, religious bias, sexual orientation bias, disability bias, gender bias, national origin) are also tracked. There were zero incidents of hate crimes reported on the St. Paul campus from 2011-2013.

### *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

The Campus of Integrity Award is an international competitive award process. In 2015, Metropolitan State was one of the award's three recipients in the United States and the only institution in Minnesota to achieve this award.

### *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

When there were significant process breakdowns, such as with the payroll situation, Metropolitan State responded to fix the problems and then closed them with an internal audit. (See Category 3 Introduction for payroll details). Better tracking of data will help the university spot problems earlier. Such tracking will also help the university take action on process improvements with defined targets, thus enabling the university to more clearly know if it has been successful in fixing problems. Training and supervisor expectations have substantially reduced 16A violations.

**414| Improvements that have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years**

The following improvements have or will be implemented by Metropolitan State to improve integrity:

- Internal processes needing improvement will be systematically addressed.
- Data will be gathered and then goals for improving outcomes will be set.
- Individuals will be held accountable for achieving process improvements.
- The Safety and Security Office will evaluate software for tracking crime statistics.

## AQIP Category 5: Knowledge Management and Resource Stewardship

### INTRODUCTION

Metropolitan State University has experienced significant growth in its student enrollment (headcount increased by more than 1000 students) since our last Systems Portfolio submission in 2010. Despite recent leveling off the university is poised to realize additional enrollment growth in fulfillment of MnSCU's plan to increase baccalaureate degree conferral in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The pace of change in enrollment, coupled with state funding which has stabilized at a lower rate than before the 2009 recession, has strained our fiscal, physical, technological and information infrastructures. In addition, changes in reporting structure for Institutional Research (IR) made by the former president placed this function in the Communication and Advancement division, where it was poorly situated to support the data needs of Academic and Student Affairs.

The university has responded to these challenges in several ways. To meet the needs of a growing student body and development of new programs we are expanding our physical facilities through construction (Science Education Center and Student Center to be completed in Fall 2015), leasing (expansion of facilities at Midway Center and relocation of two student affairs and three academic affairs units to this location), and partnerships with MnSCU community and technical colleges located in the Twin Cities. The president and vice presidents are working to develop a more strategically focused budgeting and resource allocation model. The interim president returned the IR unit to academic affairs in October 2014 and a reorganization effective July 1, 2015 will embed IR in an Institutional Effectiveness unit, which will combine support for strategic planning, continuous improvement, accreditation, and student learning assessments and will have dual reporting responsibility to the president and provost.

A significant challenge in our IT area manifested itself in late 2014 with the discovery of a significant breach of our local data systems. An IT forensics investigation determined that there was likely exposure of the social security numbers and personal data of former and current faculty and students. All affected individuals were offered identity protection services through an industry expert and, to date, no identity theft has been reported. The breach accelerated plans to modernize web infrastructure and to establish best practices in technology management.

The impacts of being part of the MnSCU system are most evident in these areas of the university's operation. For example, the university must rely on the aging and somewhat outdated Integrated Statewide Record System (ISRS); board policy governs the cycle and content of Master Facilities Planning, budgeting and large financial transactions are subject to system office review and approval and the System provides substantial support and coordination in data collection and comparative analysis. A System level CIO guides information technology standards and systems for all institutions.

The processes for fiscal, physical, technological, and information infrastructure management vary in levels of maturity. At the fiscal level, budgeting processes have been reacting, but are moving quickly toward being systematic and even aligned within the next year or two. Physical facilities processes have been systematic and are becoming aligned. Technology and knowledge management have been in the reacting stage but planned improvements are underway to move these functions toward alignment and integration.

### KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

#### **5P1| Knowledge Management focuses on how data, information, and performance results are used in decision-making processes at all levels and in all parts of the institution**

*Selecting, organizing, analyzing, and sharing data and performance information to support planning, process improvement, and decision-making*

The processes for selecting, organizing, analyzing and sharing data and performance information are shared at both the system and university level. At the system level, MnSCU has developed the Board of

Trustees Accountability Dashboard, which includes 22 performance measures related to the three system-wide Strategic Framework commitments (extraordinary education, partner of choice for community and workforce, highest value/most cost effective higher education option). A report on the institution's and system wide performance is provided to the president at both the midpoint and end of the fiscal year. These accountability measures are incorporated into the president's year end evaluation and goal setting for the next year. The president shares the report with the vice presidents and results are generally discussed at a President's Council meeting. The interim president is making a more systematic use of these measures. Vice presidents are expected to discuss as a group and evaluate performance and formulate university and divisional goals in response. The measures will also be shared with the newly formed (January 2015) Strategic Planning Advisory Committee and are expected to inform both the development and evaluation of strategic actions.

Within the university, the Enrollment Management area provides information to be used by the Enrollment Council and the provost and academic deans for planning, decision making and process improvement. The Enrollment Council was formed in 2012 and includes the president, provost, divisional vice presidents, the associate vice president of enrollment management, the director of admissions and the director of marketing. Information on new and returning student enrollment at both the undergraduate and graduate level is monitored and discussed at monthly meetings and plans are developed in response to the trends that are evident. During the registration period through the tenth day of any term, the management group, including academic deans, receives a daily report showing headcount, credits and FYE for the upcoming term, benchmarked to the previous year's counts. This information, supplemented by information from the AVP of Enrollment Management on wait lists and low enrolled courses, assists the provost and deans in adjusting course offerings dynamically to better meet the needs of students.

Institutional research is charged with providing the supporting data for academic program review each year and responds to ad hoc information requests from academic affairs, student affairs and other university divisions. Hampered by organizational misplacement in the years since the last Systems Portfolio, an underinvestment in resources and labor intensive responsibilities for student course evaluation processes, IR has struggled to provide timely and relevant data for analysis and decision-making. In October 2014, the IR unit was returned to the oversight of the provost and work is underway to establish priorities and processes. Under a planned reorganization to become effective July 2015, IR will become part of an Office of Institutional Effectiveness under the leadership of an executive director who will oversee the integration of IR, AQIP and continuous improvement, assessment of student learning and strategic planning support.

Beginning in FY2010, the Financial Management department has prepared monthly budget vs actual reports to summarize the results of operations. These reports are prepared to show the status of original/approved operating budgets by division and college/department, compared with actual and encumbered spending, and budget remaining for the year. The reports are further divided between personnel and non-personnel spending. The monthly budget vs actual reports are provided to the vice president for Administrative Affairs/CFO, for distribution to the President's Cabinet and other users as necessary.

As part of the annual preparation of audited financial statements the Composite Financial Index is tracked and is discussed with the president and vice presidents to monitor the financial health of the institution. MnSCU annually coordinates Trends and Highlights meetings, in which multiple campuses share their financial results and lessons learned, as well as discuss with MnSCU senior management the plans for academic, enrollment, and financial changes to improve the conditions of the institution.

*Determining data, information, and performance results that units and departments need to plan and manage effectively*

In 2010 and Fall 2011 the academic division engaged in a discussion of the program review process. This discussion led to the development of University Procedure 255 which outlines the data to be provided to department and program chairs at the time for scheduled review. As the university embarks

on an academic planning cycle in Fall 2015, the information needs for both academic planning and periodic program review are being examined for usefulness and data integrity. As prerequisite to the planning process, department chairs and deans will specify the information needed to conduct reviews and planning of programs and indicate information that will assist them in management of their functions.

In 2012 the university launched an AQIP Action Project (Data Counts) to define university level questions and data for evidence based decision making. Through discussion at the President's Cabinet level some data and performance results for departments were identified. The project laid the foundation for the newly created Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

A lack of budget information led to implementation of the web accounting module of ISRS in FY2010 with report access for budget managers and other ISRS users. ISRS reports are widely accessible.

Requests for accounting, finance or similar reports are reviewed to determine if a standardized report should be developed. One example of this is the daily enrollment reports, which have been standardized and automated, and are provided daily to a listserv.

