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 broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

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

Argument

1.A.1

The University of Wisconsin-Superior (UW-Superior) has a mission statement that is properly developed, adopted by the governing board, and suited to the institution.

The University of Wisconsin System (UW System) Board of Regents (the Board) mandates that each campus formulates a Select Mission that defines its operations in broad terms consistent with the UW System’s Mission Statement. The University of Wisconsin-Superior’s Mission Statement, Vision Statement, and Values Statement were recently re-developed through that process and were adopted by the Board.

A revision of the mission, visions, and values statements recently occurred as a result of the Superior Visions 2020 strategic planning process. The planning process was guided by a Strategic Planning Steering Committee, working with a planning consultant, and directly supported by the work of eight Research Teams (a circle of readers), each team focusing on specific questions.

The strategic planning process was framed in a manner that acknowledged criticisms of the previous Strategic Priorities 2008-2012 plan, built on past accomplishments, recognized the forces lining up vis-à-vis higher education, and was oriented to a strategic positioning of the University based upon a thorough environmental scan. Among the stated intentions for the strategic planning process was to “redefine institutional mission and identity.”

The University previously had a clearly articulated mission as Wisconsin’s Public Liberal Arts College and was guided accordingly. Now termed Liberal Arts High Impact Practices, the once-named Liberal Arts Initiatives were a commitment by the campus to infuse high impact, liberal arts teaching strategies into the fabric of UW-Superior. This commitment was reaffirmed during the strategic planning process.

The one change to the mission statement that came out of the strategic planning process was to
explicitly emphasize community engagement by adding the phrase “engages the community and region.” The vision and values statements were further adjusted to reflect UW-Superior's commitment to partnerships and the region. In-depth information that explains the reasoning behind this change is explained in Criterion 1.D.

The Strategic Plan: Superior Visions 2020 and resulting mission change were products of a highly inclusive process that provided numerous opportunities for participation. University members, business leaders, employers, citizens, alumni, governance groups, and students engaged in the development of the plan and the revised mission statement. Open forums, surveys, and focus groups sought feedback from these valued constituents.

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 properly reviewed and approved mission according to HLC expectations.

1.A.2

UW-Superior's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its mission.

Academic Programs

As a liberal arts institution, there is a strong presence of traditionally liberal arts majors and minors accompanied with an appropriate program array for the University's size and mission. The institution's academic program review and academic planning processes help to maintain this alignment.

As detailed within the strategic planning metrics, by Summer 2017, all comprehensive majors, majors, and minors will have selected 3, 2, or 1, respectively, Liberal Arts High Impact Practice(s) to infuse within their curriculum. This demonstrates UW-Superior's strong commitment to effective teaching and learning and the institution's strong liberal arts underpinning.

Lastly, UW-Superior's Undergraduate and Graduate Learning Goals and Outcomes 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. Skills such as communication, problem-solving, and a demonstrated ability to apply knowledge and skills in a real-world setting 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. 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 writing, counseling, and tutoring services to all undergraduate and graduate students. Although programming could be more robust, the institution has continued to make a financial commitment to the first year experience program and to the Veterans and Nontraditional Student Center. UW-Superior continues to apply and receive TRIO federal grant funding for its long-running McNair, Educational Support Center, and Upward Bound programs. As students are ready to make their way to graduate school or a career, the University's Career Services Center assists with job readiness skills.
Enrollment Profile

UW-Superior's enrollment profile is consistent with its mission. UW-Superior primarily serves students from communities in northern Wisconsin and Minnesota. Access to a public, more affordable option allows families within a lower socioeconomic status region of the state to see higher education as a viable option. As the revised mission statement includes, UW-Superior is committed to serving the needs of the region.

1.A.3

UW-Superior's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support its mission.

The four strategic initiatives of the Strategic Plan: Superior Visions 2020 directly reflect and are driven by the UW-Superior mission. Strategic Initiative IV focuses on Resource Management. Goal 2 of this initiative states, "Ensure that the budget and planning process of the University is transparent and grounded in the Strategic Plan." This goal provides the framework for UW-Superior’s integrated planning and budgeting process.

The Integrated Planning and Budgeting Process (IPBP) flowchart illuminates what was presented and approved by governance groups in Spring 2015. Fiscal year 2015-2016 marked UW-Superior's first year of implementing an IPBP. Separate but complementary templates were developed for academic departments and academic support services and administrative programs reports and budget requests. Alignment to mission and strategic priorities of the institution are key parts of the questions asked.

Fiscal year 2015-2016 marked the first time that annual reports and subsequent annual budget requests were required for all planning and budgetary units. Criterion 5.C.1 includes in-depth information on this process and UW-Superior's continual improvement efforts for this budgeting priority.

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**1.B - Core Component 1.B**

The mission is articulated publicly.

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

**Argument**

**1.B.1**

UW-Superior clearly articulates its mission through multiple public documents including the University’s [website](#), the graduate and undergraduate [course catalog](#), the University [campus profile](#), and the [Strategic Plan: Superior Visions 2020](#). The mission statement is also clearly displayed throughout [every building on campus](#).

