

Assurance Argument
University of Wisconsin-Superior

Review date: 4/24/2023

1 - Mission

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

1.A - Core Component 1.A

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

1. The mission was developed through a process suited to the context of the institution.
2. The mission and related statements are current and reference the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission and related statements identify the nature, scope and intended constituents of the higher education offerings and services the institution provides.
4. The institution's academic offerings, student support services and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
5. The institution clearly articulates its mission through public information, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans or institutional priorities.

Argument

1.A.1 *The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the context of the institution.*

The current [mission statement](#) for the University of Wisconsin-Superior was developed collaboratively and deliberately, through shared governance processes by the [Faculty Senate](#), [Academic Staff Senate](#), and [University Staff Senate](#) (formerly known as the Classified Staff Senate) as befits the context of the institution. It was [approved](#) by the University of Wisconsin System (UW System) Board of Regents (the Board) as mandated by their administrative policy.

The Board [requires](#) that UW institutions each establish a mission statement that “specifically defines the types of academic programs each institution will offer and to establish policies and practices to implement institutional mission and programming.” Through a multi-year process, a direct result of the [Superior Visions 2020](#) strategic planning process, UW-Superior redefined its [mission and identity](#) that had been in operation from 2002 to 2015. Through the development and implementation of the Superior Visions 2020 strategic plan, the campus recognized the need to more clearly articulate the refined liberal arts vision and reflect the significant investment in community engagement the campus had begun since the development of the [prior mission](#).

The resulting mission change was the product of the highly inclusive process designed for the Superior Visions 2020 development, as evidenced by the participation of University members, business leaders, regional employers, citizens, alumni, students, and governance groups through [forums](#), [surveys](#), and [focus groups](#). In accordance with the mission revision process, the UW System Board of Regents [approved](#) the revised UW-Superior [mission statement](#) in February 2015.

Therefore, the University has a modern mission that reflects the focus and vision of the institution and which was developed and [approved](#) through the contextually-appropriate channels and governing bodies.

1.A.2 *The mission and related statements are current and reference the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development and religious or cultural purposes.*

The current [mission](#) of the University was revised as a direct result of the prior strategic planning process, [Superior Visions 2020](#). The Strategic Plan Steering Committee determined, based on research and input across an array of constituencies, the need to refine the liberal arts vision reflected in the prior mission and to also capture the recent investment in community engagement the campus had undertaken. The campus also articulated the [principles and practices](#) by which these mission-based goals were to be accomplished.

The [mission](#) emphasizes the intertwined objectives of fostering intellectual development and career preparation, within the context of the [liberal arts tradition](#). To accomplish this, UW-Superior establishes an intentionally-planned and comprehensive foundation in liberal studies, in partnership with an [array of academic areas of study](#), including pre-professional programs. As a teaching-focused institution, high-quality instruction is vital to engaging with students. The institution implements multiple initiatives to support and evaluate instruction - [professional development](#), pedagogical initiatives such as [experiential learning](#) and [High Impact Practices](#), and assessment practices - that foster continuous improvement among academic programs.

The [mission](#) also emphasizes the [individual attention](#) students experience at UW-Superior. In multiple ways, the institution fosters students' opportunities for individualized educational and career preparation opportunities, as recorded in the [Elevating Internship report](#) and in [Career Services reports and newsletters](#), supported through a number of [scholarships](#) and [programs](#).

Finally, the institution has a strong commitment to public service, with [Northern Wisconsin Outreach Campaign REIF](#) as an example; [economic development](#), like through the [Link Center](#) and the [Small Business Development Center](#); and [cultural purpose](#). Commitment to cultural purpose led to the development of the [Strategic Plan for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion 2017-2020](#), and as a result, the University has invested in several initiatives and programs, such as the [semi-annual Campus Climate Survey](#), the [Employee Survey 2016](#), the [Student Survey 2016](#), and [Cultural Night](#), designed to identify challenge areas and to elevate the knowledge and celebration of diverse cultures and perspectives. Currently, UW-Superior is the only university in the region to receive the [Carnegie Community Engagement Classification](#), indicating strong institutional commitment to community engagement. Community engagement occurs through both [academic-based endeavors](#) and non-academic endeavors, namely in serving as a [COVID-19 testing and vaccination site](#), hosting [President Biden](#) and [Governor Evers](#) and [Cultural Night](#), and establishing the [Pruitt Center for Mindfulness and Well-Being](#), the award-winning [Small Business Development Center](#), and the [Civic Action Plan](#).

The [current mission](#) reflects the key goals of the institution in serving students and the community.

1.A.3 *The mission and related statements identify the nature, scope and intended constituents of the higher education offerings and services the institution provides.*

The [mission and related statements](#) directly address the institution's student-centered principles. This is a long-established value for UW-Superior, as evidenced in [prior](#) and [current strategic plans](#). In the mission and related statements, UW-Superior has put the intellectual growth and career preparation of students at the forefront of the institution's purpose.

The [mission and related statements](#) reflect the institution's focus on diverse cultures and perspectives, and as a result the institution intentionally and consistently has engaged in activities that embrace diversity, particularly in relation to the several tribal nations in [close proximity](#), examples being [Toward One Wisconsin](#), the [First Nations Studies Minor](#), the [Indigenous Cultures Resource Center](#), and the [Medicine](#)

[Wheel and Community Gathering Area](#). Additionally, the institution has a high proportion of [international students](#) enrolled, which also contribute to programming focusing on diversity like the [Global Studies Minor](#), [Culture Night](#), [Soul Food Dinner](#), and [Intercultural Coffee Hour](#).

Finally, the [mission and related statements](#) highlight the community and regional partnerships and constituents that the institution serves. This occurs through [academic partnerships](#) and [Academic Service-Learning](#) projects, and non-academic programming and [services](#), like the [Pruitt Center](#), the [Small Business Development Center](#), the [Civic Action Plan](#), and Continuing Education. In particular, the [Center for Continuing Education](#) provides offerings and services to the region to foster life-long learning.

1.A.4 *The institution's academic offerings, student support services and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.*

UW-Superior ensures that all [academic offerings](#), [student support services](#), and [enrollment profiles](#) are aligned carefully with the [institution's mission](#). This is done through a variety of consistent practices that address all of these areas.

Academic Programs

The institution has [long-standing practices](#) of regular review of [academic programs](#) and has had ongoing creation of [new academic programs](#) in the last decade.

UW-Superior continues to innovate, revise, and develop academic offerings to meet student and regional needs, building on the historic strengths of the campus. This occurs through strategic expansion that builds programs with both pre-professional emphasis, like the [Business Analytics Major](#), and in liberal arts foundations, like the new [Public Leadership and Innovation Major](#). The institution also has expanded modality options in new online majors in [Writing](#), [English](#), [Computer Science](#), and [Psychology](#). Finally, UW-Superior continues to invest in academic programs with strong historic enrollments such as [Communicating Arts](#) and [Teacher Education](#). The [Continuous Academic Program Monitoring and Review Policy](#) and process has led to successful efforts to re-build historically low-enrolling programs, such as the [Multimedia Journalism Minor](#) and [Global Studies Minor](#); this policy relies on both quantitative and qualitative data, reflecting a commitment to a nuanced understanding of the merits of different academic programs to the institution. UW-Superior also works with the University of Wisconsin System Extended Campus [collaborative degree program](#), contributing courses to [specific programs](#), as fits the institution's expertise. Finally, UW-Superior has established mechanisms to meet the need for [individualized academic plans](#). Further, the Center for Continuing Education (CCE) provides educational programming to meet the needs of lifelong learners in Superior, northwestern Wisconsin, northeastern Minnesota, and beyond. In addition to [academic credit programs](#), the CCE provides professional development certificate programs, dual credit courses, and leadership opportunities both in-person and online.

In addition to the array of academic programs the institution curates, UW-Superior also establishes pedagogical initiatives that align with the [mission](#). The implementation and use of High Impact Practices has continued to evolve over the decade. For example, each major, comprehensive major, and minor implements 3, 2, or 1, respectively, [Liberal Arts High Impact Practice\(s\)](#) within its curriculum. The University recently implemented [experiential learning](#) in every course as part of the [Forward Superior Strategic Plan](#). Ongoing, high-quality [professional development](#) for the instructional community is provided by the [Center for Learning, Innovation, and Collaboration](#) (CLIC). This demonstrates UW-Superior's strong commitment to effective teaching and learning and the institution's liberal arts underpinning.

Finally, the institution did extensive work in [refining](#) the UW-Superior's Undergraduate and Graduate Learning Goals and Outcomes throughout the decade. These ground academic program work

within a liberal arts tradition. Students are provided both broad knowledge in a variety of areas of study and knowledge within their specific field of study. These skills—communication, problem-solving, ability to apply knowledge and skills in real-world settings—also align with the career preparation emphasis of the [mission](#).

Student Support Services

The University's student support services are consistent with its stated mission and reflective of a decade of work on these topics, as explained in greater detail in section 4.C. UW-Superior enrolls a high number of [first generation college students](#) and a high [Pell Grant eligible population](#). Many students are [nontraditional or hold veteran status](#). To aid in their success, UW-Superior offers a wide array of services, including [tutoring services](#), [writing assistance](#) and [counseling](#), and [disability accommodations](#). These resources are available regardless of the student's modality status (on-campus versus [distance learning student](#)). UW-Superior has invested in a number of identity-based support offices, such as the [Department of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#), the [Veteran and Nontraditional Student Center](#) the [Gender Equity Resource Center](#), the [Indigenous Cultures Resource Center](#), and the [Office of Intercultural Student Success](#). UW-Superior continues to apply for and receive TRIO federal grant funding for its long-running [McNair Scholars Program](#), [Student Support Services](#), and [Upward Bound programs](#). The recently-awarded [Title III, Part A: Strengthening Institutions grant](#) will also enhance academic advising services and practices for all students. As students are ready to make their way to graduate school or to the workplace, the University's [Career Services](#), within the Link Center, assists with job readiness skills.

Enrollment Profile

UW-Superior's enrollment profile is consistent with its mission and over the decade has built upon its strengths, examined in greater detail in section 3.D.1. UW-Superior primarily serves students from communities in [northern Wisconsin and Minnesota](#), though outreach has expanded into [southern Wisconsin and Minnesota](#). In Fall 2022, 24% of new freshmen were from Douglas County and the immediate neighboring counties of northern Wisconsin. Of Fall 2022's new freshmen, 35% were from Minnesota, the majority being from local St. Louis and Carlton counties. Access to a public, more affordable option allows families from a region with lower socioeconomic status to see higher education as a viable option. In the most recent incoming classes, 33% of new freshmen and 43% of new transfers are [Pell recipients](#). Furthermore, 43% of new freshmen and 51% of new transfers are [first generation](#). As the [mission](#) states, UW-Superior is committed to serving the needs of the region. Superior Senior High School is and has always been the top feeder school for new freshmen, while Duluth, Minnesota's Lake Superior College and Superior, Wisconsin's Northwood Technical College are the [top transfer institutions](#).

1.A.5 *The institution clearly articulates its mission through public information, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans or institutional priorities.*

UW-Superior clearly and consistently communicates its [mission, vision, and value statements](#) in public formats. This includes on the [institution's website](#) and with other public-facing documents. The mission is also [displayed](#) through prominent signage in campus buildings. This mission was a centering focus for the Strategic Planning Core Team that developed the current [Forward Superior](#) Strategic Plan, as well as in other institutional plans such as the [Civic Action Plan](#). Some academic departments, in revising departmental missions, used the institutional mission as a foundation for those revisions, such as in [Natural Sciences](#), [Writing, Language and Literature](#), and in [Social Inquiry](#). Finally, the mission is also included in the [academic catalog](#).

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1.B - Core Component 1.B

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

1. The institution's actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public, not solely the institution or any superordinate entity.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its external constituencies and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Argument

1.B.1 *The institution's actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public, not solely the institution or any superordinate entity.*

UW-Superior's actions and decisions reflect that, in its educational role, the institution serves the public, not solely the institution or any superordinate entity. Since the founding of the University of Wisconsin-Superior as a [state-run normal school in 1896](#), the institution has embraced its role in serving the citizens of the surrounding region.

The [Wisconsin Idea](#) has served as the foundation and guide for UW-Superior and all UW System institutions for over 100 years. This principle promotes the belief that the boundaries of a university are the boundaries of the state, and that all citizens of the state will benefit from the services and resources of a university and UW System.

UW-Superior demonstrates this commitment to the public good in many ways. First, the [revised mission](#) is dedicated to meeting the needs of its regional constituents. This mission change reflects, beyond the Wisconsin Idea, UW-Superior's ongoing commitment to the community and region.

Second, the [current](#) and [prior](#) strategic plans highlight multiple ways in which the institution creates a diverse and inclusive community, supporting lifelong learning, and promoting economic growth and workforce development within the region. As a direct result of the [Superior Visions 2020](#) plan, the [Link Center](#) was established to serve as a central point of access for community partnership between UW-Superior and the region. The Link Center oversees UW-Superior's [Civic Action Plan](#), the implementation of which directly impacts student learning through community engagement, service to the region, and responsiveness to community needs, as well as manages multiple community-engaged learning programs such as [Academic Service-Learning](#), [Career Services](#), and [Undergraduate Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity](#).

Third, UW-Superior maintains policies and practices that support community involvement by employees. UW-Superior employees can complete volunteer activities during their [normal work week](#). Many employees serve on boards and with organizations within the region, using those platforms as vehicles for discussions of higher education, mission, local needs, and how UW-Superior can help address these needs. Critically, UW-Superior dedicated resources and personnel in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Over 100,000 community members of the Superior/Duluth region visited campus for the [testing services](#) and the [vaccination clinic](#) that UW-Superior hosted during the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Finally, through activities, events, and awards, UW-Superior involves and engages the community, as explained in more detail in 1.B.3. Units that provide such activities and events include Intercollegiate Athletics, Campus Recreation, Student Organizations, the Center for Continuing Education, the Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve, the Transportation and Logistics Research Center, the Music Department, and the UW-Superior Theater Program. Annual awards such as the [Community Service Award](#) and [Inclusive Excellence Award](#) demonstrate the importance the institution places on community engagement.

1.B.2 *The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.*

UW-Superior privileges their educational responsibilities as their primary [mission](#). As a public institution, UW-Superior does not generate financial returns for investors, contribute to a related or parent organization, or support external interests or investors. UW System [administrative policies](#) prohibit the University's funds from being used for generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.

As an Agency of the State of Wisconsin, UW-Superior receives taxpayer funding from the State of Wisconsin and generates its own revenues from operations. The annual [UW System Accountability Report](#) provides a public accounting to the UW System and the citizens of Wisconsin on how the institution has served and will continue to serve its educational responsibilities. Regular internal [academic program monitoring](#), maintenance of [external accreditations](#), academic assessment at both the [institutional](#) and [program](#) levels, and the [tracked success of graduates](#) all provide information that assures the public that UW-Superior is meeting its primary educational responsibilities.

1.B.3 *The institution engages with its external constituents and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.*

UW-Superior, as of 2015, made very clear its commitment to external constituents through the development of the [current mission](#) and seeks mutually beneficial [partnerships](#) with its external constituencies. With the University's expertise and capacity, it responds to the needs and priorities of the community. This work culminated in earning the [Carnegie Community Engagement Classification in 2020](#). The institution continued, in the last several years, to seek resources to support a coherent [NW Wisconsin outreach campaign effort](#). This campaign was [approved by the Foundation in 2021](#) for \$400,000 and resulted in several key efforts that are ongoing, including [Yellowjacket for a Day](#), which serves partnerships with [regional middle and high schools](#) for enrollment growth, and the [On the Road](#) visits with local community leaders to learn how the institution can respond to their needs. Recently, UW-Superior developed and implemented a unique collaboration with Northwood Technical College (formerly Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College) through a [partnership agreement](#), that allows both institutions to deepen the bonds between our work; the [streamlined transfer process](#) and [shared professional development](#) allows both institutions to serve their students through the vision and values of their missions. Finally, the institution prioritizes recognizing the outstanding contributions that regional partners make to campus through an [annual award](#).

UW-Superior is engaged with the community through many divisions on campus, including [Athletics](#), [Student Involvement](#), and the [Link Center](#) as representative examples. One of the primary reasons for creating the [Link Center](#) was due to the amount of outreach occurring; a need developed for better coordination between the varied divisions, offices, centers, and units with community partners. Within the last decade, the institution also implemented [policy](#) to allow all employees to claim volunteer hours as part of their duties.

Responding to Community Needs through Academic Departments

Each of the 11 academic departments at UW-Superior involves its students in applying coursework to meet real community-identified needs. This primarily occurs through [Academic Service-Learning](#) and [internship options](#).

The impact of the first [10 years of Academic Service-Learning](#) at UW-Superior (2009-2019) demonstrated that 117 instructors from 11 academic departments incorporated Academic Service-Learning projects in 694 sections of 134 courses. This provided 11,686 student experiences to 551 community partners, donating 241, 614 hours to meeting community needs. This generated over \$7 million in economic impact for the local community and the region.

In addition, internships, field placements, and community-oriented applied research projects work are [graduation requirements](#) for 18 majors, including Transportation and Logistics Management, Teacher Education, and Public Health, as well as in specific courses in [Legal Studies](#) and [Social Work](#).

Responding to Community Needs through Research Centers

UW-Superior is home to three campus-based research centers and one affiliated research center. These centers, each with its unique focus, provide important support and services to the community.

The [Transportation and Logistics Research Center](#) (TLRC) works to be involved in regional transportation and logistics research and offers courses, seminars, workshops and a speaker series to help professionals and the community better understand the region's opportunities. Since its inception in 1999, the center has garnered more than [\\$11 million in grants, contracts, and endowments](#).

The [Great Lakes Maritime Research Institute](#) (GLMRI) is a consortium of the University of Wisconsin-Superior [Transportation and Logistics Research Center](#) and the University of Minnesota Duluth's [Swenson College of Science and Engineering](#) and [Labovitz School of Business and Economics](#). The GLMRI was established in 2004 and is dedicated to developing and improving economically and environmentally sustainable maritime commerce on the Great Lakes through applied research.

UW-Superior's [Lake Superior Research Institute](#) (LSRI) conducts environmental research and provides services that directly benefit the people, industries, and natural resources of the Upper Midwest, the Great Lakes Region, and beyond. LSRI fosters environmental education and outreach in the Twin Ports and surrounding communities. Since its inception in 1967, LSRI has received more than [\\$74 million in grants and contracts](#) and has worked with over 170 federal, state, tribal and local agencies. Additionally, the LSRI has employed over 1,000 staff and students during its 55 years of operations; the institute currently employs 17 staff positions and 10 student positions. The success of LSRI in conducting environmental research and providing services that benefit the people, industries, and natural resources of the region resulted in being awarded the [2018 Academic Staff Excellence Award](#) by the UW System Board of Regents.

The [Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve](#) (LSNERR), an affiliated research center, works in partnership to improve the understanding of Lake Superior freshwater estuaries and coastal resources and to address the issues affecting them through an integrated program of research, education, outreach, and stewardship. There are a number of [education and outreach programs](#) that are provided to serve and meet the region's needs.

Engaging with the Community through Cocurricular Student Volunteering

Students at UW-Superior have a wide array of volunteer opportunities available to them, reflecting the strong interest among students to be of [service to their community](#). From [blood drives](#) to [Habitat for](#)

[Humanity alternative spring breaks](#), the [Department of Student Involvement](#) provides ample one-time and ongoing volunteer opportunities for students. Student organizations are also provided with [support](#) to meet community needs.

The Department of Athletics [supports the mission](#) of UW-Superior, providing student-athletes with a holistic collegiate experience that fosters personal growth through academics, athletics, community involvement, and leadership development in a competitive environment, promoting cultural diversity, gender equity, and inclusivity among student-athletes, coaches, and staff. Each year, student athletes can be found in the Superior community [Caroling for Cans](#) and [raising awareness and funds](#) for important causes.

Engaging with and Responding to Community Needs through Continuing Education Programs

The [Center for Continuing Education](#) (CCE) offers for-credit and non-credit options for citizens of all ages within the community. The CCE is committed to the Wisconsin Idea, providing a [variety of educational options](#) consistently over the past decade for community members without having to pursue a specific degree. Partnerships with schools, government agencies, businesses, foundations, and non-profit organizations provide access to an array of learning options.

Engaging with Community Needs through Institutional Partnerships

Since 2018, the University of Wisconsin-Superior has been exploring innovative ways to deliver needed facilities through [strategic partnerships](#). As an example, early exploratory studies indicated similar facility needs exist for the UW-Superior campus, the School District of Superior, local youth associations, the city of Superior, and the broader region as related to athletics. As a result, the institution contracted with Brailsford & Dunlavy, Inc to conduct exploratory research on the most efficient means to meet the broader partnership needs, and the institution discovered that there may be additional strategic partnership uses of the land managed by UW-Superior. The process is ongoing to determine best options.

The institution is also exploring how to better serve community needs through the potential creation of a UW-Superior [applied social science research center](#) which could partner with community organizations in meeting their applied research needs. Finally, the campus, working with local mental health strategic partners, is exploring potential collaboration to provide more resources, programming, and facilities to [support mental health services](#).

Engaging with Community Needs through Foundation Campaigns and Supports

In 2015, UW-Superior committed to incentivizing and raising funds through the UW-Superior Foundation to support [Undergraduate Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity](#) (URSCA), [faculty professional development](#) in both teaching and research, [emergency funds to students](#), and other [financial needs](#) to support the [Superior Visions 2020](#) strategic plan. The Foundation designed fundraising efforts between 2015 and 2023, including a major campaign called [Together We Are Superior](#), based on the commitment to invest in [people](#), invest in [programs](#), and invest in [the future](#). This campaign reached out to UW-Superior alumni and to community stakeholders to raise a stated target of \$20 million. This goal was exceeded in 2022, at the end of the campaign, in reaching [\\$25 million](#). Significant portions of these funds were used to support the Superior Visions 2020 strategic plan and to enhance the campus, through the [floating classroom vessel](#), [emergency funds for students](#), and support for [URSCA](#) and [faculty development](#).

Engaging with Community Needs Around Workforce Development

The institution has expanded its commitment over the last decade to aligning academic programs with regional workforce needs. An early effort was the [Burning Glass investment](#) which asked workforce

experts to link academic programs with careers. The University sponsored an [all-academic program event](#) to process the [Burning Glass data](#) and to [develop curricular modifications](#) based on this information. The creation of the [Center for Community Engaged Learning](#) (CCEL) provided a staffing commitment to this work and through the work of its [award-winning director](#) during the first three years, many community connections were made by serving on key commissions such as the [NW Wisconsin Workforce Development Board](#). After three years of building relationships, the University began actively linking academic affairs, academic programs, and workforce needs through efforts like hosting the [Regional Needs Summit](#). At this summit, three different workforce development experts presented about workforce needs from [Duluth](#), [Superior](#), and the [region](#). When [CCEL re-organized into the Link Center](#), more staffing was added to support Career Services and to continue relationship-building with workforce development. Currently, the institution maintains its commitment to ongoing development in meeting workforce needs.

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1.C - Core Component 1.C

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

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

Argument

1.C.1 *The institution encourages curricular or cocurricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success.*

Over the past decade, the institution has enhanced its curricular and cocurricular activities for preparing students for informed citizenship and workplace success. This occurs across the diverse array of units and levels of contact with students that reflects the institution's commitment in its [mission statement](#) to this work.

Since 2019, the University has worked under a [Civic Action Plan](#). This plan fosters informed citizenship by supporting students in their work with community partners in internships, Academic Service-Learning, and research experiences. These all aid students in preparing for their careers through developing practical skills, knowledge, and connections with professionals in their areas of interest. This direct work with organizations in their communities ensures students are informed and engaged citizens.

UW-Superior's cocurricular efforts also build opportunities for students to grow as active citizens of the state, nation, and world. Regular non-partisan efforts through the student-run [Jackets Vote](#) program provide students with opportunities to learn about the rules of voting and encourage active engagement in the voting process for students. Research demonstrates the [efficacy of these efforts](#), showing a 15% increase in voting rates since 2014 and a voting rate (47%) higher than the national average (39.1%).

As a member in good standing in the [United Nations Academic Impact](#), the institution creates curricular and cocurricular activities for students that focus on global sustainable development goals. This includes [opportunities](#) for experiential learning focused on humanitarian aid, Collaborative Online International Learning courses, and indigenous and multi-cultural read-ins. The University also fosters informed citizenship through curricular programming with offerings such as the [Global Studies Minor](#) and [Public Leadership and Innovation Major](#).