*Making data, information, and performance results readily and reliably available to the units and departments that depend upon this information for operational effectiveness, planning, and improvements*

Individual users' ISRS rights are tied to an employee's username and group rights are tied to the groups to which the employees are assigned, typically through function or organizational unit. Supervisors are responsible for securing individual data rights for their employees. IT Services is responsible for implementing employees' group rights.

IR makes information available to all through its DataSlice function, a single access point for static reports and with information on accessing dynamic reports available from a variety of university and MnSCU sources. DataSlice also allows those looking for information to request reports.

*Ensuring the timeliness, accuracy, reliability, and security of the institution's knowledge management system(s) and related processes*

IR prepares required reports using official data in accordance with MnSCU standards. MnSCU's standard definitions of the data allow valid comparisons to be made across institutions. Dates are established for providing information to the system office and for making reports to campus decision-makers. Through the DataSlice function many reports are provided on an as-needed basis.

HR has improved its transaction processing and entries into the payroll system and employee database are made daily. Similarly, Admissions and the Registrar's office enter data into ISRS on a daily basis.

ISRS access requires authorization by an institutional security manager. Metropolitan State has three: an assistant registrar, the CIO and the CFO. There are different levels of access which can be authorized for ISRS and the electronic Degree Audit system known as DARS. Operational data access can only be granted with the approval of the immediate supervisor, an institutional security manager, the campus' Chief Human Resource Officer and MnSCU HR. There are two levels of access; low access does not provide any access to private data.

Annually, Metropolitan State University is audited by an external CPA firm hired by MnSCU. An opinion of the accuracy of the annual financial statements is provided.

### **5R1| Results for determining how data, information, and performance results are used in decision-making processes at all levels and in all parts of the institution**

- The president and vice presidents conducted their first mid-year budget review in FY15 in order to make mid-year corrections to spending, helping to reduce the FY15 budget shortfall

- Enrollment has stabilized and shows increases for FY16 based on actions taken as a result of Enrollment Council meetings.
- The university is moving from a reacting stage toward becoming systematic. Information is gathered and used to inform decision-making but is not always shared in a timely way.

Term	Headcount	FYE
Spring 2014	4237	984.50
Spring 2015	4432	1015.42
% increase	4.6%	3.14%

**Table 5-1.** Summer Enrollment Comparison

Term	Headcount	FYE
Fall 2014 (as of 5/31/14)	4764	1516.73
Fall 2015 (as of 5/31/15)	4751	1518.30
% change	-0.27%	0.10%

**Table 5-2.** Fall Enrollment Comparison

*Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized (including software platforms and/or contracted services)*

- MnSCU Board of Trustees Accountability Dashboard
- Daily Registrations Reports showing year over year comparisons for headcount, registration, credits and FYEs
- Enrollment updates which include information on number of applications, admits, conversion rate and yield rate for both new and returning students at both the undergraduate and graduate level
- Wait List by Section Number
- Course Fill Rates.

MnSCU supports more than 270 reports. Metropolitan State University provides additional reports on its Common Access Point (CAP) server that accesses MnSCU-hosted data.

As part of the annual financial statements, a comparison is made of operating results using the Composite Financial Index, to summarize the operating results of each institution.

*Summary results of measures*

MnSCU University	2012	2013	2014
Bemidji State University	2.68	1.91	1.98
<b>Metropolitan State University</b>	3.69	2.26	(0.08)
Minnesota State University, Mankato	2.23	1.30	1.22
Minnesota State University Moorhead	2.57	2.47	1.75
St. Cloud State University	3.59	2.03	0.07
Southwest State University	0.47	0.77	0.18
Winona State University	2.98	2.66	1.38
MnSCU State University Average	2.60	1.91	0.93

**Table 5-3.** Three fiscal year comparisons of Composite Financial Index

Table 5-4 was shared with the President's Cabinet to compare component ratios of the CFI.

Ratios	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Primary Reserve Ratio	0.71	0.85	0.92	0.99	0.69
Return on Net Assets Ratio	2.00	(0.31)	0.12	0.52	(0.80)
Viability Ratio	0.94	1.44	2.45	0.53	0.43
Operating Margin Ratio	0.35	0.44	0.20	0.22	(0.40)
Composite CFI	4.00	2.42	3.69	2.26	(0.08)

**Table 5-4.** Components contributing to CFI for FY10 through FY14

#### *Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

The CFI Sensitivity Analysis tool created by MnSCU allows institutions to project operating results into the future. The university has projected results (Table 5-5) through 2019 to ascertain the results of operational and capital decisions on the financial health.

Key Financial Ratios	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19
Primary Reserve Ratio	0.68	0.64	0.59	0.55	0.51
Return on Net Assets Ratio	2.00	0.74	(0.24)	0.68	1.49
Viability Ratio	0.34	0.33	0.33	0.31	0.28
Operating Margin Ratio	(0.09)	(0.05)	(0.14)	(0.12)	(0.11)
Composite CFI	2.93	1.66	0.55	1.42	2.16

**Table 5-5.** Projected CFI components FY15-FY19

Table 5-6 was prepared and shared with MnSCU and the university community to demonstrate the impact of pollution cleanup on construction projects during FY2014.

FY2014 Key Financial Ratios	Including soil contamination costs	Excluding soil contamination costs
Primary Reserve Ratio	0.69	0.82
Return on Net Assets Ratio	(0.80)	(0.54)
Viability Ratio	0.43	0.49
Operating Margin Ratio	(0.40)	(0.31)
Composite CFI	(0.08)	0.46

**Table 5-6.** Comparison of FY14 CFI with and without soil contamination costs

#### *Interpretation of results and insights gained*

Based on the CFI for FY14, the university was required to prepare a financial recovery plan. This brought to light the tools available for financial analysis and decision making, which had not previously been used or shared with the vice presidents by the CFO.

We learned about the sensitivity of the CFI to single events such as the increased construction costs due to soil contamination and the importance of monitoring and modeling the impact of decisions on the CFI.

Relatively short term enrollment improvements can be effected through close monitoring of enrollment issues by a cross-divisional team that includes decision-makers from the vice presidential level.

Our successes with enrollment management have demonstrated to us the importance of data integrity, continuous monitoring of data reports, implementation of actions and review and revision of decisions to achieve desired results.

Data and its evaluation must be a shared process across divisions.

## **5I1| Improvements that have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years**

The president is implementing a reorganization plan, effective July 1, 2015. Four aspects of the plan will result in improved use of data for more effective decision making:

- Provost and vice president for academic affairs will become the executive vice president and provost with responsibility for convening an Executive Strategic Council and for coordinating operational implementation plans related to strategic positioning
- An Office of Institutional Effectiveness, headed by an executive director (ED), will combine IR, AQIP and Continuous Improvement, Student Learning Assessment and strategic planning support. The ED will have dual reporting to the president and executive vice president/provost
- The CIO will report directly to the president
- Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management and Student Affairs will be integrated under the leadership of the executive vice president/provost.

A strategic budgeting model is under development which will align resource allocations with strategic priorities, based on recommendations from the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee to the Executive Strategic Council and accepted by the president.

The university is participating with other MnSCU colleges and universities in an initiative to expand the use of the ISRS budget module beyond personnel budgeting.