Revised in 2014 and approved by the UW System Board of Regents, the [mission](#) states, "The University of Wisconsin-Superior fosters intellectual growth and career preparation within a liberal arts tradition that emphasizes individual attention, embodies respect for diverse and multiple voices, and engages the community and region.” The mission documents also include UW-Superior's revised [vision and values statements](#). UW-Superior's strategic plan has [clearly delineated goals](#) and [supplementary documents](#) that further explain how UW-Superior is working to further actualize and prioritize its changed mission, vision, and values statements.

**1.B.2**

UW-Superior continues to change and update its mission to stay current with students' educational needs and the region's needs as well. The UW System has approved amendments to the UW-Superior mission statement several times, including by [Resolution 7559](#), adopted October 10, 1997; [Resolution 8441](#), adopted October 5, 2001; [Resolution 10463](#), adopted February 6, 2015. These specific efforts show that UW-Superior keeps the mission document current and that the institution changes the mission as needed.

The [mission](#) itself is clear on the University's commitment to a liberal arts tradition, the fostering of intellectual growth and career preparation, and the emphasis on individual attention. Individual attention assumes both curricular instruction and co-curricular experiences for the student. Mutual respect and diversity is embedded directly into the mission statement. The commitment to engage the community and region implies applied research and scholarship, creative works, and public service. UW-Superior has been recognized for its contributions to public service by receiving the National President's Honor Roll designation from the Corporation for National Public Service in 2014.
Public service commitment is exercised through Academic Service-Learning, co-curricular community service, and the Athletics Department's work with community groups. Further, the University recently created a new Center for Community Engaged Learning (CCEL) to support all community engagement activities. The University has a strong commitment to Career Services as an aid to economic development and career pathways for graduates while working with employers to meet their economic need. The Graduate Studies areas also provide clinical support to the region through clinic service. There is no religious or cultural purpose for UW-Superior.

1.B.3

UW-Superior understands that its intended constituents are primarily the citizens of the northern regions of Wisconsin and Minnesota. The institution's faculty, staff, and administration are all committed to serving the needs of the region. The language of the mission statement and its supporting documents show that students are the centerpiece of the work of the University through the focus on individual attention, intellectual growth and career preparation. With the addition of the key language "engages the community and region," UW-Superior overtly embraced a long-standing underlying practice of serving the region by connecting students, faculty, staff, and the community in shared work.

The mission identifies the nature of the University as a public liberal arts institution. In 2001, UW-Superior adopted a revised mission statement to reflect its new status as “Wisconsin’s Public Liberal Arts College” as designated by the Board of Regents. UW-Superior has consistently maintained its nature as a public liberal arts institution since 2001 by being an active member of the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC), developing multiple Liberal Arts High Impact Practice pedagogies and programs to infuse curricular instruction with research-proven, effective liberal arts teaching methods.

UW-Superior has worked hard to keep institutional operations and focus within the scope of a public liberal arts institution. New majors or programs must connect to the mission statement and demonstrate how adding them will enhance the University's purpose. Recently, the University went through Program Prioritization, and one of the critical questions used to evaluate existing programs and units was directly connected to serving the mission. This exercise occurred campus wide and reviewed how all areas of the University, among a number of factors, aligned with the mission. In addition, the Strategic Plan: Superior Visions 2020 was designed to fully operationalize the scope of the institution by focusing on key initiatives that would ensure that mission was pursued and scope maintained.

The new Center for Community Engaged Learning (CCEL) is a prime example of how the University is operationalizing and embracing its link to the community and region. CCEL will link all constituencies (students, faculty, staff, and community) in a variety of learning experiences including applied research, internships, Academic Service-Learning projects, and co-curricular volunteering to address the region's greatest needs and priorities. CCEL's Advisory Board is reflective of all of the University's internal communities and inclusive of its regional partners. CCEL is one of many examples that illustrates UW-Superior's service to its intended constituents.

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1.C - Core Component 1.C

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

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

Argument

1.C.1

UW-Superior addresses the importance of diversity and inclusion in its mission documents, directing that the institution “embodies respect for diverse cultures and multiple voices.” The mission parallels that of the UW System Mission, which charges all campuses to “serve the needs of women, minority, disadvantaged, disabled, and non-traditional students and seek racial and ethnic diversification of the student body and the professional faculty and staff.” The University's catalog contains the mission statement, and the required General Education (soon to be University Studies Program) curriculum requires Diversity and Non-western (soon to be Global Awareness) courses that every student at UW-Superior takes as part of their undergraduate degree. UW-Superior actively and consistently addresses its role in a multicultural society.

1.C.2

UW-Superior reflects attention to human diversity through administrative structures, curricular requirements and offerings, and co-curricular support programs. The University has been recognized for its commitment through awards from external institutions.

Administrative Structures and Processes

UW-Superior has several administrative structures built into the organization and daily operations that reflect a commitment to processes and activities related to human diversity. In 2015, the University developed a leadership position, Diversity Fellow, appointed by the Chancellor, who served on the Chancellor’s Cabinet to advocate for diversity in campus-wide issues. In addition, during the same time period, the University created the Equity, Diversity and Inclusions (EDI) group, charged with promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion on campus, to include representatives from the Office of Multicultural Affairs, Veterans and Nontraditional Students, Gender Equity, and the First Nations Center.

On December 15, 2016, the University hired a full-time Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. This position will guide campus equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts, oversee the diversity centers, and act as Affirmative Action Officer. The Director will also serve as a member of the Chancellor’s Cabinet. In addition, the University has multiple administrative positions that work in diversity, equity, and inclusion areas. Examples include the staffing and programming of the Office of
Multicultural Affairs (OMA) and the First Nations Center. Both of these units have reported through the Division of Student Affairs and are now a part of the Department of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion which is overseen by the new Director and reports to the Dean of Students.