UW-Superior creates opportunities for students to prepare for their careers through engagement with the regional workforce community. The [Link Center](#) programming, including the [Career Services](#) unit, works with academic departments to [manage internships](#), [Academic Service-Learning](#), job shadowing, mock interview, and other career preparation activities, such as career preparation-oriented curriculum in [Psychology](#), [Education](#), and [Health and Human Performance](#). Additionally, in 2021-2022 the [Department of Athletics](#) piloted the [30-to-Finish program](#) to support their [mission](#) for academic and personal growth. Through monthly programming and activities, student-athletes receive resources and support to assist in graduation and post-baccalaureate life.

UW-Superior Institutional Research conducts an [annual, first-destination survey](#) to recent graduates in alignment with National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) standards. This 12-month annual cycle begins in March. In a recent survey of UW-Superior graduates, [84% of respondents](#) indicated that their current careers relate to the major they completed at UW-Superior. Importantly, [87% agreed](#) that their undergraduate experience prepared them for the next step in their career path. Finally, responses to questions about how well UW-Superior prepared students on key learning goals that employers rate highly—critical thinking, creative thinking, individual and social responsibility, written communication, and verbal communication—all showed positive increases in preparedness from the previous survey results from the 2018-19 graduates. Respondents rated the University’s ability to prepare students from [3.00 to 3.21 on a 1 to 4 scale across all five learning goals](#).

1.C.2 *The institution’s processes and activities demonstrate inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations.*

During the past decade, UW-Superior has consistently increased its commitment and efforts to elevate equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) work. One early historical example is the [Making Excellence Inclusive](#) plan which was one of the first coherent articulations of institutional commitment to EDI. In recognition of the importance of this plan to campus, the institution [created a Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#) to ensure there was specific leadership dedicated in this area. The institution also created a designated committee, the [Diversity and Inclusive Excellence Committee](#), to lead the campus initiatives in EDI.

More recently, the University, through initiatives and strategic planning processes, has highlighted the important efforts of fostering a diverse and inclusive campus environment for students, employees, and the community. The [Strategic Plan for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion](#) established specifically for equity, diversity and inclusion efforts was implemented in 2017. This EDI plan outlines goals and strategies focused on improving access, developing and improving programming, improving hiring processes, and educating the community through curricular and cocurricular settings. This guiding document and work by the Diversity and Inclusive Excellence committee has resulted in a shared understanding of EDI concepts, [campus-wide programming](#), and implementation of regular [campus climate surveys](#). Recently, the Diversity and Inclusive Excellence Committee was [re-organized](#), with new leadership and an updated charge, to continue the work with campus-wide EDI efforts. This occurred to ensure EDI efforts remain at the top of the mission and to provide a clearly-designated team to respond to emergent EDI challenges and pursue opportunities.

As a means to specifically address student EDI needs, the University hosts several offices that provide identity-related support, often in intersectional ways: the [Gender Equity Resource Center](#), the [Indigenous Cultures Resource Center](#), the [Office of Intercultural Student Success](#), and the [Veteran and Nontraditional Student Center](#). These offices, under the purview of the Department of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, provide physical spaces and individual support, educational and social programming, and community engagement opportunities for the campus. The success of these units has led to several recognitions, such as [Gold Medal status as a Military-Friendly Campus](#) and inclusion in the [Age-Friendly University Global Network](#).

Additionally, the [Forward Superior](#) Strategic Plan (2021-24), building on the EDI strategic plan, focuses on creating a culture of inclusion as well as closing attainment gaps. The [first year of implementation](#) focused on educating campus on existing [attainment gaps](#), identifying [best practices in improving attainment gaps](#), reviewing and revising current [hiring and personnel processes through an EDI lens](#), and developing action teams to address key areas of concern. The second year of implementation advances that work through revising policy and practice, such as turning the [Respectful Workplace](#) statement into [policy](#); developing and executing [action steps](#); and developing a [monitoring process](#) to assess the efficacy of these efforts.

1.C.3 *The institution fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff and administrators from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives.*

UW-Superior has completed several [campus climate surveys](#) since 2011. [Results](#) from this work have shown improvement over the years in several areas. Students rate campus as having improved in the following areas: more engaged training/learning, organizational relationship quality, EDI efforts, and being a welcoming and caring culture. Areas noted by students as still needing improvement include concerns about school spirit/community, especially among online learners; an inconsistent perception of diversity in the student population; adequate support for nontraditional students; and concerns about trust in the Title IX process. Some of these concerns were also raised in the HLC-sponsored [student survey](#). Key elements of the current [Forward Superior](#) Strategic Plan were designed to directly address these concerns, specifically goals around developing a culture of inclusion and a culture of care.

The University has implemented several policies and practices that contribute to a culture of inclusion. A [Respectful Campus statement](#) was adopted in 2017. Over the last few years, new construction and the renovation of existing facilities has enabled the University to provide [gender neutral restrooms](#) in most buildings on campus. In 2018, the [Department of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#) established a [land acknowledgement statement](#) to respect the Anishinaabe peoples who are current and historical inhabitants and caretakers of the region. UW-Superior also works with regional tribal communities to include Ojibwe practices, as appropriate, in significant campus [ceremonies](#) and [events](#) and in [creating inclusive policies](#). UW-Superior also elevates the contributions made by [instructors](#) and [staff](#) through nominations to UW System awards like the Dr. P. B. Poorman Award for Outstanding Achievement on Behalf of LGBTQ+ people.

The University welcomes and encourages students and employees to utilize the resources provided by the [Gender Equity Resource Center](#), the [Indigenous Cultures Resource Center](#), the [Office of Intercultural Student Success](#), and the [Veteran and Nontraditional Student Center](#). These offices, under the purview of the [Department of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#), provide identity-related support, spaces for gathering and socializing, educational and social programming, and community engagement opportunities.

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1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

Summary

UW-Superior's mission as a public liberal arts institution is clear and articulated publicly through many venues on campus and to the public. The current mission, approved by the UW System Board of Regents in 2015, was revised as part of the Superior Visions 2020 strategic plan development; this inclusive process provided numerous opportunities for participation by community members, governance groups, and students. The mission is reflected in and carried out through the work of the University in all areas.

The University demonstrates commitment to the public good in multiple ways, including the long-standing commitment to the Wisconsin Idea, the mission statement, and its strategic plans, which include a focus on enhancing the vitality of the region. Its primary mission as a public institution is education, and its response to regional needs is through academic programming, research centers, continuing education, cocurricular volunteering, institutional partnerships, and workforce development. As a result of these investments, UW-Superior is the only higher education institution to have earned the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification in the region.

UW-Superior addresses its role in a multicultural society through its mission and strategic plans. The University supports numerous administrative structures and processes to fulfill this role, including through curricular requirements and offerings. Students are supported through diversity-related services and programs, at least five of which have received public recognition.

Sources

There are no sources.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

2.A - Core Component 2.A

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

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

Argument

UW-Superior is committed to operating with integrity. Integrity is infused into policies and procedures to ensure ethical behavior in financial, personnel, and auxiliary functions by the governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students. The policy structure for integrity and ethical behavior has existed across the decade at the UW System level.

To provide a macro-overview, UW-Superior functions within the University of Wisconsin System (UW System) as a public university. The UW System is established under [Chapter 36 of the Wisconsin State Statutes](#). As a public higher education institution within the UW System, integrity is expected of all [public officials and state of Wisconsin employees](#). The UW System [Board of Regents](#) serves as a public official and the code of ethics for officials and employees applies to their role as well. UW-Superior holds [administration](#) and all [employees](#), including governing bodies, accountable to strict policies, expectations, and their respective codes of conduct and ethics.

2.A.1 *The institution develops and the governing board adopts the mission.*

The current [mission](#) statement for UW-Superior was developed collaboratively and deliberately through shared governance processes of [Academic Staff Senate](#), [Faculty Senate](#), and [University Staff Senate](#). It was [approved](#) by the UW System Board of Regents as mandated by their administrative policy.

2.A.2 *The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources, and auxiliary functions.*

Ensuring Integrity in Financial Matters

Policies and processes designed to ensure integrity in all financial matters begin with the governing body: the Board of Regents. The Board's three standing committees — [Business and Finance](#), [Capital Planning and Budget](#), and [Audit](#) — hold responsibility for financial matters.

UW-Superior follows the UW System Administration's [Accounting and Budget Control Policy](#). State employees who perform purchasing duties are subject to the Wisconsin Department of Administration purchasing manual policy [Unlawful Benefits to State Employees and Public Officials](#). Employees responsible for contracting must complete a [Statement of Economic Interests](#) which is in addition to the Statement of Outside Activities that is required by all employees. Both are required annually. These

requirements help to ensure employees understand that they are not to benefit personally as a result of university business activities.

Further, the expectations of employees with regard to financial integrity are outlined in the [University of Wisconsin Policy on Fiscal Misconduct](#). UW System has also established a [hotline for reporting waste, fraud, or abuse](#), allowing anyone to anonymously report matters of concern. The combination of policies and reporting supports an environment of ethical behavior.

UW-Superior participates in [regular audits](#) by the UW System Office of Internal Audit. The [Internal Audit Charter](#) outlines responsibility in performance of [audit plans](#) which include financial, compliance, and program testing. [Auditing reports](#) are shared with campus administration, the Office of Internal Audit at UW System, and the Board of Regents.

UW-Superior's financial statements are consolidated under the UW System and audited by the Legislative Audit Bureau in accordance with Government Accounting Standards. The [annual financial and audit report](#) consistently indicates that the financial statements fairly present in all material respects the financial position of UW System in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Ensuring Integrity in Academic Matters

The University is dedicated to academic integrity and to providing a safe, supportive, and nondiscriminatory learning environment. It is the responsibility of all undergraduate and graduate students to familiarize themselves with university policies regarding accommodations for [students with disabilities](#), accommodations for [diverse religious beliefs](#), [discrimination](#), and [absence from University-sponsored events](#). These policies are shared with students through [Orientation](#), the Dean of Students [Community Standards](#) website, [virtual presentations](#), and in the [online learning management system](#). The Dean of Academic Affairs's [syllabus template](#) also specifies mandatory information related to these and other topics; regular [syllabus audits](#) demonstrate compliance and provide opportunities for feedback to instructors.

UW-Superior follows the [UW System Administrative Code Chapter 14](#) in situations involving academic misconduct. The institution developed a [Guide to Handle Academic Misconduct](#) for instructors. Students utilize an online [Incident Report Form](#), per UW-Superior's [Student Complaint Process](#), to submit concerns.

All students are asked to make a commitment to academic integrity through the [University Pledge](#), endorsed by the Student Government Association in March 2007. In the Pledge, students are called upon to "uphold the highest levels of personal and academic honesty, responsibility, and integrity."

In addition, [undergraduate student learning goals](#) demonstrate commitment to responsible behavior and integrity. The curriculum has been developed to ensure that undergraduate students "Will engage in personal development, interpersonal competence, and social responsibility through active learning." Subgoals of this learning outcome address integrity even more directly: b) Students will articulate their roles and responsibilities in a global community, c) Students will practice healthy interdependence and mutual respect for others through teamwork, d) Students will demonstrate informed civic engagement, including intercultural competence as a dimension of the experience, and e) Students will apply ethical reasoning in their academic and community learning experiences.

At the [graduate level](#), the curriculum has been developed to ensure that students "Will conduct themselves ethically and will benefit society through socially responsible leadership."

Ensuring Integrity in Human Resource Matters

UW-Superior strives for fairness and transparency in its hiring and employment practices. In the recruitment and hiring process, the institution uses language and strategies that highlight the emphasis on ethical and responsible practices. The [Vacancy Announcement Template](#) includes the following statements: “UW-Superior is committed to making excellence inclusive in every aspect of the institution. Diversity, inclusion and equity are prioritized learning resources for all community members” and “At UW-Superior, we promote the values of academic excellence, integrity, and community within a collegial environment. At the core of our values is the appreciation for, and examination of, diversity, inclusivity, and equity.” The institution follows [Equal Opportunity Employer](#) and [Affirmative Action policies](#) and makes this clear in every employment posting. All search committee members receive [training](#) on appropriate and ethical practices prior to engaging in the selection process. A state and federal background check is also conducted on all candidates prior to employment.

All employees abide by critical policies that require fairness and ethical practices in their work. University-specific policies on these topics are made available on the institution’s website. Examples include [Code of Ethics](#); [Sexual Violence and Harassment Policy](#); [Discrimination, Discriminatory Harassment, and Retaliation Policy](#); and [Affirmative Action Policy](#).

UW-Superior students are members of both the University community and the larger community of which the University is part. As such, students are [responsible for conducting themselves](#) in a lawful manner and in compliance with the University’s policies and codes of conduct. The student conduct process fosters the development of leaders and citizens who exercise personal responsibility, ethical decision-making, and cross-cultural competency.

Ensuring Integrity in Auxiliary Functions

UW-Superior ensures integrity in the auxiliary functions in several ways. In addition to following staffing standards for all University employees, auxiliary functions personnel have additional responsibilities related to the services provided.

For example, the Yellowjacket Union (YU) has a rate structure for [facility rental use](#) and the Marcovich Wellness Center (MWC) has a [rate structure for membership](#); each of these takes into consideration undue competition with the public sector and pricing. Additionally, pre-college programs and camps for youth under 18 years of age must adhere to the UW System [Youth Protection and Compliance Policy](#). Finally, Residence Life publishes an [annual handbook](#) which includes a code of conduct applicable to all residents in campus housing.

Auxiliary operations also report [fund balances](#) on an annual basis to UW System Administration to ensure fees collected are not excessive yet are sufficient to meet the cost of operations. Further, the Student Government Association’s [Segregated University Fee Allocation Committee](#) (SUFAC) plays a significant role in vetting and approving [segregated fees](#) that support a variety of auxiliary functions.

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2.B - Core Component 2.B

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

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

Argument

UW-Superior presents itself clearly and completely through regular communications with students and the public by using the University website, [catalog](#), [admissions publications](#), and other various [public documents](#). Throughout this section, representative examples will illustrate what and how UW-Superior has consistently communicated in the last decade about its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, governance structures, accreditation relationships, as well as how evidence for any claims is made available to the public. It should be noted that the institution is undergoing a transition to a new website platform in April 2023; the timing of this transition will result in certain evidence files reflecting the prior platform. However, the institution is ensuring that all necessary information on the new platform is accurate and up-to-date.

2.B.1 The institution ensures the accuracy of any representations it makes regarding academic offerings, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, governance structure and accreditation relationships.

UW-Superior has made known its academic programs to students and the public through four primary mechanisms. First, interested parties can access information about UW-Superior, and all other UW universities, through the [UW Help](#) website and the affiliated [UW Journey app](#) hosted and administered by UW System. Prospective students and the public can explore campuses based on their academic interests, the distance from their home, and/or extracurricular activities through these tools.

Second, the University's website has consistently offered information regarding the academic programs of the institution that is accessible in multiple ways, allowing the public to review in totality the [variety of programs available](#), including undergraduate, graduate, and certificate, or to examine the [particular academic programs](#) available for a specific degree level.

Third, UW-Superior publishes the [current and past course catalogs](#) on the website; the [University catalog](#) is considered a master directory for all academic programs and offerings. The institution [regularly reviews](#) and, as necessary, updates the curriculum and requirements of degree programs in the catalog. [Programs and academic departments](#) are clearly indexed and easily accessible via the UW-Superior website or by downloadable [undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#) PDF files for the public, current students, and prospective students.

Finally, the Office of Admissions offers the campus [viewbook](#) and [transfer guide](#), which can be accessed online as PDF files or in an interactive format. These documents are distributed annually to area high schools and community colleges. Hard copies of these publications are made available to prospective students who visit campus.

Requirements

Admissions requirements are posted clearly on the Admissions Office [website](#), as well as within the [UW-Superior catalog](#). The public and prospective students will find admissions requirements for freshmen, transfer students, international students, and graduate students. During the Summer Orientation Advisement and Registration (SOAR) events, students receive degree progress and degree requirement information via the SOAR [Advising Syllabus](#). All students have access to their E-Hive [advising reports](#) which act as the roadmap to their academic progress and degree requirements. Students also have access to their [Navigate accounts](#), which provides customized to-do lists, information about majors and career exploration, and ways to contact their advisors and key support staff. These tools are used by students and advisors in their individual advisement sessions.

Faculty and Staff

The full [faculty and staff directory](#) is accessible via the UW-Superior website. Admitted students are also able to email any student or employee via the campus contact list in their UW-Superior Outlook accounts. Communication can also occur between students and their instructors via [Canvas](#), the University's learning management system; during [office hours](#), either in-person or virtually; and with their advisors via [Navigate](#).

Costs to Students

Cost is illustrated to students, prospective students, and the public through several key outlets. The Bursar section of the UW-Superior [catalog](#) and the UW-Superior [website](#), as well as the UW System [comparison chart](#), are sources commonly used by students and the public to identify cost. Incoming students attend a presentation on [tuition, fees, and financial resources](#) during the Weekend of Welcome. The Admissions Office also provides the [How to Pay for College at UW-Superior](#) resource via the UW-Superior website. Prospective students learn about the [Nonresident Tuition Waiver](#) via the UW-Superior website. Finally, the financial aid section of the UW-Superior website also provides a [net price calculator](#).

Governance Structures

The institution's governance structure is outlined by the UW System [Board of Regents](#), as established in [Wisconsin State Statute Chapter 36](#). In 2015, a significant revision occurred in Chapter 36 that enhanced the authority of the chancellor over all aspects of the institution and changed various roles of some governance groups. Although the UW System governs the [overarching operations](#), UW-Superior has authority over internal controls and organization, which includes the [campus organizational chart](#) and most campus-wide [policies and procedures](#). Financial and business practice is developed and overseen by the [Business and Financial Services Office](#), which is led by a [Controller](#). UW-Superior adheres to both institution-specific and UW System policies.

The governance structure of the institution is articulated by these four groups: [Academic Staff Senate](#), [Faculty Senate](#), [University Staff Senate](#), and [Student Government Association](#).

Accreditation Relationships

Any visitor to the UW-Superior website has full access to [accreditation relationship](#) information. The University is also a member of the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) and provides information on how students can file [complaints to that organization](#).

2.B.2 *The institution ensures evidence is available to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through research, community engagement, experiential learning, religious or spiritual purpose and economic development.*

UW-Superior ensures evidence is available to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through research, community engagement, experiential learning, and economic development. When the institution makes public claims about its [educational experience](#), the Office of Institutional Research and Sponsored Programs (IRSP) is the primary office that contains the data and evidence to support claims using various documents such as the [Common Data Set](#), [Fact Book](#), and UW-Superior [Data Summit](#).

Beyond the institutional claims listed above, claims are also made by individual units that require evidence to substantiate the nature of the claim. The IRSP works with various initiatives making claims to provide the evidence, such as [Carnegie Community Engagement Award application](#), [Elevating Internships Report](#), [Economic Impact Study](#), [McNair Scholars Program Report](#).

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2.C - Core Component 2.C

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

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

Argument

The [Board of Regents](#) (the Board) serves as the governing board for UW-Superior and for all institutions in the UW System. The Board consists of [18 members](#), 16 of whom are appointed by the Governor, subject to confirmation from the Senate. Of these 16 members, 14 members serve staggered, seven-year terms and two are ex officio members. The two ex officio members are the state superintendent of public instruction and the president, or a designee, of the Wisconsin Technical College System Board. Two (2) UW System students are appointed to the Board for two-year terms. One (1) of the two is a nontraditional student.

2.C.1 The governing board is trained and knowledgeable so that it makes informed decisions with respect to the institution's financial and academic policies and practices; the board meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.

When appointed or confirmed, Regents are provided an [orientation](#) for new members which includes a review of Wisconsin's Code of Ethics for Public Officials and Employees, Wisconsin Open Meetings Law, Wisconsin's Public Records Law, and conflict of interest training. The members of the Board are expected to know, understand, and abide by all policies and laws that apply to the Board. This is outlined in the Board of Regents Policy Documents 2-2 [Statement of Expectations](#), 2-3 [Standards and Protocol](#), and 2-4 [Ethics and Conflict of Interest](#).

The institution regularly [communicates](#) with "[Regent Buddies](#)," Héctor Colón and Dana Wachs, the two Regents appointed to learn about UW-Superior, apprising them of innovations, accomplishments, and challenges the institution experiences. Regent Buddies also participate in [campus visits](#).

2.C.2 The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.

The deliberations of the Board reflect priorities to preserve and enhance all UW campuses, including UW-Superior. The [Bylaws](#) of the Board of Regents were created pursuant to the authority vested in the Board by [Chapter 36 of the Wisconsin Statutes](#). This statute sets forth the [mission](#) and purpose of the UW System.

[Chapter 36.09](#) outlines the responsibilities of the Board. The primary responsibility for governance of the UW System is vested in the Board, which enacts policies and promulgates rules for governing the UW

System; plans for future needs of the state for university education; and ensures the diversity of quality undergraduate and graduate programs. To accomplish this, the Regents need to understand each institution within the UW System: its mission, structure, programs, financial framework, strengths, challenges, and current issues.

The Board preserves and enhances UW-Superior by appointing high-quality chancellors, such as [Chancellor Renee Wachter](#) on April 7, 2011; advocating for state budget requests, such as the [Tuition Reciprocity Act](#), that will aid UW-Superior; supporting unique partnership arrangements like the [Northwood Technical College AA partnership](#); supporting creative financial capital endeavors like the [Public-Private Partnerships \(P3\)](#) project; and supporting innovative projects to meet student needs, including [mental health](#). The Board of Regents reviews all new degree program proposals and authorizes them to proceed. During the last decade, they have authorized four proposals for UW-Superior: [Writing](#), [Environmental Science](#), [Public Leadership and Innovation](#), and [Business Analytics](#). Finally, the Board grants [tenure appointments](#) annually to faculty members at its June meeting.

2.C.3 The governing board reviews the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.

The Board of Regents continues to review and support student-oriented initiatives that are beneficial to the institution. In the last several years, the Board has supported the creation of a UW System statewide set of [mental health services](#) to benefit students. UW-Superior was one of the primary advocates for the development of these resources. In addition, the Board has shown great interest in facilitating the [growth of high school-college credit enrollment](#) across the state and [direct admissions](#), which are significant priorities for UW-Superior. The Board has shown interest in [improving practices towards UW-Superior's substantial international student population](#), which ranks second among the UW System campuses. These examples show internally-oriented investments in the student population at UW-Superior.

The Board of Regents is also supportive of work that engages UW-Superior with external constituents. One example has been their approval and support of the [Public Private Partnerships](#) that involve external partners, such as Superior Amateur Hockey Association, Superior School District, and the city of Superior in constructing new athletic buildings. Another example has been their support of a [holistic mental health center](#), in development to meet community and institution needs.

2.C.4 The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests, or other external parties.

The process within [Chapter 36](#) of selecting members of the Board, described here in the 2C introduction, aids in creating [independence from undue influence](#). The Board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests, or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the UW System or an institution such as UW-Superior.

Each member of the Board must be willing to make a strong and sustained personal commitment as evidenced in the [Statement of Expectations](#) of Board Members. Further, the Board members are subject to the [General Duties of Public Officials in the State of Wisconsin](#) as required by Chapter 19 of the Wisconsin Statutes. Board members are required to identify and disclose any discussion item where a [conflict of interest](#) may exist; they then follow the [protocol](#) established to manage the potential conflict of interest. Board members must also file [annual financial disclosure statements](#). Board members serve [without remuneration](#) from the state, the UW System, or other entities.

2.C.5 The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the institution's administration and expects the institution's faculty to oversee academic matters.

In 2015, the Wisconsin legislature modified the [statutory language](#) that sets out the roles and responsibilities of the different positions and constituencies within the UW structure. In this revision, the role of the faculty was altered as was the authority of the chancellor. Faculty now engage in advising and consulting to the chancellor but are not charged with final authority to oversee academic matters. Chancellors are responsible for overseeing all the work of the institution.

The Board of Regents delegates day-to-day institutional management to each institution's chancellor with collaborative direction of the UW System President and expects the faculty to engage in advising and consultation in academic matters. The Board empowers each chancellor with the necessary authority to fulfill the mission of their university. [Wisconsin State Statute 36.09\(3\)\(a\)](#) directs that chancellors "are the executive heads of their institutions and shall be vested with the responsibility of administering board policies under the direction of the president and be accountable and report to the president and the board on the operation and administration of their institutions."

These statutes also state that "faculty shall have the primary responsibility for advising the chancellor regarding academic and educational activities and faculty personnel matters," and all decisions are [subject to](#) the authority of the chancellor.