## **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

### **5P2| Resource Management focuses on how the resource base of an institution supports and improves its educational programs and operations**

*Maintaining fiscal, physical, and technological infrastructures sufficient to support operations (5.A.1)*

The budgeting process has been evolving since the last Systems Portfolio was submitted. During years of growth (or expected growth) in enrollment (FY10–FY14) budgeting was an incremental process, with the previous year's budget forming a base, and additions being made based on requests approved by the President's Council, which at that time included the vice presidents and the CHRO. The current budgeting process is coordinated through the president, in consultation with the divisional vice presidents, the CIO and the CHRO. Vice presidents verify their division's personnel budgets for the upcoming year and ask budget managers to prepare non-personnel requests based on their expected needs for the year, informed by a three year history of spending. The budgets are compiled and reviewed by the vice presidents and CHRO, along with requests for additions to personnel. Recommendations for a final adopted budget are made to the president, who makes the final budget determination. Under the leadership of the new, interim president, the vice presidents, assisted by the AVP of Finance and the budget director, have begun exploration of best practices in university budgeting. The intent is to move toward a more strategic budgeting model that will allocate resources to activities essential for achieving the university's mission and vision.

In the short term the university must also incorporate commitments made to the Board in the 2015 Financial Recover Plan. This includes a planned addition to reserves over the next five years. Wider campus input into the budget and resource allocation will be provided by the newly chartered Budget Advisory Committee, which will be chaired by the CFO and an IFO member with representation from across divisions and bargaining units. The Budget Advisory Committee will meet and include the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee at least twice a year to assure understanding of strategic priorities and how they should be funded.

In 2013 the university implemented a Facilities Planning Group, chaired by the CFO and including all the divisional vice presidents, the AVP and director of facilities, and an academic dean. The group reviews facilities needs and all requested changes to facilities and recommends reallocations of space or



renovations and upgrades to the president. Planning for activities for the upcoming year is carried out to determine the appropriate budget request and sources of funding.

Planning for technology has occurred within the ITS unit and the technology plan has not been widely shared with other divisions. Issues with funding arose in FY15 and some planned technology replacements could not be realized. The time between computer replacement cycles was extended from three to four years. The data breach accelerated the need and scheduling for server replacement and absorbed the time of ITS employees.

A long needed refresh of the university's web site was launched in Fall 2014. An experienced web project manager was hired and was assisted by an outside design firm in bringing the first phase of the project to fruition in March 2015. The ongoing project plan anticipates full implementation by December 31, 2015. The project manager has been assisted by an advisory team representative of university constituent groups. Resources were identified in previous years and held in a reserve to fund the project in FY15. Ongoing resources and infrastructure are needed to fully implement and maintain the upgrade and discussions about web governance and management are underway between the CIO and the interim vice president for Communication and Advancement, who oversees the web redesign.

MnSCU policy requires that its member institutions maintain 5% to 7% of their prior year's operating revenue as reserves in order to address unforeseeable or unplanned revenue shortfalls. In FY14 and FY15 the university needed to draw on its reserves to remediate unexpected soil contamination found on the sites for the parking ramp and student center. As a result, the University was one of the 11 MnSCU institutions required to develop and submit a financial recovery plan. (5.A.1)

#### *Setting goals aligned with the institutional mission, resources, opportunities, and emerging needs (5.A.3)*

Since the last submission of a Systems Portfolio the university has fully executed the Academic Plan which was developed in 2010-2011. As a result, a new academic planning process will begin in Fall 2015. This process will be informed by the appreciative inquiry results from the 2014 forums. The Strategic Planning Advisory Committee will coordinate with the newly formed Budget Advisory Committee to assure that strategic goals are supported by budget allocations.

In developing the Academic Plan, academic departments, programs, colleges, schools and centers will examine data about past operations, information about external and emerging opportunities or threats and will develop a proposed plan of academic offerings matched to the university's and academic affairs strategic goals. The work of individual units will be synthesized at the college, school and center level and the provost and deans will then prepare a strategic academic plan for the division. Academic affairs will work closely with enrollment management to determine the areas of curricular need or opportunity and to develop a strategic enrollment plan that will also be translated into a set of strategic marketing objectives. This work will filter into the strategic planning and budgeting process both through the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee and the Executive Strategic Council. (5.A.3)

#### *Allocating and assigning resources to achieve organizational goals, while ensuring that educational purposes are not adversely affected (5.A.2)*

Prior to FY2015, the divisional budgets were developed and funded without significant adjustments due to ample available resources and healthy operating fund reserves. However, due to enrollment decline and unanticipated construction expenses, FY2015 budgets were adjusted to fit available resources, with significant use of available reserves to balance the budget. All academic programs remained intact and the current level of student services were maintained despite the FY2015 adjustments to the budget. (5.A.2)

## **5R2| Results for resource management**

The university is becoming systematic in its resource allocation and management. Processes and structures are developing to support allocation in accordance with the university's mission and vision.

Twenty new faculty lines and six new professional advisor positions were added. The DARS (degree audit) processing team was expanded to substantially reduce the processing time for evaluation of transfer transcripts

A partnership coordinator was added to the Enrollment Management division to assist the articulation specialist in Academic Affairs in managing new degree completion and dual enrollment arrangements with partner two year institutions.

A marketing director and project manager for the web redesign project were added in the Communication and Advancement division.

The university was able to maintain its support for academic programs and student services during a financially difficult year (FY15) in which enrollment declines occurred and unusual, non-reoccurring expenses for soil remediation were realized.

Funds were set aside during FY13 and FY14 to be used to: implement a significant marketing campaign designed to raise awareness of the university and its graduate and undergraduate programs; undertake redesign of the web site; implement a Customer Relationship Management system (CRM) to improve communication with and service to potential and enrolled students.

The provost was able to make strategic funding available to support new program development activities in both FY14 and FY15.

#### *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

- The CFI
- Budget versus actual expenditures
- Addition of new positions in high need areas
- Partnership agreements concluded
- Enrollment on partner two year colleges in degree completion and dual enrollment programs
- Marketing dollars expended on various media outlets
- Enrollment of both undergraduate and graduate students
- New applications for admission.

#### *Summary results of measures*

<b>MnSCU University</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
Bemidji State University	2.68	1.91	1.98
<b>Metropolitan State University</b>	<b>3.69</b>	<b>2.26</b>	<b>(0.08)</b>
Minnesota State University, Mankato	2.23	1.30	1.22
Minnesota State University Moorhead	2.57	2.47	1.75
St. Cloud State University	3.59	2.03	0.07
Southwest State University	0.47	0.77	0.18
Winona State University	2.98	2.66	1.38
MnSCU State University Average	2.60	1.91	0.93

**Table 5-7.** Comparison of CFI with MnSCU universities

Partner Campus	FY10	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14
Anoka Ramsey Community	161	143	174	220	207
Century College	174	145	121	139	326
Inver Hills Community College	316	290	281	256	243
Minneapolis Comm & Technical	3,692	3,433	3,116	3,109	3,246
Normandale Community College	442	482	470	543	710
North Hennepin Community	432	364	395	321	218

Source: System Office Research (2015)

**Table 5-8.** Enrollment on partner campuses

Dept/College	Faculty	Advisor	Other
College of Management	4	1	
College of Arts & Sciences	6	2	2 support personnel
College of Health, Community & Professional Studies	7	2	2 project managers
School of Law Enforcement& Criminal Justice	2	1	1 POST & partnership coordinator
School of Urban Education	2	1	1 Office manager 1 support personnel
College of Individualized Studies		1	
Library	3*		*Converted two temporary technical staff positions to permanent faculty

**Table 5-9.** Faculty and Advisor Additions since FY13

*Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*

Metropolitan State University has a list of comparable institutions in Table 5-10 below.

Peer Institution
California State University, Dominguez Hills – California
Governors State University – Illinois
The Metropolitan State College of Denver – Colorado
Northeastern Illinois University – Illinois
SUNY Empire State College – New York
The University of Baltimore – Maryland
University of Houston-Clear Lake – Texas

**Table 5-10.** Peer Institutions

No significant efforts have been made to compare results with these institutions. Comparisons are generally made with MnSCU universities.

*Interpretation of results and insights gained*

Lack of definition of comparable data regarding financial resources makes it difficult to compare with identified peers outside of MnSCU.

The CFI is a sensitive measure of financial health and more attention needs to be paid as we work to model various strategic actions in the budgeting process.