UW-Superior has multiple processes that support diversity on campus and provide protections for campus members. First, the hiring practices at UW-Superior have fully integrated diversity and inclusion as a key requirement for the process. All searches for positions throughout the institution involve a Red File Meeting where the Human Resources Office (HR) and the Dean of Academic Affairs, as appropriate, discuss diversity, inclusion awareness, and best practices in searches. As an added layer to diversity protection in searches, HR creates an annual Affirmative Action Plan. The actual plan can be found in hard copy format in the Jim Dan Hill Library. This plan sets out UW-Superior's commitment to proper affirmative action protocols and processes in all hiring areas.

Second, UW-Superior has complaint processes for faculty, staff, administrators, and students that protect rights and offer responses to discrimination, harassment, or other difficulties. Students can submit complaints through a form on the Provost's Office website. Faculty, staff, and administrators can submit complaints to HR for processing and follow up or through formal complaint and grievance procedures provided for under formal rules. For example, the Academic Staff Senate receives and reviews concerns from academic staff and follows grievance procedures as defined in the UW-Superior Unclassified Staff Handbook, Appendix A.

The third process involves mandatory training for all staff in multiple areas: training involving sexual harassment topics, Executive Order #54 involving child abuse or neglect topics, and FERPA training involving topics on privacy and education records.

The fourth process involves training and professional development opportunities for the entire University community. The Global Awareness and Inclusivity Community of Practice sponsored by the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) brings faculty and staff together to identify best practices in promoting global education and diversity on campus. Also, the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Initiative (TRRI) in Teacher Education supports faculty and staff activities. UW-Superior is known for its quality Teacher Education program, and the TRRI PK-16 provides Teacher Recruitment financial resources to institutions expressly for Schools for Education to accomplish recruitment, advising, and program assessment. These resources are necessary to enhance diversity in teacher education programs and for growing capacity for preparing teachers for high-demand licensure areas and underserved areas such as women in STEM education, men in elementary education and early childhood education, and Special Education.

Lastly, the University is always improving and developing new policies, processes, and protocols to assist on diversity topics. Currently, campus leadership is engaging in conversations and beginning the drafting process for five new policies or protocols that will directly support a more inclusive, respectful, diverse collegiate culture and environment. These potential policies include the Anti-Bullying Policy, Respectful Campus Standards, Gender Inclusive Restroom Policy, Transgender Policy for Eligibility and Locker Rooms in the Marcovich Wellness Center, and Residence Life Gender Neutral/Inclusive Housing Policy. None of these policies or processes are in their final versions yet, but they are under development. They serve as evidence of the ongoing commitment by UW-Superior.

Curricular Requirements and Offerings
The primary process and activity that occurs at UW-Superior is student learning. The institution's academic curriculum strongly reflects a commitment to diversity. UW-Superior has integrated global and intercultural learning into its curriculum.

General Education (soon to be University Studies Program) is a primary example. All undergraduate students must take General Education (soon to be University Studies Program) coursework that includes three credits focused on issues of diversity, three credits focused on Non-western (soon to be Global Awareness) issues.

Diversity-oriented coursework is found in more than 60 diversity courses that promote understanding of issues arising from diversities such as race, ethnicity, linguistics, class, religion, rural/urban/suburban classification, gender, sexual orientation, abilities, and national origin.

Non-western (soon to be Global Awareness) courses are another example integrating global and intercultural learning with more than 40 Non-western courses that promote empathetic thinking about the world and its challenges through the study of at least one non-European or non-Euro-American society, country, or region.

Academic majors and minors are a fourth powerful example of UW-Superior's commitment to diversity with more than ten major and minor programs that offer courses addressing multicultural perspectives and skills, such as International Business, First Nations Studies, Gender Studies, Global Studies, Anthropology, History, Philosophy, Spanish, Ojibwe, French via Distance Learning, Political Science, and American Sign Language and Japanese via the Center for Continuing Education.

Also, UW-Superior has integrated High Impact Practices such as Global Awareness, which integrates global education into the curriculum.

Finally, the University has numerous study away options, both domestic and international, for students to expand their cultural understanding and experiences while earning collegiate credit, including National Student Exchange, Study Away (Scotland, South Korea, Costa Rica and Germany) and faculty led programs (3-9 credit short-term programs in January and May).

Taken as a whole, these six examples indicate a strong commitment in the curricular academic area to diversity.

Co-Curricular Support Programs

UW-Superior supports students in diversity-related services and programs in many ways.

Four critical centers exist to support inclusion, diversity, and cultural awareness at UW-Superior: the First Nations Center (FNC), Gender Equity Resource Center (GERC), Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA), and the Veteran and Nontraditional Student Center (VNSC). These centers provide students support as needed throughout their undergraduate studies. Graduate students also have access to utilize the centers' services.

In addition, several examples of diversity-related services are offered through the Office of International Programs. The Educational Success Center provides a significant grouping of federally-funded programs designed to serve students from many backgrounds who want to start strong and stay strong throughout college. The Educational Success Center includes ACCESS and BRIDGE.
Programs, ASSIST 2.0 Program for Student Success, Disability Support Services, Educational Services, Homelessness Services, and the TRIO Programs, including Upward Bound and the McNair Scholars Program.