UW-Superior is organized into [eight major divisions](#): Academic Affairs, Administration and Finance, Athletics, Community Engagement and Strategic Partnerships, Enrollment Management, Student Affairs, University Advancement, and University Marketing and Communication. Leaders of these divisions are responsible for their management. As an example of the delegation of day-to-day institutional management, UW-Superior and other universities in the UW System, working within the parameters provided by System, created the campus processes for the [Title and Total Compensation process](#) that would provide consistent titling across all job categories for all institutions. In this case, System set the broad rules and expectations but delegated the implementation processes to the campuses.

The four governance groups — [Academic Staff Senate](#), [Faculty Senate](#), [University Staff Senate](#), and [Student Government Association](#) — and the various University committees or councils — such as the [Undergraduate Academic Affairs Council](#), [Graduate Council](#), [Academic Program Review Council](#), [Personnel Council](#), and [Planning and Budgetary Review Council](#) — provide ongoing advising and consultation in the development and administration of institutional policies germane to academic matters, educational activities, and personnel matters.

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2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

Argument

Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression

The Board of Regents and the UW System have been consistently committed to freedom of expression by way of policy over the decade. In 2017, the Board revitalized their [Commitment to Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression](#), providing campuses with guidance on how to support academic freedom and encourage freedom of expression, as well as how to address incidents where these rights may be violated. As an example of this commitment, the policy states, “Each institution in the University of Wisconsin System has a solemn responsibility not only to promote lively and fearless exploration, deliberation, and debate of ideas, but also to protect those freedoms when others attempt to restrict them.” Each campus is required to provide an [annual report](#) to UW System regarding Commitment to Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression and any violations of these commitments. In the most recent submissions, UW-Superior has had no violations to report ([2021](#), [2022](#)), nor have any violations been recorded since UW System began requiring reporting in 2017.

UW-Superior’s strong commitment to freedom of expression is reflected in the University’s commitment to respecting multiple voices, as stated in the University’s [mission](#) statement. The University’s mission statement was written specifically to express the University’s core values of inclusiveness and diversity of thought. The institution adopted a [Respectful Campus Statement](#) that sets out core principles of how students and staff should engage in productive dialogue.

The University’s [Unclassified Code of Ethics Declaration of Policy](#) contained in the Unclassified Staff Handbook puts forth an expectation that every member of the unclassified staff, which includes those individuals who hold faculty, academic staff, and limited appointments, makes a personal commitment to professional honesty and integrity, to seeking knowledge and to sharing that knowledge freely with others, commencing at the time of appointment. The Handbook further states that such a commitment is essential for the University to perform its proper function in society and is necessary to ensure confidence by the people of Wisconsin.

The [Professional Code of Ethics](#), presented in the UW-Superior Unclassified Staff Handbook, affirms that the primary responsibility of faculty of UW-Superior is to seek truth within their disciplines. Further, as stated in the Code of Ethics, faculty acknowledge that freedom of expression and academic freedom are safeguards that permit the free exchange of ideas necessary for the pursuit of truth.

For students, the student newspaper, *The Promethean*, provides a venue to engage in free expression. *The Promethean* is promoted as “the student voice since 1920” and is written, edited, designed, and produced by the students of UW-Superior. Students are responsible for its editorial policy and content. Students are also provided with information regarding [academic freedom and freedom of expression](#) during in-person and online orientation sessions for both [new freshmen](#) and [new transfer](#) students.

Pursuit of Truth

The Wisconsin legislature, in setting out the purpose and mission of the UW System, made very clear that

the [search for truth](#) is a critical aim in all that Wisconsin universities do. This is a statutory expectation in the state of Wisconsin.

The [Professional Code of Ethics](#) within the Unclassified Staff Handbook states, “That our primary responsibility to our disciplines is to seek the truth. We acknowledge the principle that freedom of expression and academic freedom are safeguards conditioned by the duties inherent in our responsibility and in the concept of professional integrity. As teachers and scholars we encourage the free pursuit of learning by our students, hold before them the best scholarly standards of our disciplines, demonstrate respect for them as individuals, and at all times adhere to our proper role as intellectual guides and counselors.”

The [University Pledge](#), as presented in the UW-Superior Student Handbook, was developed to inspire UW-Superior students to become leaders in the campus community. One of the six principles expressed in the pledge is “Exploration,” in which students pledge to dedicate themselves to the ongoing pursuit of knowledge and truth. The University Pledge has been endorsed by the UW-Superior Student Government Association.

The pursuit of truth is also encouraged at UW-Superior through ongoing support for the [Center for Undergraduate Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities](#) (URSCA). URSCA promotes, supports, and celebrates the pursuit of truth through facilitating undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative activities by all academic disciplines within UW-Superior. URSCA is recognized at UW-Superior as a Liberal Arts High Impact Practice (HIP) and is thereby embedded into numerous classes and degree programs. URSCA provides resources for students to disseminate their research findings through poster sessions at the Wisconsin State Capitol building and other venues. In addition, URSCA offers [Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships](#) (SURF) that provide students with [unique and important opportunities](#) to focus on research, scholarly, or creative activity during the summer with a UW-Superior faculty or academic staff member as a mentor.

Governance Groups, Committees, and Grievance Procedures

Faculty and staff may file complaints to governance committees if they have concerns related to freedom of expression or other issues. For faculty, the Faculty Senate's Personnel Council appoints a faculty hearing committee to [address the complaint or grievance](#). The Academic Staff Senate receives and reviews concerns from academic staff and follows grievance procedures as defined in the [UW-Superior Unclassified Staff Handbook](#). University Staff grievance procedures were developed with guidance from the [University Staff Senate](#) and are detailed in [UPS Operational Policy: GEN 14](#).

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2.E - Core Component 2.E

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

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

Argument

UW-Superior's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge by its faculty, staff, and students. UW-Superior provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice by faculty, staff, and students. This is completed through numerous units and processes.

2.E.1 *Institutions supporting basic and applied research maintain professional standards and provide oversight ensuring regulatory compliance, ethical behavior and fiscal accountability.*

The Office of Institutional Research and Sponsored Programs (IRSP) has consistently managed [regulatory compliance](#) for federal, state, system, and funder policies and practices, as well as [fiscal oversight of grant funds](#) for basic and applied research at UW-Superior. The office also oversees [institutional policies](#) on [financial conflict of interest](#), [research misconduct](#), [responsible conduct of research](#), and property rights. The [Institutional Review Board](#) (IRB), as explained in more detail below, provides ethics training resources and oversees all faculty, staff, and student research proposals using human subjects.

The [Unclassified Staff Handbook](#) articulates the responsibilities of the IRSP and the faculty in the responsible conduct of research. This includes establishing the responsibility of faculty to oversee student training on the ethical standards of conducting research. For particular federal research projects, such as those funded by the National Science Foundation, there are [additional standards](#) that the University imposes.

In 2015, UW-Superior adopted [policy on misconduct in scientific research](#), which includes a process for reporting, reviewing and potential consequences for research misconduct.

2.E.2 *The institution provides effective support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students.*

The [Institutional Review Board](#) (IRB) carefully reviews all research proposals involving human subjects conducted by faculty, staff, or students at UW-Superior to ensure that the dignity and wellbeing of participants are respected and protected per the rule of the Department of Health and Human Services on the [Protection of Human Subjects \(45 CFR 46\)](#). The IRB's [Standard Operating Procedure](#) provides consistency to the process and protocols from year to year and as new leadership enters the position of IRB chair. Each member of the IRB receives a copy of the Standard Operating Procedures. Faculty who are incorporating student research as part of their courses are required to complete a [Course Certification form](#) prior to IRB approval. IRB has created mandatory training for faculty and students who are working on

research projects. This ethics training, administered by [CITI](#) since 2018, must be completed prior to the IRB reviewing any proposal.

Student research proposals are closely vetted by their faculty or staff advisors before submission to the IRB as part of [specific research-based courses](#). Additionally, the McNair Scholars Program [syllabus](#) reflects the teaching and learning of ethics. The topic of ethical research is also integrated into courses and workshops for students participating in research fellowships sponsored by the [McNair Scholars Program](#). These programs provide these trainings yearly for the students. The workshops are led by the chair of IRB.

The Office of [Institutional Research and Sponsored Programs](#) supports faculty and staff in seeking funding for research, scholarship, and creative efforts, as well as ensures compliance with regulatory guidelines and responsible research conduct requirements. The Center for Learning, Innovation, and Collaboration (CLIC) promotes and supports research that furthers teaching effectiveness, including professional development on the unique ethical challenges that the scholarship of teaching and learning can present.

Further, UW-Superior established an [on-call committee](#) to review research proposals to ensure that all vertebrate animals used for research at UW-Superior are protected from abuse. This committee has guidelines for [Institutional Animal Care and Use](#) for University-wide use and practice.

2.E.3 *The institution provides students guidance in the ethics of research and use of information resources.*

The policies and practices for providing student guidance in the ethics of research are described above in 2.E.2.

All UW-Superior students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources within their required University Studies coursework. Students are to follow the ethical guidelines for academics in [Chapter 14](#), as described below in 2.E.4.

Principles of the ethical use of sources are taught in the required class [Writing 102](#): Introduction to Academic Writing. This is reinforced in other courses, such as [Writing 209](#): Introduction to Professional Writing. The [ethical use and proper citation of sources](#) is included in Writing Center [consultations](#) with trained tutors. Resources for proper citation and avoiding plagiarism are available on the Writing Center [website](#), in [workshops](#), and through the Jim Dan Hill Library website course [guides and videos](#). Each new student at the Weekend of Welcome attends a presentation on “[Academics 101](#)” which covers topics such as academic honesty.

In addition to issues regarding plagiarism and the correct use of citations, guidelines regarding the appropriate use of copyrighted resources and information technologies have been developed for instructors, students, and other users on campus. These guidelines are available on the [Copyright and Fair Use website](#) hosted by the Jim Dan Hill Library and through the UW System policy, the [Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources](#), hosted by [Information and Instructional Technology Services](#).

2.E.4 *The institution enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.*

UW-Superior has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity. [Wisconsin State Statute Chapter UWS 14](#), on student academic disciplinary procedures, provides information to students, faculty, and staff on their respective responsibilities and the process that will be followed to address violations. To provide fair notice, faculty and instructional academic staff are expected to provide information to students in their [syllabi](#) about academic honesty. The [Community Standards](#) website describes the expectations, provides a link to the policy and procedures for academic misconduct, and includes a [Guide for Instructors](#) to explain how to navigate the process. To preserve the integrity of online examinations, select classes use the online proctoring service [Honorlock](#), which relies on the authentication processes of the learning

management system, Canvas, to verify the identity of students completing course assessments. The institution addresses academic misconduct following these processes and documents the resolution of these investigations ([2022-23](#), [2021-22](#), [2020-21](#), [2019-20](#), [2018-19](#)).

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2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Summary

UW-Superior acts with integrity through its policies and procedures which address financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions. The University communicates regularly with students and the public, using multiple public platforms and clearly presented, detailed information on all required topics.

Its conduct is ethical and responsible. UW-Superior demonstrates its commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning through compliance with the Board and University policies governing these areas. There are numerous specific policies that cover all required topics. Students are taught ethical uses of information in multiple ways: required writing classes, discipline-specific courses, and programming offered by Student Affairs and information literacy librarians.

The Board of Regents of the UW System is the governing board for UW-Superior. Its authority, responsibilities, and limitations are made clear through state law and Board policy. UW-Superior is fully compliant with all practices required by the Board.

Sources

There are no sources.

3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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

3.A - Core Component 3.A

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

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

Argument

3.A.1 *Courses and programs are current and require levels of student performance appropriate to the credential awarded.*

UW-Superior is committed to offering courses and programs that are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded. Over the past decade, six policies and practices provide strong examples of oversight for both undergraduate and graduate programs and demonstrate the institution's academic currency and provide processes to monitor appropriate expectations of performance.

The first policy to ensure academic currency and appropriate level of performance is the [Academic Program Review](#) (APR) process. On a [regular interval](#), each [graduate](#) and [undergraduate](#) academic program is reviewed through the APR process by the [Academic Program Review Council](#) (APRC). This process reviews the programs on a series of metrics, which includes intensive departmental assessments of the currency and appropriate levels of student performance within the curriculum, assessment, program resources, and program productivity. After review, a [formal report](#) is generated and forwarded to the provost, chancellor, and Board of Regents for [reaffirmation](#).

The second policy is the [catalog updating process](#) which ensures [regular review](#) of curriculum for currency and appropriateness. Both undergraduate and graduate programs participate in this process. Departments review their courses and programmatic array biennially, which includes review for currency and appropriate levels of student performance. After department review and approval, any changes or updates at the undergraduate level are reviewed through faculty governance by the [Undergraduate Academic Affairs Council](#) (UAAC) per [Academic Policy 1117](#). At the graduate level, changes are reviewed and approved by Graduate Council per [Academic Policy 1601G](#). This hierarchy of approval is outlined in the Faculty Senate bylaws for [UAAC](#) and [Graduate Council](#). Some programs, such as [Social Work](#), require third-party accreditation, as described in 4.A.5. These reviews and accreditations ensure that these programs stay current and appropriate, in alignment with the [national standards](#) within their disciplines.

The third policy and practice are the certificates designed to meet current employer demand, thereby

ensuring relevance and appropriateness of the credential. These certificates are offered through the [Center for Continuing Education](#) (CCE) as a partnership between the CCE and academic programs. Certificates are awarded after successful completion of a program of study that culminates in a mastery of a skill set or set of competencies that are formally assessed. Certificate programs are also [reviewed and governed](#) under the same review and approval processes required by faculty governance. The CCE and its academic program partners ensure that the level of rigor is appropriate for the competencies of the certificate as demonstrated by the [Certificate in Ethical Leadership](#) or the [Certificate in Ethical Policing](#).

The fourth policy that ensures appropriate levels of performance for both undergraduate and graduate students is the [credit hour policy](#). The UW-Superior credit hour policy aligns with most institutions of higher learning by requiring 2-3 hours of out-of-class work for every hour spent in class.

The fifth [policy](#) and [practice](#) are the required [course evaluations](#) providing critical information to measure student perceptions of currency and appropriate level of performance in a course. [Department rules](#) set the expectations for instructors to use course evaluations. [University policy](#) requires course evaluations for all courses each semester. At a program evaluation level, course evaluations are a part of the faculty and academic instructional staff review [processes](#). Departments and programs review student feedback on course evaluations in order to find areas of improvement on course currency and level of performance.

Finally, the institution examines how programs [serve the region's economic needs](#) as a check on program currency and level of performance. UW System [policy](#) and the current UW System [strategic plan](#) require that program array and offerings serve employer and regional needs, which is an indicator of currency. UW-Superior has implemented several practices that support communication and productive decision-making with constituencies. Each academic program is encouraged to maintain an [advisory council](#) to be comprised of alumni, regional employers, and other relevant agencies to guide and inform academic programming and planning decisions. The institution also judiciously reviews regional needs through the [Curation Visioning Team](#) that includes Admissions, Marketing, and Academic Affairs for changes to modalities or academic program offerings. These efforts have resulted in strategic development of [fully-online majors and graduate programs](#) in Psychology, English, Transportation and Logistics Management, and Computer Science, as well as Cybersecurity and School Counseling, to meet the changing needs of the regional workforce. Finally, the institution has developed two new academic programs, in [Business Analytics](#) and in [Public Leadership and Innovation](#), as a result of collaborative efforts between existing academic programs, advisory councils, and regional employers.

3.A.2 *The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.*

The University has developed and adopted university-wide [undergraduate learning goals](#) during the past decade that currently guides academic programs. Additionally, programs develop and use learning goals for their specific purposes ([graduate student learning goals](#), [certificate learning goals](#) for credit-bearing programs). Programs may also add to the university-wide learning goals by including disciplinary or purpose-specific learning goals ([Math Program Learning Goals](#)).

UW-Superior worked to [articulate and differentiate learning goals](#) for all academic degree and certificate programs in direct response to feedback from HLC in 2013. As a result, all areas required by HLC now have clearly articulated learning goals and outcomes for students.

3.A.3 *The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).*

UW-Superior has only one location and no satellite campuses.

UW-Superior has offered on-campus, online, and dual credit courses throughout the decade of the review period. The University ensures that program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery through several policies and practices.

All courses, regardless of modality, must go through the same approval process for both the [undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#) programs. By [syllabus requirement](#), the learning goals in all modalities must be present on all syllabi and must be consistent between sections of the same course.

For program quality, the institution is developing resources to guide institutional standards, supporting academic instructional excellence across [all modalities](#). The [Center for Learning, Innovation, and Collaboration](#) (CLIC) conducts [professional development](#) on instructional practices; offers instructional support [materials and resources](#); as well as librarian services, instructional design, and program specialist [support](#) for instructors in both on-campus and online teaching modalities.

Dual credit courses (which UW-Superior refers to as concurrent enrollment) are classes taught at the high school by high school teachers who must meet the same [minimum qualification](#) as faculty and instructional academic staff. The content of these concurrent enrollment classes is vetted and approved by academic departments prior to offering, per the [Memorandum of Understanding](#) each department develops with the Center for Continuing Education. This [practice](#) ensures classes offered to high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievements to courses offered at the University.

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3.B - Core Component 3.B

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

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution. The institution articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements.
2. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity and provides students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world.
4. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their offerings and the institution's mission.

Argument

3.B.1 *The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution. The institution articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements.*

The University Studies Program (USP), as general education is called at UW-Superior, is appropriate to the [mission](#), educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution. The institution engages in regular review of the USP [mission](#), [curriculum](#), and [assessment](#) to ensure this alignment. As a result of institutional review of the general education program in [2014](#), the institution revised the program's name and mission statement, instituted requirements for [engaged learning in all USP courses](#), and implemented a [regularized assessment requirement](#). Throughout the remainder of the decade, this work, led by the Faculty Senate-appointed [University Studies Committee](#), resulted in a more unified pedagogy around engaged learning for USP courses, a strengthening of the University's commitment to mission-centric foundational courses, and [assessment of student learning](#). All USP courses are [regularly reviewed](#) to ensure consistent and ongoing adherence to these requirements. The courses and categories that comprise the USP are purposefully [linked to university-wide student learning outcomes](#). Currently, the institution is deeply examining the purpose, content, and intended learning outcomes of University Studies as part of [Forward Superior Goal 1.5](#), with a report expected by May 2023.

The USP requirements are appropriate to the degree level they serve. All two- and four-year undergraduate students at the University have USP requirements. Students earning a two-year degree complete [37](#) to [42](#) credits of USP coursework, depending on the particular associate degree being awarded. The UW-Superior USP requirements are consistent with the UW System [Associate Degree requirements](#). Students earning a four-year degree complete at least [42](#) credits of USP coursework.

With the exception of Diversity and Non-western courses, the vast majority of USP courses are at the [100 or 200 level](#) within the 400-level undergraduate performance scale. This demonstrates the University's understanding that general education is foundational, relevant, and meaningful to all undergraduate student learning. Graduate program admittance relies on the completion of an appropriate four-year degree that would have included general education requirements.

The USP articulates the purpose, content, and intended learning outcomes of the undergraduate general education requirements in multiple ways. The fully-online catalog includes a [detailed section](#) outlining the purpose, content and learning outcomes of the USP. Students are apprised of [USP requirements](#) from the first conversations with admissions staff and at educational sessions during the [Summer Orientation, Advisement and Registration](#), as well as in their sessions with [academic advisors](#). Professional development relevant to general education are [regularly provided](#) to faculty and staff.

3.B.2 *The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.*

The purpose of general education at UW-Superior is to provide a foundational grounding in broad knowledge, intellectual concepts, skills and attitudes that every college student should acquire. UW-Superior has infused the vision, values, and framework of the “[Liberal Arts and America’s Promise](#)” (LEAP) Challenge of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) into its comprehensive undergraduate curriculum, serving as an active founding member of the [University of Wisconsin LEAP initiative](#). These purposes are well recognized within the tradition of public liberal arts institutions.

General education at UW-Superior is grounded in the philosophy, mission, and framework of a [public liberal arts institution](#). UW-Superior is a member of the [Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges](#) (COPLAC) since 2001 and is the **only** Wisconsin institution to be a member of COPLAC. UW-Superior was recognized as [the public liberal arts institution](#) in the UW System in 2001.

The content and structure of the general education at UW-Superior is reflected in its [curriculum](#). It provides students with a broad-based education, the hallmark of a liberal arts education including core skills in writing, speaking, and analytical reasoning, as well as students’ well-being. The Knowledge Category model provides wide-ranging knowledge from multiple disciplines and ways of knowing in the traditional branches of liberal arts. The Diversity and Global Awareness Categories enable students to become responsible citizens and to prepare for the global economy.

The University Studies Program is actively managed with oversight from a [faculty committee](#). Significant [revisions in 2015](#) included amended student learning outcomes and assessment practices. The current [Forward Superior Strategic Plan](#) includes the goal to “Re-envision the University Studies curriculum and structure to enhance value to students and their future.” The institution remains committed to [regular review and revision](#) of general education to ensure continued relevance to students’ learning and growth.

This commitment to continuous improvement results in a successful record of student achievement. Through a two-pronged assessment strategy, the USP ensures it continues to meet program outcomes. First, student learning is assessed regularly through a [planned rotation of courses](#), undertaken by participating instructors and led through the efforts of the campus Assessment Coordinator. Second, [individual USP courses](#) are evaluated to ensure that, collectively, the USP coursework stays aligned to the mission and to student learning outcomes; this review is conducted by the University Studies Committee. This process of review confirms the value of the institution’s general education program and the quality of the curriculum.

3.B.3 *The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity and provides students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world.*

Throughout the decade, UW-Superior recognizes the importance of exposing students to the human and

cultural diversity of the world in which they live and work, as is central to the [mission](#) of the institution. The [Undergraduate Student Learning Goals and Outcomes](#), relevant to all undergraduate curriculum, include goals and outcomes that attend to diversity, intercultural competence, ethical reasoning, and social responsibility as central to student learning.

Additionally, two categories within USP address the importance of human and cultural diversity and living in a multicultural world: [Diversity and Global Awareness](#). All students seeking an associate or bachelor's degree must complete a course in each of these categories prior to receiving a degree.

Of the six High Impact Practices (HIPs), one directly addresses the issue of human and cultural diversity: [Global Awareness](#). Courses that are certified as Global Awareness classes must meet the standards focusing on cultural diversity, understanding of global systems, and application of knowledge to contemporary global contexts.

Specific majors and minors also provide opportunities for students to explore facets of diversity. Diversity-specific minors include the [Global Studies Minor](#), [Anthropology Minor](#), [Gender Studies Minor](#), and the [First Nations Minor](#). Academic major programs also include courses designed to specifically integrate these topics such as in [History](#), [Special Education](#), and [Psychology](#); adopt [values statements](#); and offer [programming](#) to expand students' engagement with cultural diversity.

Additionally, UW-Superior is a member in good standing in the [United Nations Academic Impact](#), creating curricular and cocurricular activities for students that focus on global sustainable development goals. This includes [opportunities](#) for experiential learning focused on humanitarian aid, Collaborative Online International Learning courses, and indigenous and multi-cultural read-ins.

UW-Superior's graduate programs also have a strong commitment to diversity in the [Graduate Student Learning Goals and Outcomes](#). Specifically, learning goals focusing on ethical leadership and social responsibility and on requiring multiple diverse perspectives on scholarly inquiry and application demonstrate commitment to human and cultural diversity. There are specific graduate courses on diversity-related topics, such as [EDAD 728: Diversity and Social Justice in Schools](#) in the Educational Administration program.

Finally, the institution offers [professional development](#) opportunities for instructors to expand their own [inclusive practices](#) in classes, and the [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity Certificate](#) program is open to all employees and students.

3.B.4 *The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their offerings and the institution's mission.*

UW-Superior has a strong tradition of valuing faculty and student scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge. The University [mission statement](#) specifically references the link to community partnerships, research, and scholarship.

Faculty contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge appropriate to the institution. Although UW-Superior is primarily a teaching public liberal arts institution, the faculty generate significant scholarship in their disciplines and about teaching and learning. Per UW System [tenure policy](#), a faculty member must engage in scholarship, creative work, or the discovery of knowledge to achieve tenure. UW-Superior has an intensive, mandatory annual process specified in the [departmental rules](#) for reviewing and evaluating all pre-tenure faculty. Further, every five years after tenure, faculty members must undergo a [post-tenure review process](#) that includes an evaluation of scholarly output. The institution also regularly [recognizes](#) those faculty who contribute to scholarship, creative activity, and the discovery of knowledge through [award ceremonies](#).