Our successes with enrollment management have demonstrated to us the importance of: data integrity, continuous monitoring of data reports, implementing actions based on data and reviewing and revising decisions to achieve desired results.

Data and its evaluation must be a shared process across divisions.

**5I2| Improvements that have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years**

Financial Management publishes a comprehensive Budget Book annually.

The President's Council is in the process of redesigning the budgeting process to optimally allocate resources according to the mission and needs of the university.

A new planning process is being designed to systematically guide alignment of mission, vision, and goals with resource allocation.

An Office of Institutional Effectiveness is being created (beginning July 1, 2015) to assure that data is produced in a timely way for use in strategic decision making and budgeting.

**OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS****5P3| Operational Effectiveness focuses on how an institution ensures effective management of its operations in the present and plans for continuity of operations into the future***Building budgets to accomplish institutional goals*

As noted under 5P2.1 the budgeting process has been evolving since the last Systems Portfolio was submitted. Under the leadership of the new, interim president, the vice presidents, assisted by the AVP of Finance and the budget director, are exploring best practices in university budgeting. The president is also developing structures and processes that will assure that budgets are more effectively developed to accomplish institutional goals such as: the creation of Strategic Planning Advisory and Budget Advisory Committees (the two will meet together at least twice a year to integrate strategic priorities with budgeting decisions); creating the role of executive vice president and vesting responsibility and authority for implementing operational plans to achieve strategic positioning of the university in that role; and creation of an Office of Institutional Effectiveness which will support and assist the executive team with relevant and timely data for decision making and advising on and helping to implement process improvement at the university.

The current transitional process used to develop the FY16 budgets provides the divisional leaders with budget targets and includes a mechanism for leadership team discussion of how best to meet strategic goals within the confines of the projected revenue.

*Monitoring financial position and adjusting budgets (5.A.5)*

For the first time in FY15, an institution-wide, detailed budget review was conducted with every vice president. Within Academic Affairs, the dean or director of each academic college, school or center met with the budget director and the provost. As a result, adjustments were made to spending plans for the remainder of the year. Financial management has held several budget and financial report training sessions, and developed handouts for use in preparing and reading financial reports that are readily available in ISRS. Representatives from Financial Management met with work units across campus recommending use of five specific reports for managing budgets. (5.A.5) Due to turnover in many divisional and other units, monitoring of reports for budget management is not widely employed; the mid-year FY15 budget review was a mechanism for reinforcing this process.

*Maintaining a technological infrastructure that is reliable, secure, and user-friendly*

IT Services provides day-to-day operational support for all campus data systems through a multi-tiered support system. IT Services is organized into six functional teams (Application Development, Data & Reporting Services, Customer Service (Help Desk), Systems, Network, and Field Support. It employs 28 full-time staff and more than a dozen students to manage the university's technology infrastructure.

Networked devices	2,000
Classrooms (on four locations)	122
Labs	18
User Accounts	21,000
Employees	1,920

**Table 5-11.** IT Support Demands

In 2014, the university migrated to the use of StarID for system sign on. StarID is a MnSCU initiative which replaces many logins with one ID and one password to be used at any system location. This has made it easy for faculty, staff and students who may be teaching, working or learning at Metropolitan's many locations to have access to e-mail, applications programs and the internet.

A data breach occurred in December 2014 and an IT forensics investigation spearheaded by MnSCU determined that it was likely that there was exposure of the Social Security Numbers belonging to approximately 900 faculty members from 2004 to 2009 and also likely exposure of a variety of personal information of approximately 160,000 students. Of these, approximately 25,000 are "current" students (enrolled in the last three years), while the remainder are from previous years. The personal data exposed was varied and included a student's name in combination with some other information, which may have included demographic information, personal contact information, academic information, Star or tech IDs, and/or the last four digits of Social Security numbers. No financial, credit card or banking information was exposed in this incident. All possible and legal means were used to assure those potentially affected were notified. The university also contracted with an industry leader in identity theft protection and made this service available to anyone whose data may have been breached. To date no incidents of identity theft have been reported.

In the wake of the data breach discovery, IT Services implemented a number of changes to prevent further intrusions. Changes were made at several levels – network, server, services, application development, database logging, and procedures.

*Maintaining a physical infrastructure that is reliable, secure, and user-friendly*

Building Services tracks the lifecycle of building infrastructure including HVAC equipment, Fire Protection, Fire Controls, and Roofs. Energy, water consumption is also tracked by the state of Minnesota and sustainable building goals are established and mandated by the state. In 2014, the Building Services department formalized routine preventive maintenance for the first time through a new software that issues preventive maintenance in the form of work orders and assigns to appropriate staff.

*Managing risks to ensure operational stability, including emergency preparedness*

IT Services manages operational stability of technology through planned lifecycle replacements of hardware and software that varies by class of technology. Security is maintained through practices employed during system build, software development, and routine vulnerability scanning. The university adheres to system policy.

University policy 1090 outlines the authority for activating the Emergency Operations and/or Crisis Plan. The university's emergency procedures are maintained and updated annually by the Safety and Security Office and are made available on the web site through the Emergency Preparedness link on the home page. The university uses an emergency mass notification system called STAR Alert, which delivers messages by phone, text and/or email to students, faculty and staff who are registered with the system. STAR Alert operates on an opt-out basis. The university's emergency operation plan provides information on a wide variety of emergencies and catastrophic events.

The most common type of emergency event affecting the university is related to winter weather (extreme cold or snowstorms). University procedure 110 lays out detailed steps for declaring a weather emergency and the process for closing the campus.

Responses to emergency situations are complicated due to the multiple locations in which classes are taught and employees are located. Responses to emergency situations in Minneapolis and Brooklyn Park must be coordinated by the campus security and safety offices of the host institution (MCTC or HTC). Metropolitan State faculty, staff and students must be alert to and follow the emergency procedures of the institution on whose campus they are located. During widespread events, such as weather emergencies, the safety officers, chief academic officers and presidents of the affected institutions maintain contact in order to manage their respective students' and employees' needs for information and direction.

Every semester, the Safety and Security office conducts building evacuation drills in all time periods in which classes are in session at all locations.

### **5R3| Results for ensuring effective management of operations on an ongoing basis and for the future**

The university is systematic in operational effectiveness. Budgets are becoming more effectively managed to achieve institutional goals.

Space needed to accommodate growing programs and increased staffing is effectively allocated and managed through the Facilities Planning Group.

The university has effectively managed and communicated regarding weather events and potential pandemic threats.

A potentially serious data breach was detected early and IT Services was able to mobilize its resources to minimize the risk of a future breach and to secure other data systems.

#### *Outcomes/measures tracked and tools utilized*

The Budget Unit uses the regression analysis tool to assess historic spend rates and trends. Data from this analysis is used to forecast year-end results.

Oracle RightNow CX Cloud Service (February 2014™), is used in IT Services for tracking problems with technology.

Facilities Renewal Resource Model (FRRM) is an online tool used by all MnSCU institutions to track campus building repair and replacement backlogs and for renewal forecasting. Metropolitan State maintains an inventory of its buildings by sub structures allowing the campus to plan for major replacements and repairs.

Facilities Condition Index (FCI) is a tool for measuring building condition. The FCI reflects the dollar amount of deferred maintenance on buildings as a proportion of facility replacement value. The FCI is calculated in the FRRM annually.

Event Management System (EMS) tracks room use and space utilization. The system office compares individual institution's space utilization results to the overall goal of 85% of capacity.

#### *Summary results of measures*

The Science Education Center (SEC), scheduled for occupancy in January 2016 is the first science building at the University, and will be used to more fully support science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) courses, in alignment with the Strategic Plan and MnSCU Strategic Framework.

The Student Center, expected to be completed by August 2015, will offer a study and leadership learning environment for students. A parking ramp (projected completion is August 2015), will provide a central parking facility at the Saint Paul campus, meeting the City of Saint Paul's parking requirements for expanded facilities on the Saint Paul campus.