One example of a premier student group that focuses on diversity education is the World Student Association (WSA), the largest student organization at UW-Superior. WSA promotes global diversity and inclusion on campus and hosts events with this purpose. The most notable annual event is Cultural Night; held in November, it is a night of international cuisine, performances, and fashion.

Awards

UW-Superior's commitment to diversity in programs and activities has been publicly recognized with awards. The University was recognized in 2016 and 2017 in the top 25 Military Friendly Schools by GI Jobs, in the top 200 colleges for Native Americans by the Winds of Change magazine, and among the top 25 Safest Campuses in the nation by Home Owners Insurance Organization. These, along with other awards, are proudly displayed on the University's homepage.

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1.D - Core Component 1.D

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

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

Argument

1.D.1

UW-Superior's actions and decisions reflect that, in its educational role, the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation. 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 the university are the boundaries of the state, and that all citizens of the state will benefit from the services and resources of the university and UW System. As a public institution, the educational responsibilities extend into the community.

UW-Superior demonstrates this commitment to the public good in many ways. First, its revised mission is dedicated to meeting the needs of its regional constituents. The Board of Regents, the governing board for the UW System institutions, approved the UW-Superior Revised Mission Statement on February 6, 2015. This mission change reflects, beyond the Wisconsin Idea, UW-Superior's ongoing commitment to the community and region.

Secondly, UW-Superior has made its commitment to the public integral to its academic and fiscal planning. Strategic Initiative II, Thriving Partnerships, of the Strategic Plan: Superior Vision 2020 directly commits to innovative programs and strategic partnerships in the region.

Detailed within the metrics, a series of goals and action steps advance the University’s dedication to the public good. Some of these include

- Establish a Center for Community Engaged Learning to coordinate campus efforts. While there are currently hundreds of mutually beneficial partnerships occurring between the University and the community, this center would serve as the hub of all such activity.
- Develop and maintain a portfolio of programs that meet current and projected regional and national employment needs.
- Support regional needs through research, scholarship, and creative activity.

Metrics have been assigned to each action step in the Strategic Plan so progress can be tracked on an
annual basis with monthly updates required from assigned participants.

Third, a policy was approved which provides UW-Superior employees access to volunteer and serve the community during their normal work week because UW-Superior employees are very involved in the local community. Many faculty and staff serve on boards and service organizations within the region, using those platforms as a vehicle for discussions of higher education, mission, local needs, and how UW-Superior can help address those needs.

Fourth, numerous activities and events are coordinated by UW-Superior to involve and engage the community. Units that provide such activities and events include, but are not limited to, Intercollegiate Athletics, Campus Recreation, Student Groups, Continuing Education, the Lake Superior Northern Estuarine Research Reserve, the Transportation and Logistics Research Center, and the UW-Superior Theatre and Music Departments.

Fifth, UW-Superior publicly celebrates its commitment to the region and recognizes the students, community members, faculty, and staff for its success with community engagement activities. The Student Involvement Awards recognize outstanding student leadership and student organizations that have significantly contributed to the quality of campus life and the campus community and includes a Community Service Award. Also, each year, a faculty or instructional academic staff member is nominated for and recognized with an Academic Service-Learning Award at the Spring campus awards ceremony.

Lastly, the University Marketing and Communications Office regularly produces publications that consistently emphasize engagement. The UW-Superior Viewbook outlines multiple ways students can become involved in activities both on and off campus. A 2016 April/May edition of Positively Superior magazine provided examples of new initiatives at the University along with its economic and community impact and research contributions.

1.D.2

UW-Superior operates as a part of the larger UW System. The UW System is one of the largest systems of public higher education in the United States. Inherently, the primary mission as a public institution is to educate, not to support external interests or investors. Please see Criterion 2.C for more information about the Board of Regents and the UW System.

UW-Superior does not generate financial investors or support external interests. UW-Superior's educational responsibilities are the primary purpose of the institution. 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. 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. All revenues received and earned by the University are used to promote, improve, and enhance its mission to provide quality instruction and services to its students.

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. Copious internal program reviews, maintenance of external accreditations, academic assessment at both the institutional and program levels, and the tracked success of graduates all provide information that help UW-Superior provide assurance that it is meeting its primary
educational responsibilities.

1.D.3

UW-Superior seeks mutually beneficial partnerships with its external constituencies. Within the University's expertise and capacity, it responds to the needs and priorities of the community. Within the last two years, UW-Superior has been recognized for this with inclusion on the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll.

UW-Superior is engaged with the community within every division on campus. One of the primary reasons for creating the Center for Community Engaged Learning was due to the amount of outreach occurring; a need developed for better coordination between the varied divisions, offices, centers, and units.

The primary ways UW-Superior responds to the community's needs is through its academic departments, research centers, continuing education options, and co-curricular volunteering.

Responding to Community Needs through Academic Departments

Each of the 12 academic departments at UW-Superior involves its students in applying coursework to meet real community identified needs. This primarily occurs with Academic Service-Learning and internships. During the 2015-2016 academic year, 40 professors, from 12 academic departments, taught 96 Academic Service-Learning courses. This provided 1,570 student service-learning experiences, donating 34,053 hours to 146 community partners. This generated $765,511 in economic impact for the local community and region.