UW-Superior also encourages faculty and instructional academic staff to be highly accessible to support student inquiry. The institution elevated student scholarship and creative work through the establishment of [Undergraduate Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity](#) (URSCA) as a High Impact Practice. URSCA has promoted student research through [Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships](#) (in partnership with the Foundation), research-focused [student pitch competitions](#), [Research in the Rotunda](#), and the [Day of Celebration](#).

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3.C - Core Component 3.C

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

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

Argument

3.C.1 *The institution strives to ensure that the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflects human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.*

UW-Superior maintains hiring [policies](#) and [procedures](#) that enhance the equity, diversity, and inclusivity necessary to meet the University [mission](#) and [strategic plan](#). This is in accordance with UW System [policy](#). The institution expects hiring committees to utilize [recruitment strategies](#) that enhance the diversity of the candidate pool and develop [mentoring plans](#) to support newly-hired colleagues. Additionally, the institution provides [resources for new employees](#) to foster a successful transition to employment at UW-Superior.

The diversity of the UW-Superior [faculty and staff](#) has consistently represented, over the decade, a slightly more female and racially diverse composition than the [Douglas County population](#), which is the county within which the University is located.

3.C.2 *The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance, assessment of student learning; and establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff.*

UW-Superior has both sufficient numbers of and continuity of faculty and renewable instructional academic staff members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty including, but not limited to, the four non-classroom roles identified in this standard: curricular oversight, expectations of student performance, assessment of student learning, and establishing academic credentials for instructional staff. UW-Superior views its instructional community to include both faculty and renewable instructional academic staff members (such as [teaching professors](#)).

Sufficient Numbers and Continuity of Faculty Members

UW-Superior assesses the [sufficiency](#) and continuity of faculty members based on the student-to-instructor ratio. This ratio is a relevant measurement as it focuses on teaching, and it is recognized in higher education as a comparable data point. The institution historically employs sufficient numbers of faculty to allow the institution to maintain a healthy [13:1 student-to-instructor ratio](#). As of Fall 2022, the campus employs [113 full-time and 31 part-time](#) faculty and renewable instructional academic staff. The University's current student-to-instructor ratio is comparable to fellow COPLAC institutions, for which ratios range from [13:1 to 18:1](#). UW-Superior enjoys the lowest student-to-faculty ratio of the UW System four-year comprehensive universities. Other UW campuses have ratios ranging from [17:1 to 23:1](#), with an average ratio of 19:1 (UW System calculates this ratio excluding adjunct instructors, thus the 16:1 ratio for UW-Superior in [this dataset](#)).

The institution is currently experiencing a particularly high level of [open faculty and renewable instructional academic staff positions](#). This is due to generational hiring trends that are producing retirements, turnover in staffing due to pandemic-induced stressors, and a highly competitive job market. While not unique to UW-Superior, the size of the campus and the leanness with which the institution consistently operates has put additional pressures on departments to find sufficient short-term staffing for courses. The institution is committed to resolving these staffing strains, approving [23 instructional searches](#) in the 2022-23 academic year, representing about 19% of the full-time instructional positions at UW-Superior, and [adjusting starting salary ranges](#) to be more in line with comparable institutions.

In recognition of supporting continuity and sufficiency of faculty, newly hired faculty and renewable instructional academic staff complete a formal semester-long orientation to the campus and its processes in the fall semester of their hire. This process, previously called [New Faculty Orientation](#), then [Promoting Excellence in Teaching and Learning](#), is now the [Teaching and Learning Cohort](#). This process has been in place since 2007 and has been designed, refined, and implemented by the [Center for Learning, Innovation, and Collaboration](#) (CLIC). Additionally, each department is required to submit a [strong mentoring plan](#) to support the new hires when requesting searches.

For ongoing continuity measures, the institution has adopted a [remote work policy](#), built [mentorship and leadership programming](#), and is adopting a new [promotion progression](#) for instructional academic staff positions. In recognition of faculty workload management, the institution has focused on [reducing committee assignments](#). The institution has also recognized the disruptiveness of the global pandemic by [pausing](#) on academic program review for one year. The University also invests in ongoing support for faculty in many forms, including [Program Advance Grants](#), [Faculty Development Grants](#), and [sabbatical opportunities](#). Finally, the [Pruitt Center for Mindfulness and Well-Being](#) has several programs designed to assist employees with managing role overload, including the [PERMANENT](#) program and the partnership with [Healthy Minds at Work](#) program.

Faculty Classroom Roles

As noted above, UW-Superior provides [sufficient numbers](#) and continuity of faculty and renewable instructional academic staff members to fulfill faculty classroom roles and responsibilities. Instructional [classroom roles](#) include teaching, guiding learning activities, and providing student feedback, including using research-based pedagogies like [High Impact Practices](#) and [experiential learning](#). UW-Superior has sufficient faculty and renewable instructional academic staff members in all current program areas to fulfill classroom roles, sometimes by using creative methods to ensure class staffing, such as [overloads and adjunct hires](#).

Faculty Non-Classroom Roles

The institution has [sufficient numbers and continuity](#) of faculty and renewable instructional academic staff members to carry out the non-classroom roles identified in this standard. These are curricular oversight, oversight of expectations for student performance, assessment of student learning, and establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff. Instructional non-classroom roles require additional time and attention in order to ensure that the full student learning experience is of the highest quality.

Faculty within academic departments have [primary responsibility](#) for non-classroom roles. They regularly fulfill the curricular oversight responsibility, as evidenced by the [two-year catalog review process](#), the ongoing exercise of [undergraduate curriculum review](#) and [graduate curriculum review](#), the ongoing [assessment protocols](#), and providing input on the establishment of [instructional academic staff credentials](#), such as the recent establishment of the [teaching professor progression](#) series. Despite the current challenges in staffing, all of these non-classroom roles proceed, and each department has [sufficient faculty](#) to carry out these roles.

Additional Non-Classroom Roles of Faculty

Along with the HLC-specified non-classroom roles, there are [sufficient faculty and renewable instructional academic staff](#) members to regularly carry out other important non-classroom roles at UW-Superior, including:

- **Academic advisement:** Traditionally, UW-Superior faculty and select renewable instructional academic staff have carried out academic advising with assistance from the [Center for Academic Advising](#). Beginning in Spring 2016, academic advising transitioned to a [Shared Advising Model](#). Today, faculty and renewable instructional academic staff members advise juniors, seniors and transfer students. They are highly involved in creating [MOUs](#) with the Center for Academic Advising.
- **Student organization advisement:** There are numerous student organizations ([Page 1](#) and [Page 2](#)) at UW-Superior. Faculty and renewable instructional academic staff members usually serve as [advisors](#) for groups operating from their discipline areas.
- **Service:** Community service, service to the department and University, and/or service to the profession is required by [departmental rules](#).
- **Scholarly and creative activity:** Engagement within their fields or disciplines is expected of faculty and now, teaching professors. Expectations for scholarly and creative activity are detailed in the [Unclassified Staff Handbook](#) and in [department rules](#) and in the [teaching professor progression series](#).

Taken altogether, UW-Superior has historically maintained sufficiency and continuity of faculty and renewable instructional academic staff members to fulfill the classroom and non-classroom roles at the institution.

3.C.3 All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual and consortial offerings.

UW-Superior employs faculty and instructional academic staff who meet [academic credentials](#) that are appropriate for the University [mission](#) and student population, including those hired to teach in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs. The University evaluates the credentials of instructors to ensure alignment with relevant external accrediting bodies, such as the [National Association of Schools of Music](#) or the [Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction](#).

Criteria for instructor qualifications are set with each hire at the time of the initial hire. UW-Superior follows the [Minimum Teaching Qualifications Policy](#), which governs the hiring in all program types, for

all teaching qualifications. The policy establishes the minimum qualifications needed for faculty and instructional academic staff, as determined by both credential-based and experience-based criteria. The policy also provides exemptions, as needed on an emergency basis, and is HLC compliant.

The UW System [Administrative Policy 185](#) lays out the criteria for approving instructors for concurrent enrollment, also known as dual credit, programs offered in high schools for university credit. A high school instructor must have at least a master's degree in the discipline in which they teach in order to be approved as a teacher and receive approval of the appropriate university academic department, or, if there is a master's degree in another area, the instructor would require an exception.

The University maintains resumes and transcripts for all faculty and instructional academic staff.

UW-Superior does not offer or participate in contractual or consortial offerings.

3.C.4 *Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.*

Faculty and instructional academic staff at UW-Superior are evaluated regularly, in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures. All faculty are evaluated [each term](#) by [student course evaluations](#) and through annual [departmental peer review](#). Faculty must meet or exceed criteria established for them in the [Unclassified Staff Handbook](#) and within the [departmental personnel rules](#) regarding teaching. Review for faculty occurs with standards for [promotion, tenure, retention, annual review, and post-tenure review](#). Faculty under review create and present [portfolios](#) to their departments for review of their teaching, scholarship, and service.

Similarly, instructional academic staff have [written expectations](#) for teaching and service. Instructional academic staff are reviewed [annually](#), which involves a written review by the supervisor, as well as goal setting for the next academic year.

A [timeline](#) for all personnel decisions is provided to department chairs and directly to the persons who are eligible for various forms of review. [Notice](#) of upcoming faculty personnel actions and instructional academic staff review is provided to the chairs, faculty, and instructional academic staff in writing each August.

Recent efforts, through appropriate faculty governance structures, to standardize departmental by-laws has resulted in a [template](#), a [schedule for review](#), and opportunities for departments to revise their criteria for review.

3.C.5 *The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.*

UW-Superior has processes and resources in place to ensure instructors are current in their disciplines, are adept in the classroom, and are supported in their professional development. This is a consistent area of investment over the decade by the institution, as befits a primarily teaching-focused institution. Professional development for instructors is supported primarily through two offices: the Dean of Academic Affairs and Graduate Studies Office and the Center for Learning, Innovation and Collaboration. The quality of instructors and the effectiveness of the support and development provided by the institution of their work has resulted in several state-wide awards won recently by UW-Superior faculty, [Ms. Mimi Rappley Larson](#) and [Dr. Richard Stewart](#).

The Dean of Faculties and Graduate Studies Office facilitates several resources to support instructors: Faculty Development grants, Jumpstart Scholarships, and Program Advance Grants. The [Faculty Development](#) grants provide funding for continued professional development in teaching, scholarship, and

service. The Jumpstart Scholarships provide funding to support either [grant-writing](#) or [scholarship and creative activity](#). The [Program Advance Grants](#) provide funding to support the development of innovative, contemporary curricula within programs. Through these programs, [many faculty and instructional academic staff](#) are supported in continually developing their teaching roles and staying current in their disciplines.

The [Center for Learning, Innovation, and Collaboration](#) (CLIC) hosts [multiple activities](#) related to the development of effective teaching and learning strategies, which include Communities of Practices, workshops, book clubs, campus sessions, and others. Additionally, CLIC [facilitates travel and attendance](#) at regional and national teaching-related conferences. CLIC also supports and facilitates the development, conducting, and presenting of [Scholarship of Teaching and Learning](#) (SoTL) projects. Finally, CLIC developed the [Superior Learning Experience](#) program to ensure high-quality teaching in any modality, minimize the risk and stress to instructors and students due to modality changes necessitated by COVID-19, and to deepen the University's commitment to a culture of care and effective teaching pedagogies. The Superior Learning Experience resulted in 87 instructors (out of 151) participating and re-designing 94 courses in Summer 2020. While implemented out of the immediate consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, the program's efficacy and success has led to its continuation as a professional development investment by the institution.

To begin their teaching careers at UW-Superior, full-time faculty and instructional academic staff are required to participate in the [Teaching and Learning Cohort](#) (TLC) orientation series, held each fall semester. Those who teach part-time are invited to attend an [adjunct orientation](#) offered by CLIC.

Faculty are eligible for [sabbaticals](#) after five years of full-time service. Sabbatical requests must include information on research and/or activities related to teaching and learning which promote the applicant's expertise.

Additionally, as part of the UW System, UW-Superior has access to programming through the [Office of Professional and Instructional Development](#) (OPID). OPID offers signature annual programs to enhance the skills of UW System educators including [Faculty College](#), [Wisconsin Teaching Fellows and Scholars Program](#), and the [OPID Spring Conference on Teaching and Learning](#).

Finally, the institution monitors and ensures currency in disciplines and adeptness in teaching roles through the annual review processes. UW-Superior requires [faculty](#) and [renewable instructional academic staff](#) to submit annual retention or evaluation documentation, which is reviewed by the academic department and/or unit supervisor, as appropriate (see 3.C.4 above).

3.C.6 *Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.*

As a primarily teaching-focused institution, UW-Superior's central [mission](#) encourages faculty and instructional academic staff to be highly accessible to support student inquiry.

The High Impact Practices (HIPs), particularly [Undergraduate Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activity](#) (URSCA), have brought [students and faculty mentors](#) together in the spirit of inquiry in a number of ways. URSCA has promoted student research through [Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships](#) (in partnership with the Foundation), research-focused [student pitch competitions](#), [Research in the Rotunda](#), and the [Day of Celebration](#). Faculty and instructional academic staff engage in [mentorship of student inquiry](#) throughout the year.

Another HIP, [Senior Year Experience](#), affords students opportunities to share research results, original essays, and original works of art and music in a public venue. Students create these projects in classes and independently, with [input](#) from instructional mentors and advisors.

Instructors are also accessible for additional kinds of student inquiry. Faculty and instructional academic staff must be available for a [minimum of five office hours weekly](#). The governance-approved [syllabus template](#) requires that students be informed of office hours. Increasingly, instructors are offering [office hours through multiple modalities](#) — in person, by telephone, or virtually—to maximize their availability and accessibility to students. Advising is another opportunity for faculty to be accessible to students, to answer questions about their present experience, work out plans for degree progression, and set goals for the future. Many students develop long-standing relationships with their mentors out of these [advising sessions](#).

This support of student inquiry by faculty and instructional academic staff is supported by several policies and practices. UW-Superior students are to be involved in [experiential learning activities](#) in [every course](#) and in [three HIPS](#) before graduation.

Efforts at UW-Superior to ensure that faculty and staff are accessible for student inquiry have been successful. The [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) shows that UW-Superior performs at comparable or higher levels than peer institutions in regards to student engagement with faculty in ways such as career planning, working with faculty on activities other than coursework, discussing course concepts outside of class, or discussing academic performance. Additionally, the results of the HLC-sponsored [student survey](#) indicate that students find instructors to be available and helpful when they need them.

3.C.7 Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and cocurricular activities are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their professional development.

UW-Superior staff members providing support services to students are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.

Types of Positions and Qualification

UW-Superior has [policies and protocols](#) to hire qualified staff members in the student support services area. When UW-Superior is hiring in these categories, the [position descriptions](#) include a section on required qualifications for each position, as related to student support services. These are crafted to be a fit to the position being hired and include both educational and experiential qualifications. There are [guides at the state level](#) for how to craft these position descriptions and how to conduct searches. The recently implemented the TTC project also provides [clear position descriptions](#) for all student support service-related positions.

Training, Orientation, and Professional Development

All new employees have [support](#) available when entering the UW-Superior workforce. HR assists with [resources](#) needed by new employees, made available in the employee intranet. The [shared governance structure](#) of the institution is also explained by administration at senate meetings.

For examples, subscriptions for all staff members to [LinkedInLearning](#), which includes training related to student support, provides professional development opportunities. The [Center for Learning, Innovation and Collaboration](#) (CLIC) offers weekly workshops, events, and presentations for faculty and staff on a wide array of topics related to [relationship-building](#), [inclusion](#), and others that are relevant to student support services. Developing leadership among student support services staff occurs through the annual [Homegrown Mentorship Program](#), designed to deepen leadership skills and create projects that will generate demonstrable change at the University. This program utilizes small, supportive cohorts, comprised of staff from all divisions partnered with a mentor with at least 10 years of experience at the institution. Over [20 individuals](#) have participated over two cohort years. Finally, the [Equity, Diversity, and](#)

[Inclusion Certificate Program](#) supports student support services staff, as well as all members of the institution.

Both the [Academic Staff Senate](#) and the [University Staff Senate](#) award grants each year, which can include student support services projects and staff professional development.

In addition to the professional development opportunities offered through grant funding opportunities, many of the University's student services departments maintain membership in [national and regional professional associations](#) that meet regularly and share information and training.

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3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and resources for effective teaching.

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

Argument

3.D.1 *The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.*

UW-Superior provides numerous student support services suited to the needs of its student populations; understanding what those populations are is important in order to review the student support service array.

The student population of UW-Superior reflects the diversity of the community with a high percentage of students who [have children](#) (13%), are [age 25 or older](#) (30%), are [first generation](#) (46%), and/or are [low-income](#) (33%). Approximately 19% are from [diverse ethnic communities](#). International students comprise [8.7% of the student body](#), the second largest percentage in the UW System, second only to UW-Madison.

The [Educational Success Center](#) (ESC) serves as the primary centralized office to offer students a comprehensive array of services they need to be successful at UW-Superior. This unit is tasked with providing free academic and social support services to all students, regardless of modality. There are six main areas of service: [Disabilities/ADA Services](#), [Tutoring Services](#), [Testing Services](#), [Bridge Program](#), [Supplemental Instruction](#), and [Math FastTrack programming](#). In addition to the services provided by the ESC, the institution also hosts three programs through the Federal Department of Education [TRIO Program: Student Support Services](#), [McNair Scholars Program](#), and [Upward Bound](#). Over the [last five years](#), these programs have served over 2,000 students, have an average persistence rate of 84.53%, and 85.25% of students in these programs maintain good academic standing.

The [Office of Intercultural Student Success](#), [Office of Multicultural Student Affairs](#), and [Center for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#), which includes the [Indigenous Cultures Resource Center](#), provide specific [services and mentoring](#) to [students](#) from diverse ethnic backgrounds and to international students.

In addition to the services mentioned above, UW-Superior offers a [broad range of supports](#) designed to provide a comprehensive network of care to students, including [academic](#), [cocurricular](#), and [holistic support](#). The campus recognizes that for students to be able to focus effectively on learning, they must have a platform of [basic needs](#) that are met. This is reflected in the Culture of Care goal of the [Forward Superior Strategic Plan](#).

The following services provide general support to all students, regardless of their demographic profile:

- [Admissions, Summer Orientation Advisement and Registration](#), [Articulation Agreements](#)

- [Financial Aid](#)
- [Parking Services](#)
- [Campus Safety](#)
- [Technology Services](#) and [Helpdesk](#)
- [Student Health and Counseling Services](#)
- [Pruitt Center for Mindfulness and Well-Being](#)
- [Jim Dan Hill Library](#)
- [Career Services](#)
- [LINK Center](#)

Curricular support services include the following resources dedicated to providing targeted forms of assistance that will allow students to succeed academically, spanning college readiness, degree planning, tutoring, and learning skills, as well as to adapt to and successfully thrive in university life:

- [First Year Experience Program](#)
- [Veteran and Nontraditional Student Center](#)
- [Gender Equity Resource Center](#)
- [Center for Academic Advising](#)
- [Writing Center](#)

This wide range of high-value services is actively [promoted](#) so that students are aware of and encouraged to [utilize](#) these programs and resources.

3.D.2 *The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.*

UW-Superior provides learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. This is true for both incoming and current students. Various enrollment management offices work together to achieve this. The Admissions and Registrar's Offices, for example, work with the Center for Academic Advising Office to [place students appropriately](#), directing them into courses and programs for which students are adequately prepared. Each of the following descriptions represent iterations of improvement that have occurred every year.

During the admissions process, staff from the Admissions Office and Registrar's Office review high school and college transcripts to determine eligibility for admissions. At the time of admissions, students complete testing to determine the appropriate placement in math and writing courses. Approximately [18% of incoming students require remedial courses](#). UW-Superior now implements a co-requisite model for students needing remedial instruction for either [math](#) or [writing](#). This model allows students to develop the required skills for college-level work.

Newly admitted freshmen students attend a [Summer Orientation, Advising and Registration](#) (SOAR) session. Transfer students are required to complete an [online orientation](#).

Under the current [Shared Advising Model](#), all entering freshmen are assigned a professional advisor who follows each student's progress closely, offering careful and thoughtful academic advisement, as well as referrals for other needed support. As students complete University Studies Program requirements and shift into the curriculum of their major and minor, they are matched with faculty advisors in their declared academic disciplines. Professional advisors and faculty advisors utilize appropriate information-sharing and advising tools, such as [Navigate](#) and the [Degree Progress Report](#), to ensure a close working relationship and seamless transition, supporting the student through to graduation.

As described above in 3.D.1, students are provided multiple academic support services through the [Educational Success Center](#). For example, students are also provided an opportunity to participate in the [Mentor Collective Program](#). In this program, a peer mentor serves as a guide in the transition to college experience. Participants are encouraged to provide informal support and connection and to discuss professional goals, managing competing obligations, setting oneself up for success, and making connections with peers and professors.

3.D.3 *The institution provides academic advising suited to its offerings and the needs of its students.*

Historically, UW-Superior utilized a faculty-centric model for academic advising. In recognition of weaknesses of this model, specifically how peak registration periods overlap with faculty off-contract periods, the University has used a [shared advising model](#) since Spring 2016. To prepare faculty advisors for their role, the Center for Academic Advising develops and hosts [professional development resources](#), including the [Advisor Handbook](#).

This model is a [collaboration and partnership](#) between the [Center for Academic Advising](#) and the academic departments at UW-Superior. [Professional academic advisors](#), housed in the Center for Academic Advising, advise freshmen and sophomore students, undeclared students, associate degree seeking students, non-degree seeking students, and students in transition. Many professional advisors are [subject matter experts](#)—such as Mike Raunio, a Social Work graduate of UW-Superior, now advising Social Work undergraduate students—in assigned departments. They may [attend](#) their assigned department's meetings, receiving training and updates from those departments, and share information regarding students in their majors or minors. Faculty advise [juniors and seniors](#) in their programs. Students are assigned to both a professional and faculty advisor when they choose a major. This ensures that the student [always has an advisor available](#) at any time of the year, whether they are seeking advice about their major, career-specific information, or course sequencing recommendations.

Each academic department negotiates a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) with the Center for Academic Advising. These agreements outline the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved. Finally, implementation for the [EAB Navigate system](#) allows for virtual scheduling of advising appointments, for both professional and faculty advisors, as well as the ability to maintain notes and documentation related to advising appointments so that constant monitoring of student progress can occur.

Finally, the institution has actively pursued opportunities to further strengthen the advising process and resources for both advisors and students with the goal of improving retention and graduation rates. The successful awarding of a \$2 million [Department of Education Title III, Part A: Strengthening Institutions grant](#) allows the institution the ability to enhance the use of best practices related to advising and student success, to fully implement Navigate software tools, and to [add staffing](#) in key roles to mentor and support students. This five-year grant advances key goals of the current Forward Superior Strategic Plan and demonstrates the institution's ambitious and consistent commitment to student success.

3.D.4 *The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites, and museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).*

UW-Superior has consistently provided over the decade the infrastructure and resources to students and instructors which are necessary to support effective teaching and learning.

UW-Superior maintains [five buildings for classroom instruction](#), all of which are ADA compliant. Each building includes classrooms of various sizes—from seminar rooms to larger tiered classrooms—and scheduling occurs appropriate to courses. The majority of classrooms include [technology](#) needed for

teaching in multiple modalities, and the institution implements an [annual process](#) for requests to update classroom and lab technologies. Interactive television rooms allow courses to be delivered at distance sites; this technology is now used for those classes offered as Room & Zoom whereby some students attend on-campus and others at a distance synchronously.

As computers are an essential academic tool, UW-Superior has [22 computer labs](#) for student use. [Computer replacement](#) for faculty and instructional academic staff follows the computer replacement policy.

[Information Technology](#) maintains the internet across the campus, including in the residence halls. Wireless internet access is available across campus with intranet connections in most offices. For assistance with computers, internet, and other e-resources, Information Technology is open [day and evening hours](#) to accommodate schedules and needs. This includes walk-in service as well as assistance online and via phone.

The [Jim Dan Hill Library](#) maintains printed and electronic resources needed by students and faculty. As a result of a devastating flood in 2012 that destroyed much of the physical resources of the library, the institution chose to pursue more [electronic resources](#) as contrasted to replacing the physical resources. The library maintains access to hundreds of databases and periodicals, as well as making materials available through interlibrary loan. Open hours on days, evenings, and weekends help meet student needs and schedules. Faculty can access online library resources from their offices. Since [approximately 35%](#) of UW-Superior students are exclusively online learners, and with [62% of students taking at least one online class](#), students more commonly access resources through the databases and other online resources. The library staff respond to this by providing online services for consultation and assistance. Finally, the reference librarians and support staff ensure that [information literacy and research services](#) are available online and face-to-face for students and faculty.