IT Services responded to an ever increasing number of incidents as shown in Table 5-12. The number of incidents varies by month.

Fiscal Year	Monthly Average	Total
2010	360	4321
2011	346	4146
2012	511	6130
2013	804	9649
2014	921	11053

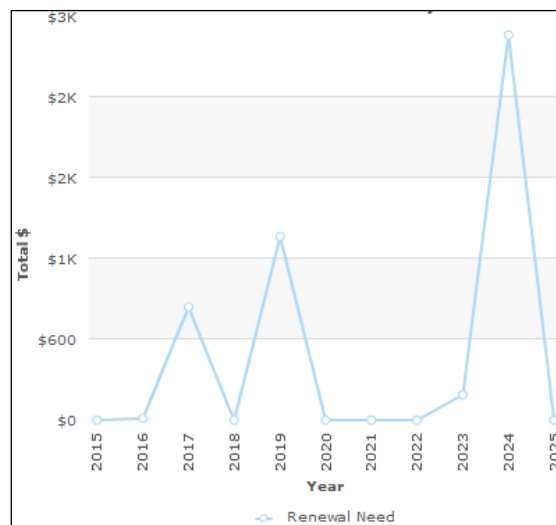
**Table 5-12.** Five year trend in IT Services incidents

Since 2009, Metropolitan State University has reduced kBtus per square foot from 137 to 78 kBtus per square foot, a 43% change for the better. Our carbon emissions have been reduced 41% and costs have been reduced almost 25% as Figure 5.1.



**Figure 5-1.** Changes in consumption, dollars, and carbon emissions from baseline

The current FCI for all buildings on Metropolitan State’s campus is 0.03. The lower the Facilities Condition Index, the better the condition of the buildings. The renewal and replacement forecast is shown in Figure 5.2.



**Figure 5-2.** Renewal forecast for ten years

*Comparison of results with internal targets and external benchmarks*


Space utilization as calculated by EMS reflects the minutes of use, rather than the hours, as measured by the previously deployed tool. As a result, all MnSCU institutions decreased in this metric. Metropolitan State’s percentage was decreased further due to classes being held in other location during construction.

Universities	Previous Measure Mean 2010-2014	Revised Utilization 2015
Bemidji State University	57.7	43.8
<b>Metropolitan State University</b>	89.2	39.4
Minnesota State University, Mankato	98.8	57.7
Minnesota State University Moorhead	76.5	43.6
St. Cloud State University	79.3	56.1
Southwest Minnesota State University	68.7	42.3
Winona State University	80.4	59.4
Subtotal: Universities	79.9	52.4
Total: System	75.7	50.3

Source: System Office Research – Academic and Student Affairs

**Table 5-13.** Space utilization comparison of MnSCU universities

Buildings, Benchmark and Beyond (B3) is an online tool which summarizes consumption, costs and carbon emissions. The B3 model established a benchmark for energy use per square foot and established 2009 as the benchmark year for the University. The state of Minnesota calculates peer comparisons of B3 sites for energy consumption, costs, and carbon emissions. Although the library building is the only eligible site for some analyses, the B3 overall rating of all St. Paul campus buildings is 59 out of 100 as shown in 5.14.

Site Name	Status	Primary Space Usage	Square Footage	Actual	Benchmark	Index Ratio	Peer Rating
 Metropolitan State University	✓	Library	295,343	77.72	107.12	0.73	59

**Table 5-14.** Peer ranking of library space to similar public sites

*Interpretation of results and insights gained*

Space utilization was down in FY14 and FY15 due to the construction requiring classes be held elsewhere. Once construction is complete and the buildings are occupied, space utilization should return to pre-construction values.

Reported consumption, costs and carbon emissions well below the benchmark standards is a further indication of good stewardship, management, and dedication to sustainability.

The low Facilities Condition Index reflects the relatively young age of our buildings as well as good stewardship.

**5I3| Improvements that have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years**

Financial Management annually documents its internal controls by function.

In FY2015, a mid-year budget review was implemented to require college and department managers to review their spending year-to-date, and to project funding needed to year end.

In FY2011 IT Services performed a complete upgrade of technology on campus by replacing both hardware and software platforms for the server environment (Novell to Windows), upgraded all desktop operating systems and application suites, and transitioning to new collaboration tools. IT Services moved from “white box” computing to reliance on industry-leader, Dell, for desktop and server platforms. IT Services purchased server virtualization software to improve availability, reliability, performance and security.



From FY2012-FY2014 IT Services increased from 20% to 100% the number of classrooms outfitted with technology. Classroom technology was incorporated into the planned lifecycle replacement schedule.

IT Services will continue to develop services that decrease costs, increase availability, and improve interoperability. We can do this through use of cloud services and supporting common experiences across MnSCU. The latter option also improves the student and employee experience.

## AQIP Category 6: Quality Overview

### INTRODUCTION

In 2003 Metropolitan State University applied to HLC to join the new accreditation pathway – AQIP. The president charged the AQIP Steering Committee comprised of the President's Cabinet with completing the application process and establishing a protocol within the university. This steering committee established the structure for the University Improvement Coordinating Team (UICT) with representation for each of the nine categories. In 2006, UICT was supported by a new full-time position – AQIP Coordinator. Both the AQIP coordinator and the vice provost served as ex officio members. In 2009, the UICT was renamed as the Continuous Improvement Coordinating Team (CICT) to emphasize the ongoing aspect of accreditation and improvement efforts and the vice provost became the chair of the committee.

In July 2012, the new provost reviewed and clarified the charge for CICT, became the committee chair and renamed the team to the Academic Quality and University Improvement Steering Committee (AQUISC). The revision of the charge states the purpose of the committee:

- To support the provost in maintaining regional accreditation status by coordinating efforts to demonstrate compliance with Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP) and the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) assurance criteria
- To support the provost in leading the integration of continuous improvement principles and processes in the university's work
- Utilize the AQIP framework to document and refine improvement efforts in support of accreditation reviews.

AQUISC is a university-wide steering committee with advisory role to the provost with responsibilities to:

- Oversee and lead AQIP categories
- Select action projects and university quality improvement projects
- Oversee and submit the Systems Portfolio
- Distribute Systems Appraisal Feedback report
- Participate in Strategy Forums
- Organize the Comprehensive Quality Review site visit.

The initial approaches to continuous improvement produced results through AQIP and UQIP projects and succeeded in involving others in addressing the AQIP requirements. These outcomes were driven by a relatively small group of very dedicated individuals, and members of AQUISC, the provost and the AQIP coordinator, as opposed to a widely embedded culture within the organizational structure.

In an effort to expand continuous improvement (CI) into the Metropolitan State culture, members of the Academic Quality and University Improvement Steering Committee and the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) Design Team developed a draft action project. They recognized that the current process for prioritizing issues and selecting projects was not well established or used. The action project proposed addressing the process for selecting projects by using wide-spread collaboration and an idea exchange platform. The interim president approved and sponsored the action project in December 2014. This project is known as "All Hands on Deck," on campus and was submitted to AQIP as an action project under the title "Enhancing CI Capability and Culture". The project uses an online employee suggestion and ideation platform to help identify issues and needed improvements, and creates new ways of chartering, staffing and supporting improvement projects. This action project addressed a critical gap in current practices and provides a sustainable model for the future. The interim president and provost are committed to ongoing improvement and recognize the need for a systemic approach to engage all employees in continuous improvement efforts.