In addition, internships or field placements are graduation requirements within the Transportation and Logistics, Criminal Justice, Teacher Education, Community Health, and Social Work majors. Co-curricular internship opportunities are also provided to students through Career Services.

Responding to Community Needs through UW-Superior's Research Centers

UW-Superior is home to three research Centers. Although the focus is different, each Center provides important support and services to the community.

The Transportation and Logistics Research Center works to be involved in regional transportation and logistics research and offers courses, seminars, workshops and speakers series to help professionals and the community better understand the region's opportunities. Since its inception in 1999, the center has garnered more than $5 million in grants and endowments.

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. It fosters environmental education and outreach in the Twin Ports and surrounding communities. Since its inception, LSRI has received more than 500 grants and contracts with a combined extramural budget of more than $50 million. More than 45 federal, state, and local agencies have supported LSRI.

The Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve (LSNERR) 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.

**Responding to Community Needs through Co-Curricular Student Volunteering**

The Department of Student Involvement, a unit within the Division of Student Affairs, provides volunteer opportunities to students. From blood drives to Habitat for Humanity alternative spring breaks, Student Involvement is the department at UW-Superior that provides one-time volunteer opportunities. Student organizations are also involved with providing support to meet community needs. Each year, the Future Teachers of America group raises funds to purchase books for local schools.

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. Athletics is to help student-athletes become exceptional students through participation in a competitive athletic program that also enriches the University community. Each year, student athletes can be found in the Superior community, Caroling for Cans, reading at elementary schools, and raising awareness and funds for important causes.

**Responding to Community Needs through Continuing Education Programs**

The Center for Continuing Education provides an array of for-credit and non-credit options for citizens of all ages within the community. The Center for Continuing Education is committed to the "Wisconsin Idea," providing a variety of educational options 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.

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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 is articulated publicly through many venues on campus and to the public. UW-Superior's Strategic Plan: Superior Visions 2020 came about through an inclusive process, providing numerous opportunities for participation in its creation by community members, governance groups, and students. The current revised mission was approved by the Board of Regents in February 2015. This mission is reflected in and carried out through the work of the University in all areas.

UW-Superior addresses its role in a multicultural society through its mission statement and strategic plan. It is supported by numerous administrative structures and processes and is integral to curricular requirements and offerings. Students are supported through diversity-related services and programs, at least three of which have received public recognition.

The University demonstrates commitment to the public good in multiple ways, including the long-standing commitment to the Wisconsin Idea, its mission statement, and its Strategic Plan, which includes 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 its academic programming, research centers, continuing education, and co-curricular volunteering.

**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 operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

Argument

2.A

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.

UW-Superior operates within the University of Wisconsin System (UW System) as a public university. The UW System is established under Chapter 36 of Wisconsin State Statutes. As a public institution of higher education within the UW System, integrity is expected by public officials and state of Wisconsin employees. The UW System Board of Regents (the Board) serves as a public official within their official capacity, and the code of ethics for officials and employees applies to their role.

The Board of Regents enacts policies and promulgates rules for governing the UW System, plans for the future needs of the state for university education, ensures the diversity of quality undergraduate programs. The Board are appointed by the Governor, subject to confirmation by the Senate, and must adhere to the Statement of Expectations of Board Members.

The Board ensures that all UW System employees operate with integrity through the Regent Code of Conduct. This applies to all of the UW System and, in particular for this case, UW-Superior employees.

Expectations for Fair and Ethical Behavior for Administration, Faculty, Staff and Students

In addition to ensuring that the institution operates with integrity, UW-Superior has a layered set of checks and balances that helps ensure fair and ethical behavior.

The first check is a long history of shared governance. A system of inclusive and shared governance leads to ethical decision-making. It creates ongoing checks and balances between different constituencies of the University. This ability for groups to both participate and question each other's views ensures that fairness and ethics are part of the daily operations and decision-making.
Faculty, academic staff, classified (now university) staff, and students have governance committees to better support the University’s mission and goals. The addition of university staff to the shared governance structure is a recent development. In Spring 2014, the Board authorized a governance structure for university staff, and the University responded by creating the Classified Staff (now University Staff) Advisory Council. All segments of the University community participate in varied levels of decision-making at the University.

Second, there is a web of critical policies that require fairness and ethics. University-specific policies are located on the Human Resources Office web page. Examples include Code of Ethics, Sex Misconduct Policy, and Affirmative Action. As stated in the Code of Ethics, “As a general rule, an employee may not use his or her university position to gain private financial or other benefits for the employee, the employee’s immediate family, or an outside organization.” There are behavioral expectations of employees, procedures outlined for reporting concerns or suspected policy violations, and assurances of confidentiality and whistleblower protection.

Third, the commitment to fair and ethical behavior is exemplified in hiring practices. An example is UW-Superior's Vacancy/Job Posting Announcement Template in which it states, "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."

Finally, UW-Superior students are members of both the University community and the larger community of which the University is a 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. UW-Superior students are accountable for their actions. The student conduct process fosters the development of leaders and citizens who exercise personal responsibility, ethical decision-making, and cross-cultural competency. A specific example of this commitment is the Student-Athlete Handbook which includes student-athlete responsibilities and expectations in addition to a variety of policies that help ensure the integrity of University operations and 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 unclassified 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 System Policy on Breach of Fiscal Integrity. UW System President Ray Cross 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 is subject to periodic 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 audit committee, 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 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.