To access both Information Technology and the Jim Dan Hill Library resources and support, faculty, staff, and students can submit [help tickets](#) in both departments for assistance with specific non-immediate needs.

Laboratories are used by programs teaching the natural sciences, psychology, languages, and visual arts, and thus are located in their [academic buildings](#): Barstow Hall, Swenson Hall, and Holden Fine and Applied Arts Center. Labs include the necessary equipment as related to the discipline.

A challenge experienced in maintaining up-to-date laboratories in the sciences and arts has been the financial cost. In 2009, the Student Government Association approved a [differential lab fee](#) to help purchase necessary lab equipment for the sciences to be used in Barstow Hall. Critical laboratory equipment needs for Visual Arts and Music are being addressed in the [Campus Master Plan](#).

An innovative new development for the University, to address the challenge of cutting-edge laboratories, is the designing and launching of a [floating education and research vessel](#). A \$1 million anonymous donation designated to the [Lake Superior Research Institute](#) (LSRI) will recreate the successful L.L. Smith Jr. floating classroom and research program that ran from 1978 to 2012. The addition of this place-based research vessel provides an opportunity for faculty, staff, and students to conduct innovative and regionally-focused educational programming and research critical to the community.

UW-Superior hosts spaces for active majors and cocurricular activities in the arts and music. [Performance spaces](#) include the Thorpe Langley Auditorium and The William “Pope” Wright Jr. Student Center in Old Main, the ballroom in the Yellowjacket Union, and the theater, recital hall, and art exhibit spaces in Holden Fine and Applied Arts Center. While performance spaces are sufficient, concerns about outdated seating and equipment in those spaces has led to the launching of a UW-Superior Foundation [campaign](#) to raise the funds needed to address the issues.

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3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Summary

UW-Superior provides a high-quality education through all of its degrees and certificate offerings, regardless of modality. The University assures that courses, academic programs, and certificates remain current. Undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs have clearly differentiated student learning goals delivered consistently across all modalities. The University Studies Program is congruent with UW-Superior's mission, undergraduate student learning outcomes, and HLC expectations. The University's long-standing commitment to High Impact Practices is evidenced across the curriculum.

During the past decade, UW-Superior was consistently properly staffed with sufficient credentials to achieve the mission. During the COVID-19 years to present, maintaining that staffing level has been increasingly challenging; the institution is reviewing hiring practices to resolve this concern. Faculty and instructional academic staff are subject to review through documented, institutionalized, annual processes. There are sufficient academic resources and support services to promote student success. UW-Superior provides cocurricular programs and enhanced learning in alignment with the specific needs of its students. The advising model has evolved to provide even stronger guidance for students from the time they enter until they graduate. Regardless of how courses are offered, UW-Superior provides a high-quality education.

Sources

There are no sources.

4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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

4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews and acts upon the findings.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that ensure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It ensures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution ensures that the credentials it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission.

Argument

4.A.1. *The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews and acts upon the findings.*

UW System [requires](#) each of its institutions to review academic programs on a cyclical basis, and UW-Superior [conforms to this requirement](#).

At UW-Superior, academic program review is carried out by the [Academic Program Review Council](#) (APRC), a council of the Faculty Senate. The APRC reviews all academic programs, including undergraduate major and minor programs and graduate programs, regardless of the mode of delivery. These [departmental reviews](#) are in-depth. This process has evolved in the past five years to improve both the quality and efficiency with which data is shared with departments and to also update the components with which departments engage in self-analysis and reflection.

Historically, the review was conducted on a 6-year cycle. This has now become a [4-year process](#) to reflect the current faster pace of change experienced in higher education and to ensure that programs respond to advancements in pedagogy, technology, disciplinary findings, and enrollment realities in a more timely manner.

The institution now utilizes a [data dashboard](#), created in partnership between the Office of Institutional Research and Sponsored Programs (IRSP) and the Planning and Budgetary Council (PBC, a council of the Faculty Senate), with input from academic departments and the Faculty Senate. This dashboard

provides [relevant data points](#) such as program enrollment, credit hour production, number of program graduates annually and across a five-year average, and other pertinent information that departments review regularly and use in their self-appraisal during the Program Review process. [Minimum thresholds](#) and data dashboards have been recently built for stand-alone [minors](#) and [graduate](#) programs.

The final major [revision](#) was to the Program Review template, used for [undergraduate](#) major programs and [graduate](#) programs. The updated template reflects the data as provided on the dashboard and speaks to the value of a given program, whether highly-enrolled or foundational to the [mission](#) of the institution. This allows the institution to demonstrate both data- and mission-driven decision-making in the review of its programs. Approved in [2022](#), the template for [stand-alone minor program](#) review is now in use.

Alongside the Academic Program Review (APR) process, the institution also created policy for [Continuous Academic Program Monitoring and Review](#) of academic program performance. Programs whose numbers dip into the “[yellow and red](#)” levels on their dashboards are subject to a process of self-monitoring. The Office of the Provost and the Dean of Academic Affairs provide an [administrative toolkit of support](#), which precedes any decisions to suspend or eliminate a program, per the UW System [policy on academic program array management](#).

In addition, in compliance with UW System [policy](#), UW-Superior [reports](#) its annual program monitoring results in the existing Annual Program Planning, Review, and Array Management Report at the end of each academic year, which is reported to the Board of Regents.

As of Fall 2022, [6 programs](#) have completed the revised academic program review process. One example is the [School of Business and Economics](#) (SBE). After completing the reporting process, the department under review can provide feedback to the Academic Program Review Council on their experience and use of the template. It is expected going forward that the template will be a living document, responsive to the needs and priorities of the campus that will allow programs to self-appraise in the most helpful way for their own health and to focus their goals and contributions to the priorities of the University.

The institution has [temporarily halted](#) the program reviews for the 2022-23 academic year due to the intensive efforts by the campus to roll-out key elements of the [Forward Superior Strategic Plan](#), to manage accreditation review tasks, and to prepare for the implementation of the [Title III, Part A: Strengthening Institutions](#) grant award. The regular cycle of academic program review has [re-commenced](#) for the 2023-24 academic year.

One other example of the institution’s effort at program curation was the [2013-14 program prioritization process](#) that the administration required of all academic and non-academic units. Following the [Dickeson model](#), each department and unit completed an [internal review of their performance](#) and reported their analysis to administration. As a result of this process, a number of programs were [either suspended or placed under further review](#).

As documented, the institution has a consistent history of regularized processes that have produced action on program curation.

4.A.2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.

Transfer Credit

UW-Superior evaluates all the credit it transcripts, as it has done over the past decade. The institution engages in a [two-year cycle of catalog revisions](#), which requires a review of all curriculum. Each department does an internal review of [every course](#) and then manages curricular revisions through the

governance process for both the [undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#) levels.

UW-Superior [evaluates](#) all the transfer credit that it transcripts. In adopting the tool [Transferology](#), through a UW System initiative and contract in 2018, the institution enhanced its ability to evaluate and award credit because of the ease of comparisons to courses at other institutions. Transferology is a consultative tool; the Registrar, [working in consultation with faculty](#) on a case-by-case basis, is responsible for evaluating the credit in cases where there is not a clear equivalence. In addition, the institution has worked to make credit transfer and transcription more transparent to students with the creation of a site dedicated to Transferring Credits and Articulation Agreements.

Experiential Learning and Other Forms of Prior Learning

UW-Superior has a set [standard and process](#) for awarding credit for prior learning. The concept and standards are described in detail in the University catalog which [outlines](#) the specific processes involved.

Credit for prior learning opportunities, each explained in more detail below, include Credit for Prior Learning Portfolio, College Level Exam Program (CLEP), Defense Activity for Nontraditional Education Support (DANTES), Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and departmental examination.

[Credit for Prior Learning](#) via [Portfolio](#) is awarded and posted on a transcript, based on the approval of learning evidence provided in a portfolio to the host academic department that verifies and documents evidence of achieving the learning outcomes of a course. The course [WRIT 298: Prior Learning Portfolio Development](#) can provide instruction on the correct completion of a portfolio to be considered for credit by an academic department.

Credit by examination is described in detail in the [catalog](#). Each exam has a clear description of course equivalency based on exam score and credit limits for each individual exam. Credit by examination can also be pursued through departmental examination under the purview and evaluation of the responsible academic department. The Registrar's Office posts successfully completed examinations on the student's official transcript.

Evaluation and transcribing of military credit is also clearly noted in the [catalog](#). Students who have served one year or more of active duty in the armed services may receive credit towards graduation for certain specialized training and educational programs completed while in military service. In awarding credit, UW-Superior follows the recommendations of the [American Council on Education](#) (ACE).

Language Testing Credit

[Language testing](#) is required for any student prior to enrolling in a non-English language course at UW-Superior and is often used by students pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree, which includes a language requirement. [Standardized tests](#) from such accredited bodies as CLEP, International Baccalaureate, ACTFL and AP College Board can be utilized.

Retroactive Credit

[Retroactive credit](#) guidelines are clearly listed in the catalog. With faculty approval, students who earn a grade of at least a B- in the higher-level course will be awarded retro-credit, posted by the Registrar's Office on the official transcript in the term in which the higher-level course was completed and for the same credit total as if both courses had been completed at UW-Superior.

4.A.3. *The institution has policies that ensure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.*

As noted above in 4.A.2, UW-Superior has clear and consistent [policy](#) that assure the quality of the credit

it accepts in transfer, both at the local institutional level and as part of the UW System [Transfer Information System Commitment](#). Please consult 4.A.2 for more detail about the [process](#). As the previous flowchart shows, the actual quality of individual courses being transferred is assessed and evaluated at the department level.

UW-Superior [accepts credits](#) for college-level course work completed at institutions accredited by a regional or national accrediting organization, recognized by the [Council for Higher Education Accreditation](#) (CHEA). Foreign institutions must be recognized by the [Ministry of Education](#) in that country. Courses must be similar in nature, level, and content to a course in the UW-Superior undergraduate curriculum and applicable to an academic program.

UW-Superior has enhanced its [process](#) and [resources](#) to assure the appropriate transfer of credits. These transfer and articulation agreements establish which courses from partner institutions have been reviewed for acceptance to ease the process for students who intend to transfer to UW-Superior.

The University does not accept [Continuing Education transfer courses](#) for credit. Likewise, while transcribed and used to satisfy specific requirements, [pre 100-level developmental courses](#) do not count for credit.

4.A.4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It ensures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.

Maintaining and Exercising Authority over Prerequisites for Courses, Rigor of Courses, and Expectations for Student Learning

The institution has consistently maintained and exercised authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, and expectations for student learning via Wisconsin State Statute [Chapter 36](#), which states that the faculty of a University of Wisconsin institution “shall have the primary responsibility for advising the chancellor regarding academic and educational activities.”

Locally, UW-Superior exercises authority over its undergraduate curriculum via [Academic Policy 1117](#) and its graduate curriculum via [Academic Policy 1601G](#), which guide the appropriate processes and approvals for creating, changing, and ending academic and learning experiences for students. Policy and process is under the purview of the Faculty Senate and its attendant councils, including [Graduate Council](#), [Undergraduate Academic Affairs Council](#), and [University Studies Committee](#). In order to regulate prerequisites, rigor, and expectations, the steps included in the academic policies cited above include course approval processes and forms at the [undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#) levels to demonstrate the scrutiny and voting undertaken by appropriate councils and committees; ultimate approval is obtained by the chancellor. The job of these councils is to review for quality, rigor, and the links to expectations for student learning.

Academic departments, under the [leadership of their chair](#), are charged with initiating, managing, and implementing curriculum review and revisions.

Maintaining and Exercising Authority over Access to Learning Resources

The institution maintains and exercises authority over access to learning resources such as the learning management system and all student support aspects.

Over the last decade, the institution has used [Desire2Learn](#) (D2L) and most currently [Canvas](#) for its

learning management system. The UW campuses work with UW System to provide the learning management system. UW-Superior's platform is curated and administered by [two local administrators](#) and the design and content of courses is within the control of faculty members and their departments. A set of [design guidelines and a syllabus template](#) are provided under the authority of the Dean of Academic Affairs.

Under the authority of the provost and the chancellor, the [Jim Dan Hill Library](#) collection is consistently updated and reviewed for its quality and sufficiency to provide learning resources for students in consultation with the Library Director. After the recovery from the devastating 2012 flood, the Jim Dan Hill Library has built up its resources to over [500,000 e-resources](#), available to all on-campus and online learners. The physical building houses a collection of about [80,000 volumes, periodicals, government documents, films, and archival materials](#). The institution has committed to expanding access to all resources from the library. All circulating items such as books and films are routinely mailed to online degree-seeking students via US mail upon request. Librarians provide [on-demand support](#) in person or online for information literacy and research support needs of students, faculty, staff, and community members.

Under the authority of the Dean of Academic Affairs and Graduate Studies, the institution provides learning access to students who require additional support and help through the [Educational Success Center](#), specifically through tutoring services. [Tutoring services](#) are available for every course in every discipline with emphasis in writing, math, science, and business with other areas supported on-demand. The institution also employs third-party online tutoring services such as [NetTutor](#) and peer mentoring through [Mentor Collective](#). Students who meet the federal guidelines of the Department of Education also can receive tutoring through the [TRIO Student Support Services](#) office.

The institution, under its authority to provide [Disability Support Services](#) in compliance with the law, provides services to students with identified disabilities. Disability Support Services fosters an inclusive environment and assists faculty and advisors in making accommodations for students in the classroom or in other learning environments.

Maintaining and Exercising Authority over Faculty Qualifications

The institution maintains and exercises authority over faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs, via a [minimum qualifications policy](#) for all instructors, which was approved by Faculty Senate in 2016.

The institution assures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.

The institution has delegated authority to create, review, and monitor the quality and compliance of all dual credit courses or programs for high school students to the [Center for Continuing Education](#) (CCE). Under their authority and in collaboration with academic departments, [instructors of dual-credit courses](#) must be approved in advance by the academic department hosting the course and are held accountable for facilitating the course in a manner that is consistent with the hosting program's standards, in accordance with the [Memorandum of Understanding](#). To ensure this, the academic department reviews a proposed high school teacher's transcripts and CV; the teacher must meet the UW-Superior [Minimum Qualification policy](#). A department liaison is appointed, and they agree to the terms of the cover letter to supervise and support the high school teacher to offer the course in a manner equivalent to the UW-Superior offering, with high-quality teaching practices and rigorous college-level standards. The academic department and the Center for Continuing Education work [collaboratively](#) to complete contracts, engage in the semester-long monitoring partnership, and complete at least one site visit. At the conclusion of the course, the high school retains the students' assessments, and UW-Superior retains the syllabi on record.

4.A.5. *The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.*

Social Work Program

Accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) is required for graduates with baccalaureate degrees in Social Work to be eligible to take the American Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) national exam for licensure. The Social Work program at UW-Superior must meet the requirements of CSWE in order to maintain accreditation. A self-study is required every 8 years, along with an on-campus site visit. The most recent [reaffirmation of accreditation](#) was conferred in November 2015 and will remain valid through October 2023. The Social Work Program is currently completing its [2023 reaffirmation of accreditation process](#).

Department of Music

Accreditation by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) verifies the highest standard of program quality from a national-level reviewer. NASM requires a comprehensive review and self-study and hosts an on-site review team every 10 years with an extensive report and self-reflection by the Music Department. A handbook available through NASM outlines the requirements and guidelines to achieve and maintain approval; only 600 institutions meet these requirements due to NASM's selective nature. The most [recent reaffirmation of accreditation](#) for UW-Superior was awarded in July 2018 for the Bachelor of Arts in Music, the Bachelor of Music Education, and the Bachelor of Music in Performance. The next review for reaccreditation is scheduled to take place in 2026-2027.

Department of Education

Accreditation for the Educator Preparation Programs at UW-Superior, including education-related undergraduate and graduate degree programs, is governed by the [Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction](#) (DPI) and the [Wisconsin Administrative Code PI 34](#) (legislatively revised in 2018; as revised, program re-approval must be completed by August 31, 2023). There are two levels of DPI approval: approval for the individual programs and approval for the institution to offer these programs. In October 2022, UW-Superior received [full institutional re-approval from DPI](#) to offer educator preparation programs in accordance with the revised Wisconsin Administrative Code PI 34. To maintain DPI approval, UW-Superior [hosts a site visit](#) from DPI every October and follows an annual review process to address key aspects of the program as guided by the revised Wisconsin Administrative Code PI 34.

At the program level, Wisconsin's DPI [maintains a list](#) of all Wisconsin-approved educator preparation programs, including those offered by UW-Superior. UW-Superior is [completing the re-approval process](#) for each individual licensure program well ahead of the August 31, 2023 deadline. When review is complete, UW-Superior [will have](#) 9 baccalaureate major programs, 6 undergraduate minor programs, 1 undergraduate concentration, and 6 graduation programs.

As further quality assurance of subject-matter knowledge by students, successful completion of a series of [Praxis exams](#) administered by Educational Testing Services (ETS) is also required for individual licensure as an educator in Wisconsin for certain UW-Superior programs (elementary education, early childhood education, special education, and school counseling) and for undergraduate students in all other education programs who have a minimum major/minor GPA of at least 2.75 but less than 3.0.

Graduate Counseling

The Wisconsin [Department of Safety and Professional Services](#) (DSPS) Administrative Rules govern master's level degree programs in professional counseling in the State of Wisconsin. The Counselor Educator program [remains current](#) with the Board in the clinical track and in the marriage and family

track as part of those licensure requirements. In addition, the Counselor Education Program clinical track offers [content training consistent](#) with the Minnesota Board of Behavioral Health and Therapy statutes and programmatic licensure processes. Finally, students are also [provided instruction](#) on how to pursue licensure in both Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Small Business Development Center

The accreditation of the UW-Superior [Small Business Development Center](#) is a [joint review](#) mandated by the Office of Small Business Development Centers and America's Small Business Development Center. This is mandated in the agreements between the national offices and conducted every five years by a review committee made up of State Director peers from across the nation. Accreditation qualifies the host institution ([UW Institute for Business and Entrepreneurship](#)) to apply for SBA funding administered by the Office of Small Business Development Centers. UW-Superior is [currently accredited](#) through 2025, under the UW Institute for Business and Entrepreneurship.

4.A.6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution ensures that the credentials it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission.

The institution has consistently monitored and evaluated over the decade the [success of its graduates](#) with the collection and review of data from multiple sources. Each year, the Office of Institutional Research and Sponsored Programs (IRSP) manages data collection from recent graduates through multiple sources. This includes [self-reported surveys](#) (conducted online since Spring 2019), anecdotal faculty or departmental reports, and [National Student Clearinghouse](#). For all of these measures, the knowledge rate measures the number of students that outcomes are identified for, across all sources. Data collection and analysis follow [guidelines](#) published by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). Knowledge rates for these surveys are generally high, with the [2018-19 rate around 60%](#).

Six months after spring graduation, IRSP re-sends the survey and re-assesses the National Student Clearinghouse database to get as high a [knowledge rate](#) as possible, employing student workers to call alumni and take the survey over the phone to ensure the best data possible. This practice was paused in 2020-21 due to the pandemic but was reinstated in Fall 2021. Once all data is as thoroughly recorded as possible, IRSP publicly shares the information in the report with stakeholders on the institution's [Superior Outcomes](#) website.

UW System also supports the collection of data on the success of graduates. In a one-time project contracted through [Equifax in May 2020](#), UW System conducted an analysis of job titles, salaries, and other factors related to post-graduation success.

From these careful data collection processes, the institution finds that the majority of graduates are either [working within their field](#) (70 %) or are in [graduate school](#) (22%) within 6 months of graduation. [Eight-seven percent](#) of graduates agree that their undergraduate experience prepared them for the next step in their career path. The survey instrument also includes [questions](#) related to the [UW-Superior Student Learning Goals](#). Students report that the institution contributed [at least "quite a bit" to the following skills](#): critical thinking, creative thinking, individual and social responsibility, written communication, and verbal communication. Please note that the percentage of students answering this way has [increased](#) since the last assessment three years prior.

Finally, in 2020-21 UW-Superior's increased growth in graduate programs and enrollment led to a [study of these graduates' success](#). This effort paved the way to including graduate programs in the annual survey and data collection routine.

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4.B - Core Component 4.B

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

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

Argument

4.B.1. *The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and cocurricular offerings.*

UW-Superior has established clear and consistent student learning goals as well as effective processes for the assessment of student learning in three curricular and several cocurricular areas.

The UW-Superior undergraduate [Student Learning Goals](#) were adopted through the [governance process in November 2014](#). There are three goals: Communication, Individual and Social Responsibility, and Creative and Critical Thinking. In [Fall 2016](#), the graduate [Student Learning Goals](#) were adopted: Mastery of Content, Ethical Leadership and Social Responsibility, Communication, and Scholarly Inquiry and Application.

Specifically for undergraduates, the following curricular and cocurricular experiences are mapped to the Student Learning Goals: [majors and minors](#), the [University Studies Program](#), [Student Affairs](#), and [Athletics](#). Since Fall 2021, work is underway to map [Student Employment](#) roles and duties to the Student Learning Goals as well.

UW-Superior has strong, routine [processes for the assessment of student learning](#) in undergraduate, graduate, and cocurricular offerings.

Undergraduate Academic Programs

Undergraduate major and minor programs, whether delivered online or face-to-face, developed [initial assessment processes in 2011](#) and have continuously improved them. Over the decade, the assessment processes became increasingly institutionalized and have continued consistently. The current process for the major and minor programs is as follows:

Students engage in their learning experiences in the [majors and minors](#) and through the [University Studies](#) courses. The primary mechanism for assessing student learning is through the required [Senior Capstone and Senior Year Experience](#) project. Students are expected to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities in their major and the UW-Superior student learning outcomes. All seniors must give a [public presentation](#) of their capstone work. Notably, in Spring 2020, all programs moved their Senior Year Experience to an [online format](#), including music recitals, writing and art portfolios, and research posters and presentations, as part of the campus response to COVID-19. Post-pandemic, some programs returned to in-person presentations, although some retained an online presence to share [student work publicly](#), such as posting student work on websites.

At the presentations, faculty rate their students' work for the learning goal, using [AAC&U VALUE rubrics](#), and reflect on the students' performances. Programs reflect on the aggregate ratings and complete an [assessment report](#) that records the faculty's insights and plans to change curriculum or pedagogy to further improve students' learning experiences. In a given year, the report requires programs to [demonstrate improvements](#) from the previous cycle. For example, Student Learning Goal 1 was assessed in 2015-16 and again in 2019-20. Programs report the [changes](#) they've implemented, in this iterative way.

The final step of the assessment process is internal accountability and reporting out to stakeholders. To accomplish this, the [Assessment Committee](#), a governance group charged by Faculty Senate, reads each of the more than 30 assessment reports. The committee [provides feedback](#) to the programs on the results and intended responses. The Assessment Coordinator then [reports](#) out on the process and aggregated assessment results to campus stakeholders via annual all-campus email updates. These communications may include the [raw data of the ratings](#), a snapshot of the programs' reports, and may provide context for each year's achievements.

This 3-goal, 3-year process is well-instantiated at the University, having completed two full 3-year cycles in [2015-18](#) and [2019-2022](#). Upon concluding a cycle, with 2018-19 being the first and 2022-23 being the second, the institution takes an intentional year of [REST](#): REflect, Strategize, Take action. This provides some time for faculty to put into place their ideas for improvements to curriculum and pedagogy, as well as gives the Assessment Coordinator and Assessment Committee a chance to work on long-term planning and appropriate changes to the assessment reporting forms, learning goals, or other aspects of the assessment process in concert with governance.

University Studies Program

Assessment of the University Studies Program (USP) has also become well-instantiated at UW-Superior after a [key report to UW System](#) on general education. As a result, "General Education" was [redesigned](#) to be "University Studies" and was launched in Fall 2017. The USP assessment process is a 3-year cycle that proceeds as follows:

In a given fall semester, a [subset of categories](#) in the curriculum are brought together to assess the Goal/Outcome to which they are mapped. The University Studies Committee, with input from instructors, determine a [common measure](#) for the students to produce. Given the variety of disciplinary perspectives in a category such as, for instance, [Global Awareness](#), the measure may be a written reflection or the type of writing task that can show certain outcomes regardless of disciplinary content. The decision is instructor-driven.