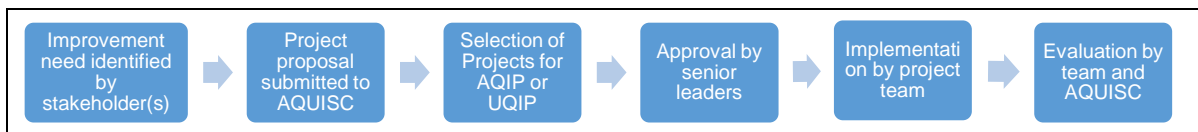
In terms of systems maturity, Metropolitan State University is working to solidify a systemic approach to continuous improvement. The university's approach to oversight and implementation of continuous improvement efforts has evolved in concert with changes in senior leadership over the past seven years.

## QUALITY IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

### 6P1| Quality Improvement Initiatives focuses on the CQI initiatives the institution is engaged in and how they work together within the institution

#### *Selecting, deploying, and evaluating quality improvement initiatives*

Academic Quality Improvement Program projects and University Quality Improvement Projects (UQIP), such as those highlighted in the Table 6.3, typically follow the pathway depicted in Figure 6.1 below. A standard UQIP charter template is provided for initiation of improvement projects to help assure several important dimensions have been sufficiently defined including: purpose and benefits, project role assignments, outcomes and deliverables, key metrics, and high-level milestones with a timeline.



**Figure 6-1.** University Quality Improvement Project (UQIP) Chartering Sequence

Sponsorship and resource allocation for AQIP or UQIP level projects is integrated with the senior leadership endorsement process, which includes designation of a senior-level administrator as the project sponsor. Improvement projects conducted at the department or college level are typically sponsored by deans, directors or managers who have the authority to approve recommended changes in processes, procedures, and products and can advocate for necessary policy changes that may also be needed. After the implementation of an AQIP project, the team leader reports back to AQUISC to close the project. (5.D.2)

In the recently launched “All Hands on Deck” (AHOD) initiative, a less formal process is being tested to identify and prioritize smaller-scale projects, while AQIP projects will continue to follow the process noted above. For AHOD, there is an alternate five-step process followed:

1. A commercially developed online suggestion platform is used to solicit ideas for either needed improvements or potential opportunities. Once submitted, ideas are “crowd sourced” during a comment period to elicit refinements, information, concurrent activities, and other related considerations.
2. After a comment period, ideas submitted during the “ideation cycle” are voted upon by members, using an integrated voting system. Those with the most votes, a proxy for community importance and potential project participation, are summarized and included in a solicitation for project leadership and participation. Those projects that attract leaders are then moved to stage three.
3. Project leaders meet as a group with CI facilitator volunteer’s to discuss project parameters, key stakeholders, potential obstacles, and implementation strategy. If all projects are deemed feasible and can be done without endorsement from AQUISC or senior leaders, the core project team completes a charter and recruits additional team members needed for the project.
4. Projects are executed and results tracked within the online platform. Periodic events are planned to review outcomes and recognize participants on project teams.
5. The ideation platform is always available for submission of new suggestions. A project formation/submission cycle is in development. The first cycle will conclude as part of the AHOD action project in June 2015.

**6R1| Results for continuous quality improvement initiatives**

The maturity level for selecting, deploying, and evaluating quality improvement initiatives is systematic.

Description	Goals	Summary of Results (6R1)
<b>Student Complaint Policy and Procedure – Action Project</b>		
<p>The university had a decentralized and inconsistent approach to handling student complaints related to student complaints. This does not include issues for academic and discrimination. Each office had its own procedure for receiving, tracking and resolving complaints that resulted in inconsistent resolution of issues and a missed opportunity to identify institution-wide improvement opportunities.</p>	<p>Develop a revised university policy. Develop the university procedure regarding complaints. Develop the process by which complaints are managed. Complete annual reporting for university complaints.</p>	<p>Developed, approved grievance Procedure #303, Student Complaints and Grievances Policy #3030. The Student Gateway Services became “owner” of complaint management. A “student complaint process map” and definitions are available in student handbook and web site. There are now three ways for students to submit a complaint: online, email and in-person. Students receive a response within 2 business days detailing the next steps of the complaint. Annual reports have been published since Jan 2013 in student email and on the web site.</p>
<b>Student Enrollment Pathway (Degree Audit Report) – Action Project</b>		
<p>Metropolitan State University has 97% transfer students. In 2010 five credentials evaluators were overwhelmed with a volume of work that resulted in long delays in transcript evaluations, far longer than a published four-week standard. Delays affected student admission decisions and registrations as well as overall student satisfaction.</p>	<p>Significantly decrease the time for credential evaluation for incoming and current students, at a minimum, meeting the four-week published standard.</p>	<p>A project team was formed to assess the overall capability for credentials evaluation, an important core competency for the university. As a result of their analysis and recommendations, process changes and “right-sizing” staff, the following results were achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Between 2012 and 2015 new student evaluations reduced from 2 plus months down to a published 8–14 business days</li> <li>• Transfer credit updates for currently enrolled students was at 6–8 months, now typically completed within 1–2 months)</li> <li>• New equivalencies are completed within 2 weeks.</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment of Community-Based Learning – Action Project</b>		
<p>The project was chartered to strengthen and standardize evaluation of student learning outcomes from community-based experiential learning activities, which had been traditionally conducted through a variety of strategies by faculty.</p>	<p>Design, pilot, improve, and implement a tool and process to more consistently assess student learning outcomes in community-based learning.</p>	<p>The survey/assessment tool was implemented in 2010-2011 and promoted widely to faculty. Sustained adoption has been limited, primarily to nursing faculty who used the tool in lieu of other methods already in use. Most faculty did not perceive sufficient added value to adopt a new, and more time-intensive process for assessment than what was currently being used.</p>
<b>Adoption and Implementation of Quality Matters (QM) for Online Courses – UQIP</b>		
<p>Quality Matters (QM) is a nationally recognized, faculty-centered, peer review process designed to certify the quality of online courses and online components. The university chose to adopt 21 standards deemed to be “essential” of total of 43 standards developed by QM.</p>	<p>Improve overall quality and consistency of online courses offered through the university. Increase faculty expertise in online learning and enhance a collaborative approach to course development.</p>	<p>Metropolitan State adapted the QM rubric and implemented an incentive program to encourage consistent use of process beginning Fall 2014. # peer reviewers trained: 27 # faculty workshop participating: 98</p>
<b>All Hands on Deck – Action Project</b>		
<p>This initiative created a new framework to foster a stronger CI culture and establish a systemic approach to identifying, supporting and measuring CI efforts of all types, from team-based process improvements to institution-wide AQIP projects. The program includes the use of an online employee engagement platform to solicit and manage suggestions.</p>	<p>Test a platform to solicit and respond to employee improvement ideas. Create processes and provide tools to charter and support improvement projects. Test a “grass roots” approach to quality and process improvement. Document, publicize project results.</p>	<p>50 employees participated in the online environment and ideation process. 20 employees participated in the four initial projects launched from among 18 ideas submitted. Four projects are currently in progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Streamlining the purchasing process</li> <li>• Strategies to reduce confusion and frustration for students and other visitors at a satellite campus.</li> <li>• Organization and capability mapping – A project intended to help all stakeholders identify “how we do things and who’s in charge.”</li> <li>• Remote Participation – a team looking at ways to enhance remote participation in meetings events through behavior change and technology utilization.</li> </ul>

**Table 6-1.** Summary of Results for Key Initiatives

Description	Goals	Summary of Results (6R1)
<b>Metro Announce – Action Project – AQIP</b>		
Students at the university can have multiple affiliations with departments and functional units within the university, and the institution sponsors a substantial number of extracurricular opportunities for students. As a result, students were receiving dozens of email messages from varied sources at the university resulting in information overload and ultimately rendering this communication channel ineffective and generating ongoing student complaints. A project was chartered in the summer of 2013 to devise a more orderly and effective communication process with students.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Articulate the process for sending communications to students.</li> <li>2. Establish the frequency for sending communications to students.</li> <li>3. Create the web form(s) which allow university community members to request messages to be sent to students.</li> <li>4. Pilot and test communication messages.</li> <li>5. Establish the university policy for communications to students.</li> <li>6. Establish a university policy for student communication will be addressed with UQIP in 2015.</li> </ol>	<p>Goals 1-4 were achieved and a new approach to student communications was implemented in the Spring of 2014. Students, who were receiving up to 15 emails per week from various departments, now receive consolidated announcements and news items twice weekly through The Catalyst, the name of the online publication.</p> <p>Policy development is in progress and adoption is anticipated in the Spring of 2015.</p>