In the context of financial integrity, responsibility for protecting student financial information is imperative. As an example, UW-Superior demonstrates a commitment to credit card security through an active Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliance program. Annually, all departments accepting credit card payments must complete a questionnaire and receive online training for all employees who handle credit cards.

**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, and discrimination and absence from University-sponsored events. These policies are shared with students through Orientation, on the Dean of Students website, through the Student Digest, on the student information sheet and syllabus attachment, and through email communications. In addition, instructors prepare a course syllabus for distribution to the class during the first week of the semester in which a section on expectations regarding academic misconduct is included.

UW-Superior follows the UW System Administrative Code Chapter 14 in situations involving academic misconduct and has developed a Guide to Handle Academic Misconduct for instructors. A student can also have a concern addressed through UW-Superior's Student Complaint Process or by submitting an Incident Report Form that is available in the Student Handbook.

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, 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."

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 Personnel Matters**
UW-Superior strives for fairness and transparency in its hiring practices. The University is an Equal Opportunity Employer and makes this clear in every employment posting. UW-Superior utilizes search committees to ensure that fair and ethical hiring practices are enforced when filling vacant staff and faculty positions. 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.

Matters of personnel integrity are also addressed through the grievance procedure, code of ethics, and promotion procedures.

**Ensuring Integrity in Auxiliary Functions**

Multiple approaches are in place to ensure integrity in auxiliary functions. Auxiliary functions follow the staffing standards of all University employees but have additional responsibilities for ethics related to services provided.

For example, the Marcovich Wellness Center (MWC) has established a rate structure for membership that takes into consideration undue competition with the public sector and pricing. MWC also has a published policy regarding use of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs in that facility. Camps and clinics attended by minors under the age of 18, which are frequently sponsored by the Department of Campus Life or Athletics, must adhere to the minor protection and adult leadership policy which became a requirement in September 2016. Residence Life publishes a handbook annually which includes a code of conduct applicable to all students who reside in campus housing.

Auxiliaries must report fund balances annually to UW System Administration to ensure fees collected are not excessive, yet meet the cost of operations. Further, the Student Government Association's Segrated 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 with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

Argument

2.B

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 communicates about its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

Academic Programs

UW-Superior makes known its academic programs to students and the public. The most prominent source of programmatic information can be found at the University’s website. Featured on every web page or subsite is a button located in the upper right named "academics" which links to the directory of undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education programs.

The University catalog is considered the master directory for all academic programs and offerings. Programs and academic departments are clearly indexed and easily accessed via the UW-Superior website or by a downloadable PDF file for the public, current students, and prospective students.

Another common source of academic programmatic information can be found through several admissions publications, which are commonly distributed to prospective students and community members. A few examples of the publications used during an academic and recruitment cycle include the Admissions Viewbook, the Admissions Visit Book, and the Transfer Admissions Viewbook. All of these documents are distributed annually to regional high schools and community colleges during admissions visits and can be easily obtained in hard copy in the Admissions Office. Part of the admissions communication flow includes emailed links to this programmatic information to new and prospective students.

Requirements

Admission requirements are posted clearly on the Admissions Office website as well as within the UW-Superior catalog. Graduation requirements can also be found within the UW-Superior catalog and are discussed during freshman registration events on campus. Degree progress and degree requirements are outlined and distributed to students during Summer Orientation Advisement and Registration (SOAR) via the SOAR Advising Syllabus. New enrolling freshman students spend about one hour of their SOAR event learning academic requirements for degree completion and satisfactory
academic progress. Every student has access to their e-hive advising report that is the roadmap to degree and graduation requirements. Many advisors use this source for individual advisement sessions with students.

**Faculty and Staff**

The full faculty and staff directory is accessible via the UW-Superior website and is available through printing. Once students are admitted to UW-Superior, the ease of full directory access improves with their email account creation because students have access to the entire campus contact list through their Outlook accounts. Credentialing of the faculty and staff is outlined in the UW-Superior catalog, containing attained degrees and the institutions where earned.

**Cost to Students**

Cost is illustrated to students, potential students, and the public through several key outlets. The Bursar section of the undergraduate catalog and the UW System comparison chart managed by UW-HELP are sources commonly used by students and the public to identify cost. In addition, UW-Superior's financial aid website features a net price calculator. There are also several links to the net price calculator from other frequently visited parts of the University website, including every subsite within the online Admissions pages of UW-Superior's website. Price is further outlined in admissions publications like NTW flyers, the Viewbook, and the tuition calendar.

**Control**

Much of UW-Superior’s operational and control protocol are outlined by the Board of Regents. Their full policy contains everything from system-wide policy to detailed staff and faculty contract information.

The University's internal control and organization is clearly represented within documentation contained on the UW-Superior Human Resources Office website. This includes the campus organizational chart and most campus-wide policy and procedures.

Financial and business practice control is developed and overseen by the UW-Superior Business and Financial Services Office, which is led by a Controller. The University adheres to both institution-specific and UW System policies. More in-depth information on these policies and practices is detailed in Criterion 2.A.