Measures are collected and rated by instructors. Then, a [reflection session](#) is held in which instructors discuss the trends in the data, as well as anonymous samples of student work. The ratings and reflection session culminate in a [report](#) compiled by the Assessment Coordinator and shared with the entirety of the University Studies instructors and other campus stakeholders.

Graduate Programs

Graduate Programs met in Fall 2021 to begin assessment practices. Goals were previously established, as noted above. The programs created a [five-year assessment plan](#) that was approved by Faculty Senate in [Spring 2022](#). Assessment of designated courses in each program commenced in Spring 2022 with results and reports submitted in [Fall 2022](#). This first iteration of assessment focused on [Goal 4](#): Scholarly Inquiry and Application. Programs assessed the work of 102 graduate students, with all students meeting expectations at the master's level.

Cocurricular Programs

Assessment efforts began in cocurricular units in 2015-16. Beginning in 2016, a Cocurricular Assessment Task Force, appointed by the provost, identified the units that would be responsible for assessing student learning in this domain and [reported its recommendations](#) to the Chancellor's Cabinet. The task force completed a pilot assessment that entailed [mapping the 13 units to the Student Learning Goals](#) and conducting a [survey](#), which identified strengths and weaknesses in connecting student learning goals to student employment. As a result of this work, key units in Student Affairs developed assessment plans unique to their areas and more [direct assessment](#) of learning goals. Implementation of these [plans](#) and reflecting on what was learned has led to changes in [training and professional development](#) support for student employees, as well as [new programming](#) that allows student employees to demonstrate learning goals more effectively. For example, the [Department of Athletics](#) completes both [internal and external assessment](#), including surveys of current and former student-athletes, an equity review of resources and supports provided to student-athletes, and a compliance and fiscal responsibility analysis. The institution is continuing to expand assessment of cocurricular programs, as demonstrated by the recent assessment of student learning outcomes among [Student Employment](#). The cocurricular divisions also spend a day [sharing assessment results and reflecting on proposed changes](#) each year.

4.B.2. *The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.*

UW-Superior uses information gained from assessment to improve student learning as evidenced above, in 4.B.1. In 4.B.1, the process and the improvements to student learning are documented. The institution has [macro-evidence summaries of the feedback](#) provided to departments by the Assessment Committee on their assessment practices and use of the results. To provide more in-depth examination of how this works, the institution provides two evidentiary snapshots as examples of improvements to student learning, as informed by the assessment results.

Evidentiary Snapshot # 1: Department of Education

One of UW-Superior's largest majors, the undergraduate programs in the [Department of Education](#), sought to help students increase their proficiency in written communication; specifically, results from the first cycle of Goal 1: Communication in 2015-16 prompted the department to create a new unit within the 100-level gateway course entitled "Communication as a Professional Educator," ensuring that all majors at the entry-point received practice and feedback on their writing. As the evidence shows, in 2020, the program saw general improvement and understanding and are able to zero-in further on improvements to students' use of evidence and syntax in their writing.

Evidentiary Snapshot # 2: Natural Sciences

[Natural Sciences](#) must balance attention to students' scientific knowledge and abilities with liberal arts learning, as per the UW-Superior [mission](#) and curriculum. This has posed a challenge in the past, but by carefully aligning their curriculum with the UW-Superior Student Learning Goals in 2020, results of students' oral presentations on a Quantitative Literacy rubric showed that students were well-able to represent and communicate their process and findings, as well as show high ethical standards for the scientific community.

These two snapshots are replicated across majors in the UW-Superior curriculum. The [macro report-out](#) to campus provides evidence of the magnitude of changes that occur based on this process.

4.B.3. *The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty, instructional and other relevant staff members.*

UW-Superior has consistently improved its assessment practices over the decade. The institution's current [assessment process](#) is based on good practice and is developed to ensure that all students can

demonstrate competencies in important student learning outcomes. UW-Superior's Assessment Committee uses methodologies that are best practices, including [AAC&U VALUE Rubrics](#). These practices were developed, in part, through the institution's participation in the 2010-2012 [HLC Assessment Academy](#).

UW-Superior includes [active and substantial participation](#) of faculty and academic staff members in assessment, which occurs throughout the design and implementation process. For curricular assessment, [faculty and instructional academic staff members](#) in the academic programs rate students' work and reflect on the trends, write assessment reports, and make continuous improvement decisions to make changes in pedagogy or curriculum. UW-Superior does not use third-party vendors for assessment. For [cocurricular assessment](#), academic and university staff are the main participants in the assessment process and rate students' work, provide assessment reports, and make improvement decisions regarding professional development and programming.

Another best practice adopted by UW-Superior is the [direct assessment of authentic student learning](#) through the assessment of products that the [students themselves create](#). The student products that are assigned and rated are created by students to demonstrate what they have learned in the most appropriate way for their programs of study. They are authentic and useful assignments embedded in their chosen curriculum. As recommended by the [AAHE](#), UW-Superior avoids the use of stand-alone or one-off writing prompts or exams.

Finally, UW-Superior values and actively demonstrates accountability and transparency in the assessment practices used by units. The Faculty Senate charges the [Assessment Committee](#) made up of faculty, instructional academic staff, and an ex officio member from the Office of Institutional Research and Sponsored Programs to review the programs' assessment reports and provide peer-to-peer scrutiny and feedback. The committee reviews about [30 reports per year](#), and the [Assessment Coordinator](#) organizes the records of the assessment data, feedback, findings, and curricular changes reported by the programs. Additionally, one of the most important revisions that has occurred over the decade is the intentional inclusion of assessment of student learning results to the [Integrated Planning and Budget Process](#). This change reflects the centrality and importance of assessment results to long-term planning and budgeting efforts. All of these aspects are [reported out](#) routinely each year to the campus stakeholders, keeping the process, results, and data-based decisions transparent to the public.

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4.C - Core Component 4.C

The institution pursues educational improvement through goals and strategies that improve retention, persistence and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

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

Argument

4.C.1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence and completion that are ambitious, attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations and educational offerings.

Over the last decade, UW-Superior has made consistent concerted effort to set concrete goals for student retention, persistence, and completion. While ongoing changes in leadership, multiple re-assessments of campus enrollment targets, and the recalibration of tuition revenue targets to be consistent with mission created challenges, the institution did improve student service and succeeded in maintaining relatively stable retention. These efforts gained the institution experience and wisdom, and UW-Superior is now positioned to set redefined goals, enact effective project management to guide efforts in meeting those goals, and conduct effective analysis of progress along the way.

In 2013, the [Strategic Enrollment Management \(SEM\) Plan](#) was oriented toward fifteen recruitment goals and nine retention goals. Many of those goals were [achieved by 2016](#). As a result of these achievements, the 2013 SEM Plan was [retired in 2017](#) by Chancellor Wachter.

Between 2013 and 2017, UW-Superior took steps towards clarifying its [enrollment management goals](#) and [recalibrating how these goals are achieved](#). The institution honed its focus through the [Superior Visions 2020 Strategic Plan](#) on [recruitment](#), [retention](#), [persistence](#), and [completion](#) as the key indicators of enrollment success. Three important factors led to the goals that were then set in 2016-17 in these areas.

First, in 2015 UW System required each institution to set specific enrollment management goals related to recruitment, retention, completion, and persistence under [Act 55: Educational Performance Measures](#). UW-Superior established [four and six year graduation goals](#) for all full-time new freshmen with sub-population goals for Pell recipients and non-Pell recipients, underrepresented minorities, and non-underrepresented minorities. More recently, in 2022, UW System created a [strategic plan](#) that required each institution to submit [retention and completion goals](#) for several student populations. This is a good example of how UW System helps institutions focus on enrollment management targets.

Second, UW-Superior implemented an [added layer of specific goals](#) for enrollment management at the end of 2016 with semester targets for recruitment, retention, persistence, and completion. The first iteration of

this deeper level of planning was piloted in Spring 2017.

Third, the [Superior Visions 2020](#) strategic plan set clear expectations for persistence and retention. The metrics that operationalized [Initiative 3, Goal 2](#) were specific on the need to implement a shared advising model to increase retention; the metrics that operationalized [Initiative 4, Goal 2](#) defined the need to create a specific dashboard to monitor progress on retention and graduation rates. These targets were [monitored and recalibrated](#), as needed.

In Spring 2017, these actions demonstrated efficacy; the chancellor's [Spring 2017 weekly update](#) showed that UW-Superior was retaining more students. These three layers of goals ensure that the University is executing enrollment management strategies on an annual, cyclical, and semester basis in coordination with UW System targets. The established goals are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to UW-Superior's [mission](#), student populations, and educational offerings.

The current goals recognize that the institution needs to maintain realistic enrollment management goals while also growing tuition revenue within realistic limits. At the same time, the UW-Superior student demographic is complex. The [student population](#) includes a large percentage of Pell-eligible and first-generation students, two populations that often have challenges in retention, persistence, and completion. Given the unique needs of UW-Superior's student population, realistic enrollment management goals have always included a recognition that some students will not persist despite the institution's best efforts.

From 2018 to the present, the institution has continued to revise and monitor retention, persistence, and completion goals through three representative examples: a multi-layered [Continuous Academic Program Monitoring and Review Policy](#), the creation of the [Student Success Initiative](#), and the recently attained [Title III, Part A: Strengthening Institutions grant](#).

The creation of the Planning and Budgetary Council (PBC) [Dashboard](#) and the later development of the [Continuous Academic Program Monitoring and Review Policy](#) established a consistent process for setting retention, persistence, and completion goals and monitoring achievement. Annually, academic programs are provided a review of their current completion metrics in the [PBC Dashboard](#), as well as the goals set by the institution. This includes the average number of graduates within the past 5 years, the average number of credits to degree, 4-year and 6-year completion rates, and average course enrollment numbers. As established by the Continuous Academic Program Monitoring and Review Policy, those programs who are not currently meeting the institution's completion goal will begin a [multi-year effort](#) to improve their completion rates. This may include increasing recruitment, retention and persistence of students, or modifications needed to the curriculum or structure of the degree program to improve completion rates, as was done in [Computer Science](#) and in [Mathematics](#). The institution is [currently reviewing](#) the feasibility of adding retention rate metrics to these annual reports to further integrate key student metrics in program decision-making.

The [Student Success Initiative](#), in collaboration with several working groups for the [Forward Superior Strategic Plan](#), is [charged](#) with developing an institutional definition of "student success"; establishing student success key performance indicators and benchmarks for retention, persistence, and completion rates; and designing and monitoring a clear process of data review and reporting on progress. A critical component of the Student Success Initiative is the implementation of three specific recommendations from the institution's consultant, Complete College America. The consultant's charge was to identify practices that research shows will move the needle on retention, persistence, and completion. These three initiatives include [Purpose First](#), [First Year Experience](#), and [Basic Student Needs](#). All three of these recommendations involve setting goals and monitoring results related to retention, persistence, and completion.

Finally, the recent [Title III, Part A: Strengthening Institutions](#) project proposes to stabilize, grow, and sustain retention and completion rates. Specifically, the five-year project targets increasing retention rates from first to second year by [12% \(to 73%\)](#) and increasing 6-year graduation rates by [18% \(to 52%\)](#). This will be done through integrated efforts targeting the [advising model](#): reviewing student orientation, increasing professional development of advisors, identifying and solving structural challenges to the advising system, and implementing the full capacity of [EAB Navigate](#), a student success navigation system.

Each of these three current programs utilize concrete retention, persistence, and completion goals to guide decision-making, resource allocation, and program modification, as appropriate. These initiatives are appropriate to the [mission](#), student population, and educational offerings at UW-Superior. Their goals are to clearly define student success for the campus, to attend to achievement gaps, and to continue to develop new initiatives to support these mission-critical areas.

4.C.2. *The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence and completion of its programs.*

UW-Superior consistently collects information on student retention, persistence, and completion through the Office of Institutional Research and Sponsored Programs (IRSP). This office prepares [public documents](#) and [internal reports](#) that summarize current and past data on these topics. Additionally, [system-level data](#) is used to examine comparisons between like-UW comprehensives and to situate the institution in system-level retention and completion trends.

The University analyzes the retention, persistence, and completion data at the [institutional](#), [governance](#), and [departmental](#) levels. The IRSP office also provides [individualized evaluation reports](#) for faculty and staff to assess the effectiveness of specific interventions aimed to improve retention, persistence, and completion.

This data is disseminated during [Opening Week](#) presentations designed to update the University on key topics, such as enrollment management. In addition, the IRSP sponsors a [Data Summit](#), an event that department chairs and other key offices are invited to in order to take a deep-dive into enrollment trends. At the program level, the IRSP disseminates [customized data](#) on retention, persistence, and completion to academic departments for the [Academic Program Review](#) process (explained in Criterion 4.A.1).

Since the implementation of [EAB Navigate](#), the IRSP has ready access to a variety of retention, persistence, and completion reports. Additionally, EAB Navigate prepares a [10-year predictive analytical report](#) related to the probability of a student persisting to the next term.

4.C.3. *The institution uses information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.*

Over the last decade, UW-Superior has experienced an evolution in the strategies and approaches to using data on retention, persistence, and completion in its decision-making. The institution sought external consultant recommendations as early as 2011, which documented the need to use data to make improvements in student retention, persistence, and completion rate performance. This was summarized in [2012](#). This set the stage for the institution's commitment to building strategic, data-driven plans for improving student retention, persistence, and completion rates.

Based on data, the institution developed an ongoing series of recommendations and action plans, all of which required analysis of efficacy. For example, one critical recommendation was the [Provost's Taskforce on Guided Pathways for Student Success](#), a collaborative effort to improve the student experience and increase retention, persistence, and completion. One consequence was the recognition of excess credit to

degree completion and programs who had them were required to [review data and justify why](#). Additionally, the institution reviewed and revised the transfer process, implementing [new technology](#) to improve student information about transfer and increasing the rate at which courses were accepted as direct equivalents. Finally, each department was [required to evaluate the DFW](#) rates in courses and [report](#) improvements to curriculum, student relationships, and student referrals to necessary resources.

As part of structural changes to improve how data is used to effect student outcomes, the institution developed and revised the [Integrated Planning and Budget Process](#), created [cross-divisional committees](#) when implementing action plans, and regularized data communication using outlets such as the [Data Summit](#) and [Opening Week sessions](#).

As a result of these structural changes, the University has significantly improved its ability to not only collect and analyze data related to persistence, retention, and completion, but also to act on projects of improvement in response to that data. Most notably, the creation of the [PBC Dashboard](#) provides critical data related to completion rates and retention rates for academic programs, which those programs must review and [respond to](#). Key metrics related to completion rates are highlighted in the [Continuous Academic Program Monitoring and Review Policy](#) and process. Programs that are [not performing](#) must propose improvements through [action plans](#). Failure to improve on these key metrics can result in the program being under review or suspended, according to the policy.

4.C.4 The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

UW-Superior uses Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) definitions to determine retention and completion rates for use in the [Common Data Set](#). The Common Data Set represents "a collaborative effort among data providers in the higher education community and the College Board, Peterson's, U.S. News & World Report, and Wintergreen/Orchard House." The Common Data Set is compiled and published to the UW-Superior website on an annual basis.

In addition to IPEDS standards, UW-Superior's Office of Institutional Research and Sponsored Programs (IRSP) utilizes alternative measures for use in reporting student retention and completion rates in cases where IPEDS definitions do not suffice. One example is the disaggregation of retention and completion results by students' major programs. In such cases, clear documentation is provided on the process used to analyze the data as well as how to interpret the resulting reports. These [customized reports](#) are generated for each major program at UW-Superior and are provided to academic departments as a source of information to be used in writing [departmental reports](#) and [program reviews](#).

Another notable example where UW-Superior goes beyond the IPEDS definitions is in [separate tracking](#) of transfer students and first-time freshmen. With transfer students making up a very high proportion (between 45% and 50%) of all incoming students each year, the University has recognized the importance of this student demographic by performing separate reporting, at the institutional level, for first-time freshmen and transfer students.

In the same vein, at the national level, UW-Superior, along with all other comprehensive UW System institutions, participates in the [Student Achievement Measure](#), whose purpose is to "track student movement across postsecondary institutions to provide a more complete picture of undergraduate student progress and completion."

To provide meaningful interpretation of student retention and completion data, comparisons with peer

institutions are facilitated with the use of tools such as the interactive online Accountability Dashboard available through UW System's Office of Policy Analysis and Research. For example, the [Progress & Completion](#) dashboard option yields a retention chart showing UW-Superior in comparison with a group of peer institutions pre-selected to align with the financial and demographic characteristics of this individual campus.

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4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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

Summary

UW-Superior demonstrates its responsibility for quality educational programs through regular Academic Program Reviews, Continuous Academic Program Monitoring and Review, annual assessment reports, periodic review of the University Studies Program curriculum, external accreditations, and documentation of the success of graduates through employment rates, admission rates to advanced study, and alumni surveys. Transfer of credit is carefully examined to assure that consistency and quality of courses transferred are aligned with UW-Superior standards through faculty involvement.

Commitment to students' educational achievement is valued at UW-Superior. The University has made great strides in the area of assessment and continuous improvement. Student learning outcomes have been established and applied at the graduate, undergraduate, and general education levels. Undergraduate, graduate, and University Studies programs submit annual assessment plans and reports, receiving feedback from a faculty-led committee. Assessment reports require each program to discuss how it uses assessment outcomes to inform continuous instructional and programmatic improvements.

While UW-Superior has experienced challenges with retention, persistence, and completion rates, it has demonstrated its commitment by significantly enhancing its capacities and strategies to set, manage, and meet enrollment targets and to collect and analyze data collected through a variety of sources.

Sources

There are no sources.

5 - Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

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

5.A - Core Component 5.A

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

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

Argument

5.A.1 Shared governance at the institution engages its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students—through planning, policies and procedures.

Shared governance is vibrant and active at UW-Superior and engages its internal constituencies through planning, policies, and procedures. Five examples demonstrate that shared governance is a valued practice at UW-Superior.

First, UW-Superior maintains an engaged and positive relationship with its governing board, the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System, under Wisconsin [Chapter 36](#). The Board of Regents knows the UW campuses through "[Regent Buddies](#)." Several UW-Superior leaders are involved in key initiatives at the System level, such as the Associate Vice Chancellor Dr. Harry Anderson in the [mental health initiative](#) and the roles of [Chancellor Renee Wachter](#) in developing the new [UW System Strategic Plan](#) and the [UW System Online Strategic Growth Report](#). In addition, the campus's [Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance](#) served on the search committee for the new UW System President. The institution's [chancellor, provost and Senior Student Affairs Officer](#) attend all Board of Regents meetings to ensure the campus's needs are heard and to positively contribute to a healthy UW System. These kinds of commitments by UW-Superior leadership have existed consistently over the past decade and show that UW-Superior engages with its governing board in an effective way.

Second, UW-Superior has a clear structure of governance bodies, per WI [Chapter 36](#) and [Regent Policy 20-20](#), to represent all internal constituencies. They meet regularly with administration to engage in [consultation and advising dialogues](#). The practice of [advising and/or consulting](#) is used to ensure regularized, routinized information flow and engagement as part of the fabric of the institution.

The constituency groups are described here:

- [Faculty Senate](#) and its [five councils](#) are the primary mechanism for shared governance, from macro to micro details, as related to policy, practice, and planning. Administration [meets regularly](#) with

these groups to engage in advising and consultation.

- The [Academic Staff Senate](#) is the recognized governing body for all academic staff, both instructional and non-instructional. Administration [meets regularly](#) with the Academic Staff Senate to engage in advising and consultation on matters related to policies and practices that are related to personnel matters.
- The [University Staff Senate](#) is the recognized governing body for all university staff. The chancellor, provost and other leadership members [meet monthly](#) with University Staff Senate to dialogue.
- The [Student Government Association](#) (SGA) serves as the voice of the students. The SGA has three main councils and committees: (1) the [Student Affairs Committee](#) reviews, develops, and recommends policy and guidelines regarding student life, services, and concerns as determined by the President or directed by the Student Senate; (2) the [Student Judicial Committee](#) monitors the functions of the Student Senate, operates elections, hears impeachment nominations, maintains communication with the Student Body, and regulates student organizations; (3) the [Segregated University Fee Allocation Committee](#) (SUFAC), in consultation with the chancellor, has the primary responsibility of allocating segregated university fees. Administration [meets regularly](#) with the Student Government Association for advising and consultation.

These structures ensure regular, engaged, and ongoing exchanges of information and provide an effective vessel for collaborative sharing and joint decision-making where possible.

Third, UW-Superior's leadership includes governance representatives for the purpose of ensuring diversity of perspectives and collaborative decision-making. One example is the [Chancellor's Cabinet](#) where policies, practices, and planning are regularly discussed. The Chancellor's Cabinet provides key updates on the overall University context and the external context within UW System and the Board of Regents and opens the floor for internal communication between the groups. The currently seated Chairs of the Faculty Senate, Academic Staff Senate and University Staff Senate also serve on [Chancellor's Cabinet Plus](#) as governance-appointed members to monitor the progress of the [Forward Superior](#) Strategic Plan.

One story involving Faculty Senate illustrates the strong commitment to shared governance at UW-Superior, even when things get tough. After statutory changes to [WI Chapter 36](#) in 2015 and then the experience of unilateral [program suspensions](#) by administration in 2018, the relationship between administration and faculty was strained. Faculty Senate and administration developed the first [shared governance policy](#) that helped define the relationship between these key actors based on the 2015 statutory changes. It was approved in 2018, and [Academic Staff Senate](#) and [University Staff Senate](#) are developing parallel policies. The Faculty Senate-approved policy allowed the opportunity to propose and work through [multiple restoration steps](#) from the 2018 unilateral suspension. This demonstrates administrative commitment to the efficacy of shared governance.

Fourth, the student role in shared governance is a well-established practice at UW-Superior. Student senators engage with administration through [regular reports](#) at their meetings. SGA has critical responsibility in forming SUFAC, the committee that manages the [segregated fee review process](#) in consultation with the Budget Office. Segregated fees are fees in addition to tuition which can only be expended on the specific purpose(s) for which they were created and often support student involvement. Additionally, SGA provides feedback and recommendations on the use and rates of segregated university fees, for both [allocable and non-allocable fees](#). Segregated fees provided \$2.3 million in revenue in FY22 to support the auxiliary services provided to students.

Fifth, governance and leadership representatives from UW-Superior, including the [chancellor](#) and [provost](#), and [UW System Representatives](#) for academic staff, university staff, faculty, and students, meet monthly in statewide meetings with System administration for ongoing consultation. They also receive [informational and input items](#) from UW System, which informs campus actions. Chancellors and provosts [attend all Board of Regents meetings](#), being called upon regularly to share news and activities from their campuses.

This shows the overall flow of information between UW System and UW-Superior on a monthly basis.

Taken as a whole, these five practices demonstrate that UW-Superior engages its internal and external shared governance constituencies in planning, policies, and procedures.

5.A.2 *The institution's administration uses data to reach informed decisions in the best interests of the institution and its constituents.*

Over the past ten years, the institution shifted its practices from reactive or one-off uses of data to an intentional, strategic, and regularized process of data-informed decision-making. An example of a one-off, unrepeated data-informed report is the [2012 Planning and Budgetary Report to Faculty Senate](#). This report was a deep examination of the enrollment data and patterns in majors across the campus. The Planning and Budgetary Council prepared a report to Faculty Senate that warned of the need for more accountability over [course management](#), [class sizes](#), and [overall health of some majors](#). While this report was an excellent example of how this council, administration, and the Office of Institutional Research collaborated, it was not fully acted upon nor repeated. However, it became an anchor report for later changes and led to recognition of the need for more intentional data-informed practices.

Since 2012, the institution has increased its investments in data and operationalized its use in decision-making practice for the benefit of the institution and its constituents. Seven examples show this growth of data-informed decision-making.

First, the institution over the past ten years has steadily increased its investment in the [Office of Institutional Research and Sponsored Programs](#) (IRSP) that serves the campus in data generation and analysis to support data-informed decision-making. This office began as a one-person office in the early 2010s and now has [four members](#) who support the work of quality data gathering and analysis. This office also is the key interface between the institution and the extensive [UW System OPAR office](#) who generates and has access to broader databases at the state-wide, regional, and national levels. These investments have strengthened UW-Superior's analytic abilities with data as demonstrated by the first [Data Summit](#) held in 2021, as an inaugural event to be held biennially. The IRSP office responded to over [276 requests for data and analysis](#) from across the campus in FY22. Specific request tickets for projects increased by 22% over the prior year; this also shows an increase in the campus understanding of the value of data in decision-making. One example of the link between sufficient staffing in IRSP and the deepening of data analysis prior to decision-making is the recent [UW-Superior Strategic Priorities](#). The priorities were derived from a deep-dive [data examination of fiscal and enrollment realities](#) and identifying opportunities for growth. With proper staffing, this type of practice will continue to improve.