**Table 6-1.** Summary of Results for Key Initiatives (continued)

### **6I1| Improvements in quality improvement initiatives that have been implemented or will be implemented in the next one to three years**

- All Hands on Deck action project includes a pilot project that will be used to design and deploy a continuous improvement capability for the university beginning in the Fall of 2015. The program will include an ongoing mechanism to engage employees in identifying continuous improvement opportunities and participating in improvement projects. In addition, the pilot project is developing processes and tools to support improvement efforts through both embedded and off site training, standardized project management practices, and funding to support projects
- In the reorganization proposal there are plans to create a new office of Institutional Effectiveness that would unite accreditation with strategic planning, institutional research, and assessment. This grouping is intended to provide more emphasis on related capabilities such as organizing, analyzing, sharing data and modeling continuous improvement methodologies. Co-location of staff and projects would realize a degree of synergy
- Redesigning the structure of AQUISC to better align the focus, skills and talent of members. The recommendation is to create two groups under the AQUISC umbrella. “Academic Quality” would be responsible for the systems portfolio, systems appraisal feedback report, assessment, federal compliance documentation and the comprehensive quality review site visit. “University Improvement” would oversee and lead action project selection, university quality improvement projects and lead the integration of continuous improvement principles in university work
- Development of a CI web site to provide communication and sustainability for CI activities by sharing information about improvements projects. Successful projects will drive engagement and encourage others to participate and projects that struggle will demonstrate the cyclic nature of improvement activities. The web site would make project ideas, planning, implementation and results available for all employees.

### **CULTURE OF QUALITY**

#### **6P2| Culture of Quality focuses on how the institution integrates continuous quality improvement into its culture**

*Developing an infrastructure and providing resources to support a culture of quality*

The plan for a new office of institutional effectiveness is a visible configuration to demonstrate a commitment to improvement efforts and firmly embed responsibility and accountability for initiatives.

The office would include additional leadership and combine the efforts of existing staff who are currently working in different “silos”. In the Fall of 2015 the deployment of a platform to support project identification and participation in improvement projects will provide another visible configuration to demonstrate a commitment to a culture of quality within the institution.

*Ensuring continuous quality improvement is making an evident and widely understood impact on institutional culture and operations. (5.D.1)*

A key feature of the online ideation and project formation platform is ongoing status updates on submitted suggestions as well as project progress and results. Once fully deployed, all interested employees will have access to this resource and will be able to track outcomes. Sending regular satisfaction surveys to employees for follow-up and to measure satisfaction with project results would be a standard practice. For the broader community AQUISC will continue the “Measurable Difference Awards”, distribute “All Hands on Deck” polo shirts to those who have participated on improvement teams, celebrate the writing teams for the Systems Portfolio and use existing communication channels to highlight key accomplishments of improvement projects. (5.D.1) And most effectively, increased efforts will show up to stakeholders as improvements in ways that make a difference to them: time savings, improved information and service products, enhanced certainty, and reduced frustration. These are the most powerful contributors to a culture of quality.

*Ensuring the institution learns from its experiences with CQI initiatives (5.D.2)*

When an action project is completed, the team leader attends an AQUISC meeting and presents a final report. (5.D.2) This has been an informal process. As of May 1, 2015 team leaders will have a standard report format for closing an action project which will include: an overview of AQIP feedback, project charter review, lessons learned and insights gained. All team members will be invited to participate in a new the “After Action Project Review” process. (5.D.2)

The university has sponsored and hosted Performance Excellence Network (PEN) St. Paul monthly meetings from 2008 to 2013. It was necessary to move the meeting to another location during the construction of the parking ramp. Plans are in place to have the PEN meetings return to campus in the Fall of 2015. These on-campus meetings provide a forum for local leaders and professionals to share with members of the university community information on principles, processes, and operational practices that improve performance in their organizations. PEN meetings are free and open to all staff, faculty, and students, thanks to the university's membership in the Performance Excellence Network. (5.D.2)

Since 2009, Metropolitan State has had a partnership with the State of Minnesota Office for Continuous Improvement (OCI) and has worked together on employee training and Kaizen initiatives. Their newly expanded program features a larger selection of CI tools, strategic planning methods and approaches to performance measurements and is free to all state employees. Since 2013, 43 employees attended 52 training sessions on a wide variety of topics. These offerings educate and encourage faculty and staff to take action and improve effectiveness and CI capabilities in day-to-day practices. (5.D.2)

*Reviewing, reaffirming, and understanding the role and vitality of the AQIP Pathway within the institution*

AQUISC members serve staggered, three-year terms, except faculty members and student representatives who serve for one academic year. As a new members joins AQUISC, an individual AQIP/HLC orientation session is scheduled with the AQIP Coordinator. Review of the AQUISC procedures and charge is discussed in the first meeting with the new team members. Other activities that reaffirm the vitality of AQIP include:

- Recognition of retiring AQUISC members
- University celebration for the completion of the Systems Portfolio
- Widely-shared information and communication prior to the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report
- Public forums to review and analyze the Systems Appraisal Feedback Report
- The Measurable Difference Award

- Use of CI facilitator volunteers who assist with AQIP action projects
- An AQIP/HLC overview is presented at new employee orientation.

## **6R2| Results for continuous quality improvement to evidence a culture of quality**

The maturity level for providing results for continuous improvement as evidence of a culture of quality is systematic.

There are many definitions for a “culture of quality,” and for the purpose of this section the definition includes the extent to which employees at all levels of the organization are committed to quality improvement, believe they are capable and empowered to participate in improvement efforts, are provided with the tools and resources needed to implement improvements, and are recognized for their efforts. Listed below are examples of CI results as evidence that a quality culture is present at Metropolitan State.

### Continuous Improvement Readiness Survey

A recent (February 2015) university-wide survey of “Continuous Improvement Readiness” conducted by the State of Minnesota Office for Continuous Improvement (OCI) is the most explicit measurement of the current state of the quality culture at Metropolitan State University. The survey received an overall 39% response rate, with a 72% response rate from the pilot group of “All Hands on Deck” (36 responses) and a 34% response rate from the larger population. (111 responses). Key findings from this survey as reported by the lead OCI researcher indicate that:

- Among staff and faculty, reported knowledge and willingness are high; while empowerment and resources are in need of more attention.
  - 92% of respondents feel that they have the knowledge or skills to make improvements
  - 78% of respondents report willingness to participate in an improvement event
  - 59% of respondents report having participated in an improvement event in the last year
  - 43% of respondents report that they have the resources to improve service quality and efficiency.
- Leadership confidence does not match faculty and staff perceptions. With very few exceptions, senior leaders and supervisors/managers feel much more positively about the capacity for improvement than faculty and staff. Less than half of faculty and staff respondents agree that employees are empowered to collaborate with others to improve service quality and efficiency.
- Accountability and data-driven decision-making may be particular areas for improvement. Majorities of all groups, including senior leaders, do not agree that senior leaders hold employees accountable for making improvements, and less than 40% of respondents agreed that customer satisfaction information and data are used to improve.

These findings indicate that additional work is needed to foster a more conducive culture of quality within the institution. On the positive side, university personnel feel they are willing and able to participate in continuous improvement efforts. Indeed this is further reinforced by the participation of personnel in state-provided training over the past two years (N=52) and self-reported background of pilot project participants who have a solid education and training in continuous improvement, Lean, problem solving, project management, Kaizen facilitation and group facilitation; the essential tools and methods needed for successful improvement efforts. In order to leverage this foundation of employee willingness and talent, senior leaders must have a renewed commitment to foster a more robust continuous improvement culture through key changes outlined in section 6I2 below.