**Accreditation Relationships**

Under the category of accreditation, the University displays its credentials in two ways. The full listing of accrediting agencies applicable to UW-Superior and its programs can be accessed via the University website and can be found in the UW-Superior catalog. It is also important to note the listing of states that UW-Superior currently operates in through Distance Learning program offerings. Prospective online students are frequently directed to this listing to ensure that they are aware if UW-
Superior is allowed to operate online classes in their home state.

**Marketing and the Website**

The UW-Superior website is published by University Marketing and Communications which provides the design, structure, navigation and editorial conventions and oversees official content. Official content includes all websites that communicate or conduct business on behalf of the University or its departments, offices, or units.

In addition, the University’s social media following has more than doubled since 2015, making social media a primary tool for communicating timely information to distinct audiences, including the campus community, prospective students, and the general public. UW-Superior’s current official social networks are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.

**Alumni Magazine**

The University Advancement Office, in collaboration with the University Marketing and Communications Office, produces and funds an annual 36-page Superior Alumni magazine. The magazine serves a multi-purpose communication function for external constituents. It communicates current news about the University, highlights successes with programs and people, promotes upcoming events and programs, and promotes the need for raising private gift support through donor testimonials and/or fundraising initiatives.

The magazine is mailed every November, and the distribution list includes all alumni, parents and retirees, as well as friends, businesses and other organizations that have supported the UW-Superior Foundation with charitable contributions. Superior Alumni magazine is also distributed to all University faculty and staff.

**Institutional Effectiveness**

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) provides leadership to the UW-Superior community through guidance and support in data-informed planning and decision-making while strengthening the institutional accountability in improving learning environments and outcomes for the success of all students.

The OIE presents data on retention and graduation, enrollment, student satisfaction, employee numbers, the student academic profile, among others on its website. Annually, Retention and Graduation reports, Student Achievement Measures, and Common Data Sets are posted to the website. Both internal and external data users may request additional data on the website through a data request form.

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2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

1. The governing board’s deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
2. The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution’s internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
3. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.
4. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

Argument

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 by 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 UW System students are appointed to the Board for two-year terms. One of the two is a nontraditional student.

2.C.1

The deliberations of the Board reflect priorities to preserve and enhance all UW campuses, including UW-Superior. The Regent Bylaws 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 the future needs of the state for university education, and ensures the diversity of quality undergraduate programs. To accomplish this, the Board need to understand the UW System, its mission, structure, programs, financial framework, strengths, challenges, and current issues; the role of the governing board; the role of System Administration; the roles of faculty, academic staff, and students; relationships between the UW System and other state agencies; and the state and national higher education environment.

Regents are expected to accept responsibility for effectively and efficiently governing the UW System in the public interest. They are to adhere to high standards of ethical conduct and to comply fully with laws relating to conduct of public officials and boards.

Meeting agendas of the Board are developed by the UW System Administration Office after conferring with the chancellors and other university leadership. The Board appoints the president of the university system and the chancellors of the 13 universities and UW-Extension and UW Colleges. UW-Superior's Chancellor Renee Wachter was appointed by the Board on April 7, 2011. The
Board **grants tenure appointments** annually to faculty members at its June meeting.

2.C.2

The Board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution’s internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations. The Board of Regents committees provide the means to deliberate, discuss, and debate decisions for the various functions of the UW System. Board meetings are subject to Wisconsin’s [open records](https://www.wisconsin.gov/govdata/recordkeepingrecords) and [open meeting](https://www.wisconsin.gov/govdata/recordkeepingmeetings) laws. Both external and internal parties are invited to present at Board meetings, and these meetings are open to the general public. Webcasts of the deliberations are available online. Agendas are published to the Regent website a week in advance of the meeting, and supporting materials are available on Monday of the week of the meeting. All Board materials and webcasts are archived and accessible by the general public.

2.C.3

The previously described process for selecting members of the Board in Chapter 36 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.

Each member of the Board must be willing to make a strong and sustained personal commitment as evidenced by the Statement of Expectations for Board Members. Further, the Board are subject to the General Duties of Public Officials in the State of Wisconsin as required in Chapter 19 of the Wisconsin Statutes. Board members are required to abstain from participating in discussions where a conflict of interest is found to exist. Board members must also file annual financial disclosure statements. Board members serve without remuneration from the state, the UW System, or other entity. Board members may have reasonable and necessary travel expenditures reimbursed for their participation at Board meetings.

2.C.4

The Board of Regents delegates day-to-day institutional management to each institution’s administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters. The Board empowers each chancellor with the necessary authority to fulfill the mission of his or her 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 administrating 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."

UW-Superior is organized into five major divisions: Academic Affairs, Administration and Finance, Enrollment Management, Student Affairs, and University Advancement. The Vice Chancellors (or the Dean of Students) are responsible for the day-to-day management of their divisions.
The four governance groups (Faculty Senate, Academic Staff Senate, University Staff Senate, and Student Government Association) and the various University committees or councils (such as the Council of Undergraduate Academic Affairs, the Graduate Council, the Academic Program Review Committee, the Personnel Committee, and the Planning and Budgetary Review Committee) are given the authority to develop and administer 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 freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

Argument

2.D

The Board and the UW System are committed to freedom of expression. Most recently, this commitment is evidenced by Resolution 10600 passed in December 2015, in which it 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.”