Second, the institution has increased its investments in various data programs that allow for the examination of data in a larger contextual way. Some opportunities came from UW System obtaining large contracts that institutions could opt into, such as [Tableau](#). Sometimes UW-Superior invested directly, such as the [2013 Burning Glass](#) analysis to help academic programs link their curriculum to [career pathways](#). More recently, the institution has [chosen to deeply invest in EAB Navigate](#), the student success tool that has the capacity to increase retention by over 10% if it is fully implemented. The institution is now in its fourth year of implementation and has increased advisor use of this tool [by 75%](#). There is a [full Navigate implementation plan](#) for the next couple of years to ensure maximum implementation. By doing so, the institution will gain valuable data about students and the effectiveness of the institution in retention, persistence, and graduation rates.

Third, the institution implemented a revised [Integrated Planning and Budget Process](#) that was approved in March 2022. This [annual planning and budgeting process](#) requires the institution to do [quarterly reviews](#) of the financial and enrollment status with the Chancellor's Cabinet. This new process will generate excellent on-the-ground data about how UW-Superior is performing relative to its strategic priorities and

[key indicators](#) of success. This data will inform future planning and budget decisions.

Fourth, over the past decade, UW-Superior has enhanced greatly its [assessment activity](#) of student learning. There is a clear cycle of process now for assessment, and the assessment results allow the institution to continuously review strengths in curriculum and areas of improvement. More detailed information on [assessment](#) is found in 4.B.3.

Fifth, over the past decade and following the model of the [2012 Planning and Budgetary Council deep dive](#), the institution implemented the [Continuous Academic Program Monitoring and Review Policy](#) that involves an examination of performance on [two key metrics](#) of all academic programs. This use of data ensures the institution is meeting UW System and institutional goals for efficiency and effectiveness in curriculum. It also provides the mechanism for data-driven decision-making related to [placing programs under review or on suspension](#), if needed.

Sixth, over the past decade, there have been different efforts to assess the performance of all units and departments across the campus. COVID-19 paused most of the departmental performance assessments, but the new [Integrated Planning and Budgeting Process](#) includes a [re-start of the annual reporting and evaluation process](#) for all units. The institution expects that by reviewing unit and department performance data, efficiencies and possible reallocation decisions can be made in a data-informed way. This practice also allows for [celebrating excellent performance](#) in units and departments.

Seventh, the [Academic Program Review](#) process has embedded 7 data categories where academic departments are expected to analyze their performance. By examining the performance of their own programs and providing meaningful analysis to the three groups involved in review (department, Academic Program Review Council, dean, and provost), academic programs and administration can [identify continuous improvement opportunities](#) to enhance the student experience.

These examples show that over the past ten years, UW-Superior has enhanced its data capacity and data-informed decision-making.

5.A.3 *The institution's administration ensures that faculty and, when appropriate, staff and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy and processes through effective collaborative structures.*

The administration's strong commitment to shared governance was summarized in 5.A.1. The response in 5.A.1 also explained the groups in place to ensure collaborative structures exist. This segment will focus on the assurance that administration includes faculty and, when appropriate, staff and students in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes.

The process that exists to ensure shared governance participation by faculty in academic requirements, policy, and processes was well established over this past decade. [Chapter 36](#) specifies the roles that each constituency has in policy. By law, the administration must include, where appropriate, these groups in policy-making processes via advising and consultation. Relative to academic requirements, policy, and processes, the faculty are the most frequent participants and are [primarily charged](#) with providing advising and consultation on academic and educational activities. As an example, [AP 1117](#) governs approval for undergraduate academic curricular matters. The [Undergraduate Academic Affairs Council](#) (UAAC) reviews all proposed academic curricular, policy, and procedural items and makes a recommendation to the Faculty Senate on what action should be taken. The curricular chart of [AP 1117](#) specifies the layers of review up to and including administration, when needed. This is a clear and well-established process to ensure participation of faculty in undergraduate curricular matters.

The matching policy on curriculum at the graduate level is [AP 1601G](#). This policy governs approval of

graduate academic matters. The Curriculum Approval Chart works in an almost identical manner to [AP 1117](#) but at the graduate level. The Graduate Council reviews all proposed graduate level academic curricular, policy, and procedural items and makes a recommendation to the Faculty Senate on what action should be taken. Taken together, on curricular and academic experiences in advising, consulting and approving curriculum, both graduate and undergraduate processes are clear, specific, and well-established.

[Faculty Senate reviews](#) and works collaboratively with administration to create and revise all academic policies. This is a frequent practice between the groups. Neither Academic Staff Senate nor University Staff Senate have specific permission under [Chapter 36](#) to be involved in academic requirements, policy, and processes. However, in the interests of ensuring collaborative input, [Academic Staff Senate](#) and [University Staff Senate](#) are often briefed with informational updates on these policies and their input is sought on many topics, such as [strategic priorities](#) for the University and a [teaching professor promotion series](#) for instructional academic staff.

The Student Government Association (SGA) is charged under [Chapter 36](#) with providing primary consultation about student life, services, and interests. This is not specifically in the realm of academic policies. However, the administration keeps students informed on critical academic changes where appropriate and seeks input when it would be helpful. The administration also remains [open to any requests by SGA](#) about policies and provides advice to them about next steps. The administration keeps students informed as shown by [SGA meeting agendas](#) with administrative representation.

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5.B - Core Component 5.B

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

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

Argument

5.B.1 *The institution has qualified and trained operational staff and infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.*

UW-Superior has focused significant effort to ensure that the institution has qualified and trained operational [staff](#) and [infrastructure](#) sufficient to support its operations. UW-Superior has sufficient human resources to support its operations. Each [hiring decision](#) is carefully examined to ensure right-sizing within units and across campus, primarily with the help of Human Resources, and to ensure appropriate qualifications; faculty and instructional academic staff are also vetted through the [Minimum Teaching Qualifications Policy](#). The University employs [144 full- and part-time faculty and renewable instructional academic staff](#) to deliver on its primary mission of instruction, as detailed earlier in 3.C.2. The total number of full- and part-time staff for the operations of the campus [totals 410, for a full-time equivalency of 355 employees](#). This equivalency includes non-teaching operational staff who are essential to the infrastructure of the campus including executive administrative, middle management, clerical support, and skilled crafts workers.

The trend pattern over the last 10 years shows that roughly the [same overall staffing levels](#) have existed consistently (changes in staffing due to operational re-prioritization is described below). This is an indicator that the institution has sufficient staffing for its operations. Specifically in the instructional categories, the institution has successfully maintained roughly a [70% to 30% ratio of faculty to IAS](#). The institution has been able to maintain these staffing levels [without significant lay-offs or cuts in the past decade](#), even during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, another indicator of sufficiency. The institution has continued to offer a [similar academic program array](#) and services, without interruption, over the decade; any academic program closures were strategic and do not reflect gaps in staffing. To help fill gaps, UW-Superior [employs student employees in multiple positions](#). Overall, UW-Superior has generally maintained sufficiency in staffing levels.

It should be acknowledged that, although overall the University has sufficient staffing, operational needs and models can change over time, resulting in the need to shift resources. The institution has been and is prepared to shift quickly and efficiently to reflect this reality in higher education. There [are continuing efforts](#) in both the academic and non-academic services areas to discern what the campus needs and to provide those infrastructure services by [changing the way the institution does business](#). For example, the institution outsourced the [bookstore and custodial services](#) to a provider in 2013. These decisions were made due to a [budget reduction](#) imposed by the state. The institution went through program prioritization earlier than other UW institutions, of both [academic](#) and [non-academic](#) units, to achieve efficiencies. More recently, the University shifted the type of work the Human Resources Office does for the campus. In 2019,

the campus moved a large part of its transactional human resources work, such as payroll and benefits for staff, criminal background checks, and contract processing, to [UW System Shared Services](#) to focus on the functions the campus needs: supervisor training and development, and services to manage employee relations issues.

Another example of offloading transactional work to gain capacity is the move of travel expense report auditing from the campus to UW System. This frees up staff to spend time on other tasks, such as process improvement, like using [BP Logix](#) for review of [purchasing card transactions](#). In Technology Services, [PeopleSoft as a Service](#) is a project that is moving the current student information system from campus to UW System, making UW System responsible for software and security updates, maintaining the system, and disaster recovery requirements. In order to increase safety, the campus has converted all but one of its security officers into [fully sworn police officers](#) so that they are capable of managing all safety and crime-related issues on-site.

These examples illustrate how UW-Superior is doing its best to remain flexible in meeting operational needs, and overall the University is staffed sufficiently to support all operations.

5.B.2 *The goals incorporated into the mission and any related statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources and opportunities.*

The [mission](#) of UW-Superior is “The University of Wisconsin-Superior fosters intellectual growth and career preparation within a liberal arts tradition that emphasizes individual attention, embodies respect for diverse cultures and multiple voices, and engages the community and region.” The current mission, approved through the [Board of Regents in 2015](#), reflects the addition of UW-Superior's commitment to the region and community. This change reflected growing involvement and service with the community and region in many ways. The mission statement also includes [eight specific goals](#) that reflect success in meeting the mission: a foundation in the liberal arts, broad undergraduate program array, quality graduate programs, well-developed online options, productive scholarly activity, an inclusive campus community, solid interinstitutional relationships and partnerships, and cooperation with UW extension for outreach programming. The institution curates its organization, resources, and opportunities to fulfill the broader mission and eight goals.

One way to demonstrate the ability of the institution to realistically fulfill its [mission and related goals](#) is to evaluate how many of the goals are actually in place. The [University Studies Program](#) demonstrates that the institution provides a foundation in liberal education. Because all undergraduate students complete University Studies, either at UW-Superior or elsewhere, this goal is met. The institution offers a broad undergraduate program array and quality graduate programs, as documented by the [catalog](#). The institution has been a long-time leader in alternative delivery, which UW-Superior [first offered in 1977](#). The institution has [well-documented](#) high-quality and productive scholarly and creative activity among its community members. There is a deep commitment to inclusion and diversity, as reflected by a multi-pronged [Department of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion](#), a university-wide [Diversity and Inclusion Committee](#), and specific planks to a culture of inclusion in the [Forward Superior](#) Strategic Plan. [Strategic partnerships](#) are growing, as evidenced by the [Public-Private Partnership \(P3\)](#) project and the [holistic mental health project](#). The institution developed and implemented a unique collaboration with Northwood Technical College (formerly Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College), through a [partnership agreement](#), that allows both institutions to deepen their bonds through [streamlined student transfers](#), [shared professional development](#), and similar efforts. [Articulation agreements](#) between institutions exist and are growing. UW-Superior has a long-standing, productive relationship with UW Extension through the [Center for Continuing Education](#) to support outreach programming. These eight goals are fully embodied at UW-Superior and show that the institution realistically selected them to support the mission.

A second way to demonstrate that the institution is realistic about fulfilling the mission is the actions taken

to enhance resources, organization, and opportunities. One of the best ways to determine if an institution is realistic in its goals is to see evidence of constant evaluation of organization and resources, such as the strategic re-organization of structures. The following five examples indicate how the institution constantly re-examines and makes productive changes to better serve the University [mission](#).

First, the University has continually adapted the enrollment management function as it has learned more about best practices and has experienced more through different experiments. The original division was created in fiscal year 2016 with the naming of a [Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Management](#). This new division included the offices of Admissions, Financial Aid, Career Services, Registrar, Advising, International Programs, Disabilities, and the TRIO programs. That structure helped establish the core understanding of enrollment management, but it became siloed. In 2019, that division was re-organized into the [Office of Student Success](#) with some key service offices reporting to the Senior Enrollment Management Office. [In 2021](#), the Chancellor and members of Chancellor's Staff evaluated all functions of enrollment management again, in light of the lessons of COVID-19, and engineered a [re-organization](#) whereby the division was dissolved and re-integrated into Student Affairs and Academic Affairs, to ensure a seamless service experience for students. These three re-organizations demonstrate that the institution is willing to realistically adapt to changing circumstances to create the best structures for enrollment management.

Second, the institution re-examined the best and most efficient ways to ensure high quality professional development and decided to re-organize the former [Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning](#) (CETL, created in 2007) to collaboratively work with the Jim Dan Hill Library through the formation of the [Center for Learning, Innovation, and Collaboration](#) (CLIC). Building on the successful track record of CETL, this new configuration brought together the learning management system expertise of Canvas with the proven experience in professional development of CETL and the resource base of the library. In the intervening three years, CLIC has evolved to a center of student gathering with a robust set of [professional development offerings](#) powered by the resource capabilities of Jim Dan Hill Library.

Third, the institution made a [significant resource commitment](#) to support the [Educational Success Center](#). This center provides [many services](#) to support student success through the [Bridge Program](#), [tutoring](#), [peer mentoring](#) and [study skills development](#). Regular reports from this center track student participation to show [students can be successful](#).

Fourth, the University created and invested in the [Center for Community Engaged Learning](#) (CCEL) in 2015. This [award-winning](#) unit was recently re-organized to be the [Link Center](#). The purpose of Link is to be a clear access point for community and regional partnerships to find help, support, and resources from the expertise of the University in order to serve the region. In addition, it is the anchor center for the longstanding High Impact Practices of Academic Service-Learning and Undergraduate Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity.

Fifth, the institution has worked in close collaboration with the UW-Superior Foundation to fundraise for areas of need for the institution. The most recent campaign, [Together We Are Superior](#), raised [\\$25.3 million](#) to invest in [people](#), [programs](#), and [the future](#).

These five examples of re-organizations and resource allocations illustrate how UW-Superior is constantly realistically examining how to support the [mission](#) and the goals in an effective way.

A final indicator of maintaining a realistic approach to implementing the mission and its goals is decision-making about finances and human resources. Over time, the University has been willing to add new positions, where needed, based on data such as the incoming Case Manager position and academic advisor position through the [Title III, Part A: Strengthening Institutions](#) grant in partnership with the [Forward Superior](#) Strategic Plan; expansion of the [Disability Support Services position](#) under [Forward Superior](#);

and [additional HR staff](#) to support increased demands. The University constantly carefully assesses need areas by privileging what will best serve students and makes investments accordingly. Fiscal, structural, and human resource decisions have been mission-driven and realistic.

5.B.3 *The institution has well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring its finances.*

UW-Superior is one of the 13 four-year universities within the UW System and, as such, is affected by the budgetary realities of the UW System. The UW System has an overall operating budget of \$6.87 billion which is approved by the Board of Regents on an annual basis.

Over the past ten years, the University has received a small increase in its funding ([6.39%](#)) from the state while tuition rates have remained frozen. With [Consumer Price Index](#) (CPI) over this ten-year period totaling 25.6%, this has put pressure on campus resources as state support has not kept pace with price increases. In addition, any pay plans given by the legislature are typically funded approximately [2/3 by the state and 1/3 by tuition increases](#). The inability to increase tuition to cover this 1/3 share has [cost the campus over \\$1.1 million](#).

General Purpose Revenue (GPR) is state appropriated revenue allocated to campuses as "budget authority" and is combined with tuition revenue to create the campus operating budget. [Undergraduate resident tuition](#) in Wisconsin has been [frozen since FY13](#), so for ten years the campus has [not had an increase in revenue](#) through increasing tuition rates. This is causing pressure on budgets due to inflation, as a dollar does not stretch as far as it used to.

Despite these challenges, the campus has worked hard to effectively manage its resources. First, the institution has consistently and successfully lobbied UW System for [special funding](#) to support emerging innovative initiatives that will best serve the students. This is an innovative way to secure funding when the institution does not have resources.

UW-Superior has a well-developed process in place for [monitoring expenses and budget](#). There are numerous UW System policies, procedures, and documents to ensure proper fiscal management within its component institutions, including UW System [Regents Policy - Section 21](#), UW System [Annual Financial Reports](#) and [Campus Financial Statements](#), and UW System [Annual Budget and Fee Schedules](#). The campus financial reports are audited annually by the [Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau](#). The [campus's financial composite ratios](#) have remained in or above the zone for public institutions for the [past three reporting years](#). The campus regularly monitors its finances through tools provided by UW System, such as WISER, an online DataMart reporting tool, which allows the campus to organize data and create reports that monitor [fund balances](#) and spending against the budget. The campus also utilizes reports in the Shared Financial System (SFS) that monitor expenditures against the budget, in the [AC322 Report](#), and current revenues, expenditures, and fund balances, in the [AC351 Report](#). Receivables due on student accounts are reviewed each term using the [UWSSF430 Report](#).

The campus considers fund balance and the change in fund balance to be a primary indicator of financial health and an important way to monitor financial performance. Budgeting and forecasting functions are done annually (budgeting) and bi-annually (forecasting) in [PlanUW](#) software and in Microsoft Excel. The campus also completes an [annual tuition revenue projection](#) to forecast tuition revenue for the upcoming fiscal year.

In addition to what is listed above, the University instituted a revised [Integrated Planning and Budget Process](#) (IPBP) in 2022. This process includes the campus providing department and unit goals and the Chancellor's Cabinet Plus monitoring each step of the cyclical process. Through this process, planning, budgeting, and assessment results are integrated. This review process was implemented in Fall 2022 and will continue annually.

Finally, the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance annually examines the [MAPS data](#), a Utah-based website that compares IPEDS financial data to peer campuses. This provides comparable data against which UW-Superior can measure its performance.

Taken together, these practices demonstrate a clear and consistent practice in place for budgeting processes at UW-Superior.

5.B.4 *The institution's fiscal allocations ensure that its educational purposes are achieved.*

UW-Superior works diligently to ensure that budget and fiscal allocations are managed in a way to achieve educational goals and purposes. The Budget Office and Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance both work across the divisions of the campus to build the [annual budget](#) as well as manage a process of [one-time funding requests](#) that can support projects for the [mission](#), strategic plan, strategic priorities, and student success. It is important to note that both the staff transition of the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance retiring in 2018 and COVID-19 disrupted and impacted processes, but efforts were refocused in Fall 2022.

The annual budget is put together by Cabinet Officers in conjunction with department managers to ensure that campus needs can be met. The timeline for the annual budget process is outlined in the Integrated Planning and Budget Process (IBPB) [Map](#) and [Key](#). The timeline and process for strategic [one-time budget requests](#) is outlined in the [Strategic One-Time Funding Request Process](#) document. Chancellor's Cabinet Plus [meets annually](#) to review the budget, enrollment, and strategic priorities to ensure alignment.

Careful management of its funding has enabled UW-Superior to establish a [tuition reserve of \\$2.5 million](#) that can be used on a one-time basis to address strategic priorities and future budgetary needs. UW-Superior's resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity. UW-Superior is a public institution which is part of the larger state-associated UW System. As a public institution, UW-Superior is not part of a corporate entity, a subsidiary of a religious order, or a for-profit institution and, therefore, does not have a superordinate entity to which budget is allocated. Please see section 2.C for more details on the relationship between UW-Superior and UW System.

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5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities, including, as applicable, its comprehensive research enterprise, associated institutes and affiliated centers.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity, including fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue and enrollment.
5. Institutional planning anticipates evolving external factors, such as technology advancements, demographic shifts, globalization, the economy and state support.
6. The institution implements its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.

Argument

5.C.1 *The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities, including, as applicable, its comprehensive research enterprise, associated institutes and affiliated centers.*

UW-Superior allocates its resources in alignment with its [mission](#) and priorities. As stated in 5.B.3 and 5.B.4, the institution has clear and established processes for resource analysis, allocation, and modification. Budget and fiscal allocations are done in a way to achieve educational goals and purposes according to the mission, strategic priorities, and strategic plans. The [Integrated Planning and Budget Process](#) ensures that this is a [coherent process](#).

The institution has a successful research profile given its size, and resources are allocated and supported appropriately. The research portfolio consists of research institutes, undergraduate research opportunities, institutional research, and faculty research supports. UW-Superior has three campus-based research centers: [Lake Superior Research Institute](#), [Transportation and Logistics Research Center](#), and the [Great Lakes Maritime Research Institute](#). It also has ongoing partnerships with UW-Extension and the [Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve](#) (LSNERR). Each institute and center has a slightly different research profile.

The [Lake Superior Research Institute](#) (LSRI) was created in 1967 and was formally recognized by the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System in 1969. LSRI's mission is to conduct environmental research and provide services that directly benefit the people, industries, and natural resources of the Upper Midwest, the Great Lakes Region, and beyond; to provide non-traditional learning and applied research opportunities for undergraduate students; and to foster environmental education and outreach in the Twin Ports and surrounding communities. Due to their continuous growth model and successes over the past decade, LSRI is contract and grant-supported and [generates millions of dollars](#) for the campus each year. The institution provides direct support for some [staff](#) and [resources](#). More recently, LSRI obtained the resources from an anonymous donor to purchase a [new \\$4 million floating classroom vessel](#) designed for Lake Superior.

The [Transportation and Logistics Research Center](#) (TLRC), founded in 1999, provides applied transportation and logistics research, education, and advisory services that advance the economy of the region. Faculty, staff, and students in the Transportation and Logistics Management and Supply Chain

Management programs contribute to the research efforts. Since its inception in 1999, TLRC has generated [\\$11,866,447 dollars in contract and grant monies](#).

The [Great Lakes Maritime Research Institute](#) (GLMRI) represents a consortium of the UW-Superior [Transportation and Logistics Research Center](#) and the University of Minnesota Duluth's [Swenson College of Science and Engineering](#) and [Labovitz School of Business and Economics](#). This collaborative partnership focuses on maritime research opportunities and has brought in [several million dollars in grants](#) over its lifespan.

The [Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve](#) (LSNERR), an affiliated research center, works in partnership to improve the understanding of Lake Superior freshwater estuaries and coastal resources and to address the issues affecting them through an integrated program of research, education, outreach, and stewardship. An example of [monies generated by the partnership with LSNERR](#) includes \$398,238 in FY23.

The Office of [Institutional Research and Sponsored Programs](#) (IRSP) at UW-Superior provides institutional support of all grants, contracts, and research functions for the University. This office provides the vast majority of the data-driven information needed for decision-making. This office does all the [financial reporting for grants and contracts](#) and supports grant development and research via various professional development opportunities and internal grant programs, such as the [Jumpstart Grant Writing Incentive](#) and the [Grant Writing Academy](#). IRSP supports [\\$11,341,130.22 in extramurally funded research activities](#). As a result, the institution has been rated [#1 among the comprehensive institutions](#) for research and public service within the [UW System for the past two years](#).

Faculty research is supported (up to [\\$75,000, annually](#)) by [Faculty Development Grants](#) and numerous grant programs, like the [Jumpstart Grant Writing Incentive](#), [Jumpstart Scholarship Program](#) and [Program Advance Grants](#) sponsored by the Dean of Academic Affairs and Graduate Studies. The [Center for Learning, Innovation and Collaboration](#) also provides [support](#) for research projects in the [Scholarship of Teaching and Learning](#).

The institution has a longstanding commitment to [Undergraduate Research, Scholarship and Creative Activities](#) (URSCA) for students. The URSCA High Impact Practice has been in place for a decade and includes the [Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship Program](#) (SURF) which serves up to 25 undergraduate scholars per year in a mentor-based research program in their disciplinary area; student scholars are provided [financial support](#). URSCA also supports [community-based research projects](#) within academic programs. In addition to URSCA, the institution supports the [TRIO McNair Scholars program](#), a federally financed DOE grant program that provides direct support, mentoring and service to about 25 qualified undergraduate scholars per year. UW-Superior has had TRIO McNair for a decade and has secured [\\$1.3 million](#) to continue the program for the next 5 years. Finally, the institution has access to [WiscAMP funds](#) for eligible students in the amount of \$50,000.

Finally, the institution builds resources based in partnership with the UW-Superior Foundation. The Foundation's efforts at fundraising in areas of need for the campus are informed by the [mission](#) and priorities of the institution. A recent example is the [Together We Are Superior](#) campaign. This campaign reached out to the UW-Superior alumni and community stakeholders to raise a stated goal of \$20 million. The goals of this campaign included invest in [people](#), [programs](#), and the [future](#). This goal was exceeded in 2022, reaching [\\$25.3 million](#). Significant portions of these funds were used to support the [Superior Visions 2020](#) strategic plan and to enhance the campus, through the [floating classroom vessel](#), [emergency funds for students](#), and support for [URSCA and faculty development](#).