### Appreciative Inquiry

During Spring semester of 2014, the university conducted Appreciative Inquiry (AI) sessions to help identify the aspirations and concerns of university faculty and staff. Over 300 individuals participated in at least one of the four phases of the process, and findings from the process have so far spawned three

significant improvement initiatives: All Hands on Deck, collaborative project sourcing; a new Strategic Positioning and Planning task force; and a senior leadership development program focused on change leadership and accountability. This process and subsequent follow up activities represent a new commitment to employee engagement responsiveness to improvement ideas.

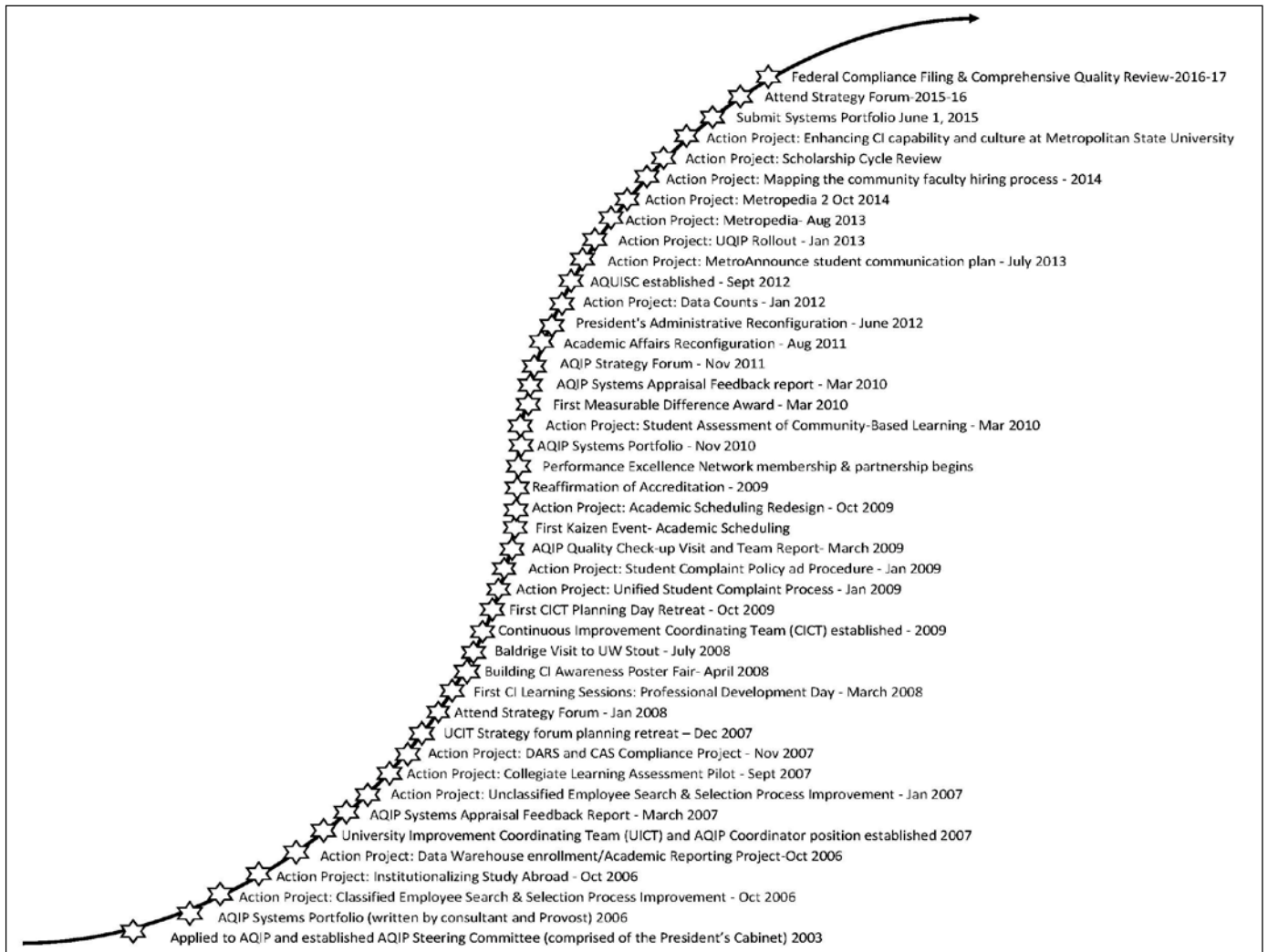
#### Measurable Difference Award

This recognition award for leadership in improvement efforts was initiated in 2010 and has become integrated with the annual employee recognition program conducted in April of each year. The award highlights improvement gains over the past year and raises awareness of efforts that may otherwise not be widely apparent to the university community. (5.D.1) The award application establishes criteria "...a results oriented process improvement would typically have the following characteristics: process flowchart or map, list of measures that can be tracked over time, planned approach to improvement or identified needs, and positive impact as measured by data." (5.D.2)

#### **612| Improvements in the quality culture that have been implemented or will be implemented in the next few years**

- President's Cabinet completed "Framework to Effect Change" a program focused on change leadership. (February 2015)
- Completed "pre" version of the university-wide survey "Continuous Improvement Readiness" conducted by the State of Minnesota Office for Continuous Improvement. (February 2015)
- Complete "post" version of "Continuous Improvement Readiness" to close the AHOD action project. (estimated August 2015)
- Establish an appropriate survey cycle for "Continuous Improvement Readiness"
- Centralize assessment, accreditation, continuous improvement, institutional research and planning functions in one unit
- Make CI resources available: tools, best practices, and lessons learned
- Host semi-annual quality event for recognition, best practices, lessons learned, and networking
- Update the AQIP/HLC information for new employee orientation
- Implement after action project review process.





**Figure 6-2.** Metropolitan State University AQIP Journey

**GLOSSARY**

AFSCME – American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees  
AQUISC – Academic Quality and University Improvement Steering Committee  
BIT – Behavioral Intervention Team  
CAE – Center for Academic Excellence  
COL – Center for Online Learning  
CRM – Customer Relationship Management (RightNow)  
CUAT – Community University Action Team  
D2L – Desire2Learn  
DARS – Degree Audit Reporting System  
EMS – Event Management System  
FCI – Facilities Condition Index  
FDIS – Faculty Designed Independent Study  
FRRM – Facilities Renewal Resource Model  
GAR – Group Advising and Registration  
GELS – General Education and Liberal Studies  
HSRB – Human Subjects Review Board  
ICAI – International Center for Academic Integrity  
ICES – Institution for Community Engagement and Scholarship  
IFO – Inter Faculty Organization  
IIQ – Instructional Improvement Questionnaire  
IR – Institutional Research  
IT – Information Technology  
ISRS – Integrated Statewide Records System  
JAO – Judicial Affairs Office  
LECJEC – Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Education Center  
LGBTQ – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning  
MAPE – Minnesota Association of Professional Employees  
MDWY – Midway Center  
MEC – Management Education Center  
MMA – Middle Management Association  
MnSCU – Minnesota State Colleges & Universities  
MnTC – Minnesota Transfer Curriculum  
MSUAASF – Minnesota State University Association of Administrative and Service Faculty  
NSSE – National Survey of Student Engagement  
OCI – Office for Continuous Improvement (State of Minnesota)  
PACE – Personal Assessment of the College Environment Survey  
PEN – Performance Excellence Network – Minnesota Baldrige  
PLA – Prior Learning Assessment  
PSEO – Post-Secondary Enrolment Options  
PSOL – Priorities Survey for Online Learning  
SDIS – Student Designed Independent Study  
SEC – Science Education Center  
UQIP – University Quality Improvement Project

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