5.C.2 *The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting.*

Over the past decade, UW-Superior has steadily enhanced the coherent links between assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting, as was initially flagged in the 2013 HLC site visit. HLC put the institution on a monitoring plan in 2015 that encouraged the work of integrated planning and budgeting development to move ahead. The institution successfully responded to this with the [2015 response to the monitoring report](#).

The subsequent strategic plan, [Superior Visions 2020](#), began to address this issue, per Strategic Initiative IV, Goal 2, Action Step 2. In 2014-2015, the University formed a committee that created the first Integrated Planning and Budget Process (IPBP) [Map](#) and [Key](#). The proposed IPBP process was [reviewed in Faculty Senate](#) through advising and consulting in 2016. At this same time, the institution continued its investment in an [Assessment Coordinator](#) specifically charged with developing an assessment of student learning process to be integrated into the planning and budget process. Over the last several years, the Assessment Coordinator successfully developed a three-year cycle of assessment that has been [completed twice](#) and produced refinements each time.

The first version of the IPBP was run in 2015-2016 ([Map](#) and [Key](#)), followed by an extensive internal review that produced several improvements for the 2016-2017 cycle ([Map](#) and [Key](#)). This included all budget requests being linked to the strategic plan metrics or initiatives and streamlining the role of annual plans by non-academic units. The IPBP was also run including [one-time budget requests in FY18](#) and over \$300,000 was awarded to help one-time projects. COVID-19 halted the natural process of the IPBP between 2020-2022 due to its [disruptive effects](#).

In 2023, UW-Superior has a fully-revised [Integrated Planning and Budget Process](#) (IPBP), which includes the critical link for the role of assessment of student learning in the planning and budgeting process ([step 7](#)). This version of IPBP deliberately links assessment of student learning results, quarterly fiscal reporting, bi-annual objective/goal setting by individual units/departments, and clarifying strategic priorities for [each cycle](#). The [2022-2023 cycle](#) is currently in process and a full evaluation will be done in Summer 2023 for improvements prior to the launch of the next cycle. The [Chancellor's Cabinet](#) is the designated group responsible for the ongoing running of IPBP each year and for conducting annual reviews of how to improve the process. This version of IPBP represents a full integration of all key parts of an effective, stable integrated process.

5.C.3 The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.

The institution's primary planning processes are articulated in strategic plans. The past two institutional strategic plans — [Superior Visions 2020](#) and [Forward Superior](#) — were created and designed using an [inclusive, layered facilitated process](#) that included the entire campus and appropriate external constituencies, such as alumni and key partners within the region. They each took about 18 months to complete ([Forward Superior](#) took a bit longer due to COVID-19 interruptions) and used [similar processes](#). This included creating an [internal facilitator team](#) advised by an external expert in strategic planning. To inform the final [Forward Superior](#) Strategic Plan, University members, businesses, employers, community members, alumni and students [engaged](#) in [surveys](#), [focus groups](#), and [open forums](#) to identify the key themes for the plan and to help refine the specific initiatives of the plan. The Office of Institutional Research and Sponsored Programs was also heavily engaged in providing data of all types to inform the planning process, including the [Strategic Plan Data Analysis Report](#) and the [Self-Examination Survey Data](#). Drafts of the [Forward Superior](#) Strategic Plan were shared with campus via [email and open forums](#) throughout the process, and all input from the different constituencies was considered.

Additional information about the Integrated Planning and Budget Process, which includes all current strategic plans, is provided in 5.C.1 and 5.C.2. There is an intentional weaving of planning, budgeting, and assessment of student learning that also includes input and feedback from the campus and external

constituencies.

5.C.4 *The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity, including fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue and enrollment.*

As the smallest institution in the UW System constellation, UW-Superior has always had to plan carefully in their strategic planning and budgeting approaches and anticipate the possibilities of overcoming challenges in revenue shortages and enrollment declines. The institution does this by a deep awareness of state support (and its shortages), additional sources of revenue (which it constantly seeks), and its current capacity. Some aspects of these topics are within institutional control; some are not. Under the leadership of the chancellor and the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, the institution is constantly monitoring funding and enrollment to position the institution well. Several of these examples will demonstrate the institution's sound understanding of its current capacity, including practices to stabilize finances and grow tuition revenue.

First, the institution monitors revenue and enrollment fluctuations constantly, [planning and reporting](#) to its internal constituents on the state of campus enrollment, including recruitment and retention; on changing student demographics and the impact on finances; on the real-world negative effect of relatively flat General Purpose Revenue budgets from UW System; and on the ongoing challenge of a decade of tuition freeze in Wisconsin and the wavering state support of the value of higher education. The institution monitors and creates [enrollment and retention reports](#), made available to the public on the institutional research website, as well as the UW System [Accountability Dashboard](#) for system-wide comparisons. In this way, the evidence demonstrates the institution operates from a sound understanding of its capacity.

Second, UW-Superior engages in ongoing strong advocacy for initiatives in the state legislature that will enhance resources. The [State Tuition Reciprocity](#) proposal is an example of efforts by border institutions like UW-Superior, in partnership with others, to allow reciprocity dollars that are now claimed by the state to be re-allocated to the institutions that generate these funds. The institution has requested that state funding be provided to expand the reach of the Lake Superior Research Institute through the [Rural Community Conservation Network](#). If obtained, these funds will widen the reach of research relative to water quality in the north, create new undergraduate research opportunities, and bring in more funds to the University. This will enhance revenues for the institution and allow the institution to better handle fluctuations.

Third, the chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor for Administration and Finance, and the provost have worked together to advocate with UW System for [special funding opportunities](#) that brought resources to the campus. The institution has successfully gained funding in initiatives such as Student Success Funds, Twin Cities Marketing/Recruitment Initiative, Athletics JV Sports/Roster Expansion, Public-Private Partnership (P3) Project, and Complete College America consultancy. The institution participates in UW System initiatives to support EDI work on the campus to [help historically marginalized and under-represented students](#) to be successful. These examples show the positive effects of obtaining funds from UW System and the legislature to support initiatives on the campus, to enhance the institution's revenue and allow stability despite fluctuations.

Fourth, the institution continuously monitors the performance of its academic programs through the [Continuous Academic Program Monitoring and Review Policy](#) and by completing environmental scans through the [Curation Visioning Team](#) to find new opportunities with academic programs to grow enrollment. Due to the unique opportunities presented by COVID-19, UW-Superior identified immediate opportunities by [expanding parallel online majors](#) in high growth areas such as Psychology, Transportation and Logistics Management, and Computer Science. All of these were approved by UW System and have [generated increases in enrollment](#) from these efforts. In addition, the institution continues to identify new academic program opportunities and during the past three years have approved

two new majors: [Public Leadership and Innovation](#) and [Business Analytics](#). Both have been identified as growth areas and are in the early phases of roll-out. The institution has [approved](#) a new policy to support the growth of [microcredentials](#) and will begin an aggressive roll-out program on this in Spring 2023. These efforts show a strategic, ongoing focus on growing enrollment.

Finally, the institution is working to grow enrollment in two student demographic opportunities: international students and student athletes. The [International Admissions](#) division of the Admissions Office has developed effective strategies to recruit and admit international students. UW-Superior saw its peak international enrollment in [Fall 2018](#) with 228 students. International enrollment declined for a few years after Fall 2018 but has recently increased again from 157 students in [Fall 2020](#) to 194 students in [Fall 2022](#). UW-Superior has the [second highest percentage of international undergraduate students](#) (8.7%) in the UW System, second only to Madison at 10.4%.

In addition, the University has recognized the [enrollment potential of student athletics](#) and has explored ways to [expand rosters](#) to enhance enrollment. Student athletes also perform well in [GPA and academic success](#), with higher retention rates than non-athletes. These efforts reveal the institution's commitment to growing enrollment and improving flexibilities in the budget.

5.C.5 Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology advancements, demographic shifts, globalization, the economy and state support.

UW-Superior plans for emerging factors that might affect its enrollment and finances in a careful, anticipatory manner. The institution also [reflects on](#) the adaptations undertaken, like those in response to the COVID-19 global pandemic, to strategically retain those changes that continue to be of use and judiciously step back from those no longer necessary.

Technology Advancements

UW-Superior has worked to address its technology needs, assessed the rapidly changing technology environment in higher education, and invested in several critical enhancements in staffing and structure to prepare for them. During the last decade, there has been a rapid set of changes related to technology support for the University, and UW-Superior's Technology Services has deepened and expanded its response to these changing technology environments. [Technology Services](#) provides a range of opportunities and support functions to the campus, including computer and network support, web services, multimedia services, as well as network, telephone, and technical support. In April 2021, the campus hired a [Senior Technology Officer](#). This person diagnosed current and future needs of this department and has worked hard to restructure the department to be more nimble and responsive. Through these unit [re-organizations](#), the Senior Technology Officer has enabled the department to be positioned to meet future changes in technology. As part of this restructuring, Technology Services developed a [strategic plan](#) that provides the anticipatory framework to plan for emergent changes.

Due to the surge of [compliance regulation by UW System on IT security](#) and the need to allow the institution to pivot to this enhanced regulation, the institution dedicated [one staff person to ensuring high IT security](#) for the campus. Technology Services updated the [core network](#) in FY21, upgraded to the [Palo Alto firewall](#) in FY21, made major progress on a [fiber optic project](#) in 2022, and added [wireless access points](#) across the campus due to increased usage and accessibility needs during COVID-19. These preventative measures ensured that UW-Superior's network remains strong and safe, and that the capacity to respond to access issues is stable. In an effort to generate cost savings, the campus also switched to [Voice Over IP](#) for its phone system in April 2021. Some of these changes were due to the COVID-19 challenge; some were done to mitigate risk factors that had been identified; some were done to enhance student and campus-community access; finally, some were done as anticipatory steps to protect the campus infrastructure from emerging technology threats.

In addition to Technology Services support, the institution is constantly anticipating the types of supports and staffing positions that are required to help the student of today and tomorrow excel. For example, there are two positions that support instructional design, one [Instructional Design Librarian](#) and one [Educational Technology Consultant](#), within the Canvas team. These individuals anticipate changes in pedagogy and high-quality teaching methods and, as a result, work with instructors on the design and development of online and hybrid or blended courses. In addition, the campus is deeply committed to full implementation of a new technology tool, the [EAB Navigate](#) student success management tool. This tool significantly changed the institutional capacity to know more data about students and to develop appropriate anticipatory interventions to improve their persistence, retention, and completion rates. Also, the campus equipped many [classrooms with technology support](#) for hybrid and online classes as a result of COVID-19. With the ever-changing field of technology including compliance, regulations, and data security, human and financial resources will require a larger portion of the overall technology budget. The current [technology strategic plan](#) forecasts upcoming challenges and opportunities and sets the goals for further technology infrastructure enhancement. UW-Superior is tuned to these emerging trends and is preparing for them now.

Demographic Shifts

UW-Superior carefully monitors changes in student demographics by focusing on recruitment, retention, persistence and completion, and the effects this is having on its financial position. To plan carefully for how to recruit more students, the University has generated numerous enrollment plans over the past five years for specified periods of time in [2018](#), [2019](#), [2020](#), [2022](#) and [2023](#). Currently, the institution has a [recruitment plan](#) that targets growth demographics such as more international students and more student athletes to continue to grow enrollment. These goals and strategies show the institution anticipating changes and help it get in front of trends to ensure stable enrollment.

UW-Superior's [institutional retention](#) rates have consistently lagged behind others within UW System. As a response, UW-Superior launched a [Student Success Initiative Team](#) in order to identify the causes and propose new recommendations for changing these rates. As a result of Objective 3.1 in the [Forward Superior Strategic Plan](#), the University hired the consultants from Complete College America to [diagnose deficiencies and propose recommendations](#) that would improve student success and increase [retention](#), [persistence](#), and [completion](#) rates. These recommendations involve three approaches: [Purpose First](#), [Basic Student Needs](#), and [First Year Experience](#). The [Student Success Initiative Team](#) obtained approval to proceed with all three recommendations and the first roll-outs are expected in Spring 2023.

Another critical new initiative to improve retention, persistence, and completion involved seeking the [Title III, Part A: Strengthening Institutions](#) grant, awarded in Fall 2022. This \$2 million infusion of funds over the next five years will substantially revise and improve UW-Superior's academic advising experiences, provide a case manager to meet student basic needs through triage and referral, and create an innovative First Year Experience that will help students orient to the institution in their first year.

Finally, the institution is invested in the [full implementation of the EAB Navigate](#) student success software that identifies students who may need assistance in their degree progress. [EAB Navigate](#) involves participation from the entire campus and, when implemented, will significantly help retain students. A three-year implementation plan is [in process](#). These initiatives are all anticipating that retention will continue to be a challenge point, and the institution is planning effective responses.

The institution is very mindful of the decreasing participation rates of high school students attending college and is planning how best to respond to this demographic cliff in undergraduate on-campus students. There are three initiatives designed to respond to these demographic challenges. First, the institution has significantly increased its partnership with regional high schools to enhance the [dual enrollment of high school students at UW-Superior](#). By doing so, the institution is maximizing the

likelihood that these students will enroll at UW-Superior and grow the enrollment profile. Second, the institution [intentionally continues to grow](#) its international student enrollment with the [second-highest percentage of international students among UW institutions](#). Third, the institution continues to [seek new opportunities to recruit student athletes](#). Fourth, the institution continues to build upon its forty-year path-breaking record of serving adult learners with distance learning degree options by enhancing the marketing of the [self-designed majors program](#).

When graduate enrollment numbers began a swift decline a number of years ago, to the point where several education-related graduate degrees were fiscally untenable, the institution began an innovative collaboration with [Academic Partnerships](#). This partnership shifted most graduate curriculum online to meet the needs of adult learners who are often working professionals. Academic Partnerships helps with effective marketing, recruiting, and onboarding of new graduate students in an innovative seven-week intensive model. Since that contract began, enrollment in graduate programs affiliated with Academic Partnerships has [increased 307%](#), and these programs are leading the institution in graduate enrollment.

Finally, COVID-19 required the institution to think differently with the [mandatory online shift](#) that occurred on short notice in 2020. The [Center for Learning, Innovation, and Collaboration](#) (CLIC) went into high gear to create a five-week intensive [Superior Learning Experience](#) (SLE) to train instructors at the University in online teaching and learning methods. Over [90% of the instructors](#) participated in Summer 2020 and this, in turn, rapidly grew institutional capacity to teach online. Because of these changes and new opportunities, the institution rapidly moved in Fall 2020 to [create parallel tracks](#) of high enrolling on-campus majors in online formats. The [growth of enrollment in just 18 months](#) of Psychology, Computer Science, and Transportation and Logistics Management indicated the wisdom of this move.

Taken as a whole, these enhancements ensure that the institution is responding well to demographic shifts and planning for projected changes.

Globalization

UW-Superior [ranks second in the UW System](#) in the percentage of international students that attend the institution. The infusion of so many cultures and languages within the student body helps ensure that the [mission statement](#) commitment of respect for diverse cultures and multiple voices occurs. UW-Superior intends to maximize on this opportunity with more [investment and outreach to grow international student enrollment](#) in coming years. International students are mentored and guided by the [Office of Intercultural Student Success](#) to assist persistence, retention, and completion.

The curriculum at UW-Superior also specifically integrates [Global Awareness](#) as a High Impact Practice and a [Global Studies Minor](#), which was [recently reinstated](#) after its suspension in 2018. Numerous academic programs have strong elements of globalization in their curricula whether by individual courses, such as in [Political Science](#), or integrated across the entire curriculum, like in [Social Work](#). These curricula are reviewed regularly through the [bi-annual catalog review process](#) and are revised to keep up with new trends in globalization. A number of majors have also developed Study Away options such as the Acapella Choir recently performing in [China, Brazil, Italy](#), and short-term Study Abroad opportunities in [South Korea, Japan, Costa Rica, and Germany](#). UW-Superior has also offered long-term Study Abroad options in [China, Italy, Korea, Costa Rica and Scotland](#). Finally, the [University Studies Program](#) curriculum has a [Diversity](#) requirement and a [Global Awareness](#) requirement that ensure all incoming freshmen are exposed to globalization.

Additionally, UW-Superior is a member in good standing in the [United Nations Academic Impact](#), creating curricular and cocurricular activities for students that focus on global sustainable development goals. This includes [opportunities](#) for experiential learning focused on humanitarian aid, Collaborative Online International Learning courses, and indigenous and multi-cultural read-ins.

Economy

UW-Superior has a [major impact](#) on the regional economy. This affords the institution the ability to effectively build relationships with regional partners and advocate at the state-wide level. The institution has recently summarized the [positive economic impact of the University](#) to the regional economy and developed a marketing booklet, titled [Anchor of the North](#), that documents UW-Superior's value and many contributions to the region and state.

UW-Superior responds to changes in the economy from two angles: the opportunities to prepare students for future careers and the challenges posed by an economy that increasingly hires workers without formal college credentials. To capitalize on the opportunities, UW-Superior has invested numerous times over the past decade in efforts to integrate more intentional partnerships between majors and future career pathways. In 2015, the institution invested in a [Burning Glass project](#) that included all academic departments. Each major received a direct report of the types of employment related to their academic programs and suitable for their graduates. Each major was to map how they could enhance their service to students in the career pathway.

Several academic departments have intentionally woven career preparation into their curriculum, such as career preparation-oriented curriculum in [Psychology](#), [Education](#), and [Health and Human Performance](#). This aids students as they make progress towards their degree to plan ahead and obtain the skills needed to achieve their career goals.

Another way to stay connected to the economy, related to campus partners, is through the creation of advisory committees. In the [Superior Visions 2020](#) and [Forward Superior](#) strategic plans, the University encouraged the development of advisory committees by all academic programs. A [protocol was developed](#) on how to complete this process, and since 2018, the institution has created numerous advisory committees. The [Link Center](#) oversees the formation and support of advisory committees.

A more recent effort to connect the institution with local employers was the [Link Center](#) hosting the first [Regional Workforce Summit](#) between workforce experts in the region and UW-Superior administrative leaders and representative faculty from across campus. This Summit produced valuable information for academic programs to build stronger career pathways and led to UW-Superior joining the [Eligible Report Training List](#) (ETPL), a website for job referrals from workforce offices in Wisconsin.

The [Purpose First](#) initiative, launching in Spring 2023, focuses on how to link incoming freshmen to their career aspirations from day one at the institution. This initiative will follow a best-practice that career orientation helps retention and reflects directly on UW-Superior's [mission](#) commitment to career preparation. In 2023, the institution will launch [10 inaugural micro-credentials](#), which are designed to serve workforce needs.

To acknowledge an obstacle, the economy is producing a [participation rate challenge](#) within Wisconsin for all institutions. The participation rate measures how many high school graduates are choosing to attend college anywhere, and this rate is on a precipitous decline throughout the state. If this trend continues, the entire UW System will have significant challenges to overcome due to this economy. UW-Superior is planning responses to this challenge, as noted in the above section on demographics, as well as with the additional initiatives below.

Some of the responses by the institution include adding online options for high-enrolling majors such as [Computer Science](#), [Psychology](#), and [Transportation and Logistics Management](#). Additionally, the [current protocol for departments to propose new academic programs](#) requires market research to assess student interest in these majors, as well as to determine the demand and feasibility of the proposed degree. Finally, the [Academic Program Review](#) template and process requires departments to document how the degree

prepares students for their future, including career plans, but also to assess the success of their students in finding employment as a result of this career preparation.

State Support

UW-Superior has experienced [decreasing state support](#) over the last decade. The percentage of support from the state for each UW institution has produced multiple [budget cuts](#) that harm the fiscal parameters of the institution. The [tuition freeze](#) for over a decade has prevented all UW institutions from adjusting their rates to reflect inflation or other fiscal pressures. The [legislature](#) is [divided on their support](#) for the value of higher education. These different emergent factors have caused UW-Superior to prepare and anticipate effects and plan for [creative and innovative](#) responses to ensure fiscal and enrollment stability.

The institution continues to engage in ongoing strong advocacy for initiatives in the state legislature that will enhance resources. The [State Tuition Reciprocity](#) proposal is an example of efforts by border institutions, like UW-Superior, partnering to request that reciprocity dollars that are now claimed by the state be reallocated to the institutions that generate these funds. UW-Superior has requested that state funding be provided to expand the reach of the Lake Superior Research Institute through the [Rural Community Conservation Network](#). If obtained, these funds will widen the reach of research relative to water quality in the north, create new undergraduate research opportunities, and bring in more funds to the University.

The institution has recently summarized the [positive economic impact](#) of the University to the regional economy and developed a marketing booklet, titled [Anchor of the North](#), that documents UW-Superior's value and many contributions to the region and state.

5.C.6 The institution implements its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.

UW-Superior has taken numerous steps to intentionally and thoughtfully improve its operations on the campus, throughout the last decade. Several examples will demonstrate this.

Over the last decade, the institution has re-designed, multiple times, the [Integrated Planning and Budget Process](#) (IPBP). This ensures macro-oversight of institutional goals, strategic planning, assessment of and improvement of operations, student learning outcomes and budget management. Section 5.C.2 details more about the IPBP plan.

Multiple critical institutional initiatives are being implemented, including [Title III, Part A: Strengthening Institutions](#) grant, [Forward Superior](#) Strategic Plan, [Student Success Initiative](#), and [EAB Navigate](#). In order to systematically facilitate this implementation, the institution has formed a [macro facilitation team](#) of leaders from across the initiatives to ensure efficiency, collaboration, and coordination.

Another example of systematically improving operations is the evolution of the [University Police Department](#) from a Campus Safety model. All officers except one are now sworn police officers which allows them to handle most crime or safety-related situations that occur on a college campus. This evolution better serves students and community.

Technology Services continues to evolve to better respond to the increased [audit activity on IT security issues](#) and upgrading various systems such as the [core network](#), [firewall](#), [Shop UW+](#), and [BP Logix](#). These systems have been upgraded to ensure compliance and unified purchasing card management systems. Finally, the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance annually examines the [MAPS data](#), a Utah-based website that compares IPEDS financial data to peer campuses. This provides comparable data against which UW-Superior can measure its performance.

The institution seeks to systematically improve and evolve its practices relative to serving student needs

and enhancing academic performance. Several examples will illustrate these efforts.

- The [Student Success Initiative](#), launched in 2022, focuses deeply on improving retention, persistence, and graduation rates for the institution. This initiative will produce a campus-wide definition of student success and implement three strategic recommendations to improve retention: [Purpose First](#), [Basic Student Needs](#), and [First Year Experience](#).
- The recent [reorganization](#) of the Division of Student Success into the Division of Academic Affairs and the Division of Student Affairs represents an opportunity for greater efficiencies and collaborations of student services. For example, the [Center for Academic Advising](#) and the [Educational Success Center](#), under the Dean of Academic Affairs and Graduate Studies, seeks a seamless fusion between academic departments, their students, and the appropriate support offices. The integration of two TRIO programs under the provost, [McNair Scholars](#) and [Student Support Services](#), supports students in receiving hands-on help from campus experts to address issues early and appropriately. This helps more clearly link student services to the academic programs and students that they serve.
- To advance the vision of caring for students and their persistence, Forward Superior Strategic Plan [Goal 2 Culture of Care](#) was developed as an intentional strategy. Meeting this goal requires the [Dean of Students Unit](#) to provide numerous opportunities for [student engagement](#) and assistance in [all aspects of student needs](#).
- The evolution of the [assessment of student learning outcomes](#), over the decade, helps monitor student learning and point out areas of improvement in [academic programs](#).
- The recently-obtained [Title III, Part A: Strengthening Institutions](#) grant will evolve the institutional focus on how high-quality academic advising enhances the student experience and fosters student success.

The [Office of Institutional Research and Sponsored Programs](#) provides the data to inform and evaluate the initiatives described above. It is through the use and analysis of data that the institution systematically improves its operations and student outcomes. Examples include [NSSE](#), UW-Superior [Accountability Reports](#), [Diversity Update](#), and [information regarding student achievement](#).

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5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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

Summary

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

The University engages in systematic, ongoing strategic planning, closely aligned with its mission, both to meet its internal, external, and emergent challenges and to maintain and strengthen the quality of its programs into the future. Decision-making about resource allocation is collaborative and coordinated, involving governance groups and administration, and is based upon input into priority-setting from all campus constituencies. The University focuses on maintaining its operations while supporting continuous improvement.

UW-Superior plans for the future. The Integrated Planning and Budgeting Process encompasses reporting and budgeting information from all of its units – academic, cocurricular, operational, and administrative – and is aligned with the strategic plan.

Sources

There are no sources.