UW-Superior’s strong commitment to freedom of expression is built in to the University’s mission statement. The mission communicates to all members of the UW-Superior community that the freedom of all individuals to express themselves and to be heard in doing so is integral to fulfilling its mission. The University's mission statement was written specifically to express the University’s core values of inclusiveness, diversity, and the free exchange of ideas as essential components of the University’s mission.

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 seek knowledge and to share 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 Conduct, 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 the 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.

Pursuit of Truth

The Professional Code of Ethics within the Unclassified Staff Handbook states, “Our primary responsibility to our disciplines is to seek the truth. 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.

UW-Superior is home to an office called the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL). CETL is devoted to promoting and supporting the art and science of teaching. CETL plays a central role in educating and encouraging faculty, instructional academic staff, and university staff in the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning. Among CETL's key themes is to foster campus dialogue and collaboration about effective teaching practices and ways to facilitate student learning and engagement.

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 a 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, complaints are addressed by the Faculty Senate's Personnel Council, that will appoint a faculty hearing committee to deal with 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 handled in an escalating manner beginning with the staff member's supervisor, as 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, students and staff.

1. The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.
2. Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.
3. The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Argument

2.E.1

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.

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 well-being of participants are respected and protected per the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) rule on the Protection of Human Subjects (45 CFR 46). Student research project proposals are closely vetted by their faculty or staff advisors before submission to the IRB. The topic of ethical research is also integrated into courses and workshops for students participating in research fellowships sponsored by the McNair Scholars Program and the Office of Undergraduate Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activity (URSCA).

For each research project involving human subjects, the IRB determines whether subjects will be placed at risk and, if risk is involved, whether

- The risks to the subject are so outweighed by the sum of the benefit to the subject and the importance of the knowledge to be gained as to warrant a decision to allow the subject to accept these risks;
- The rights and welfare of any such subjects will be adequately protected; and
- Legally effective informed consent will be obtained by adequate and appropriate methods in accordance with the provision of the regulations.

The Grants and Research Office supports faculty and staff in seeking funding for research, scholarship, and creative efforts. The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) promotes and supports research that furthers teaching effectiveness. In addition, new faculty receive information about scholarship and research, including best practices in fostering and supervising student research, as part of New Faculty Orientation (now called Promoting Excellence in Teaching & Learning [PETL] Orientation).

Further, UW-Superior established a committee that reviews research proposals and instructional practices to ensure that all live animals used for instruction or research at UW-Superior are protected from abuse. This committee is in the process of developing guidelines for Institutional Animal Care and Use for University-wide use and practice.
2.E.2

All UW-Superior students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources within their general education required coursework.

Principles of proper use of sources are taught in the required writing class Writing 102: College Writing II (soon to be Introduction to Academic Writing). This is reinforced in other courses, such as Writing 209: Business and Professional Writing (soon to be 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 and through the Jim Dan Hill Library website course guides and videos. For international students, the Office of International Programs offers a brief overview of writing protocol entitled “Ethics in College Writing.” Students are informed of the necessity of proper citation and avoidance of plagiarism in the mandatory syllabus attachment of every course. All incoming students take a pledge that includes a commitment to academic honesty.

In addition to issues regarding plagiarism and the appropriate 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 the Appropriate Use website hosted by Information and Instructional Technology Services.

2.E.3

UW-Superior has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity. The Board of Regents policy for addressing academic dishonesty encourages offering opportunities for redoing assignments and transparent negotiation or assignment of penalties. Faculty are given guidance in dealing with cases of academic misconduct, and definitions and sanctions for academic misconduct are contained in a mandatory document attached to all course syllabi. The policy and procedures for handling academic misconduct are described in the Student Handbook. For Distance Learning, an exam proctoring procedure is in place for students taking classes online.

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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 Board and University policies governing these. There are numerous specific policies that cover all required topics. Students are taught ethical uses of information in required introductory writing courses and are informed about proper citation and plagiarism through multiple appropriate venues.

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

3.A - Core Component 3.A

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

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

Argument

3.A.1

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. Six policies and practices provide strong examples of oversight for both undergraduate and graduate programs to ensure academic currency and appropriate levels of performance.

The first policy and practice is the catalog updating process. It ensures regular review of curriculum. Both undergraduate and graduate programs participate in this process. Departments review their courses and programmatic array biennially. After department review and approval, any changes or updates are reviewed through faculty governance at the undergraduate level by the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Council (UAAC) per policy Academic Policy 1117. At the graduate level, these changes are reviewed and approved by Graduate Council Academic Policy 1601G. This hierarchy of approval is also outlined in Faculty Senate’s bylaws for UAAC and Graduate Council. Some programs, such as Social Work, require third party accreditation. These third party reviews and accreditations ensure that these programs meet national standards within their disciplines.

Certificates offered through the Center for Continuing Education (CCE) are 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 for faculty governance. While certificates may be numbered at different levels, CCE and its academic program partners ensure that the level of rigor is appropriate for the competencies of the certificate, as demonstrated by the Paralegal Certificate.

The second policy to ensure academic currency and appropriate levels of performance is the Academic Program Review (APR) process. On a regular interval no longer than seven years (and currently six), each academic program (graduate and undergraduate) is reviewed through the APR.
process by the Academic Program Review Council (APRC). This process reviews the programs on a series of metrics, including programmatic mission and alignment with University mission, program goals, student learning outcomes, curriculum, assessment, teaching and advising effectiveness, demand analysis, and program resources and program productivity. In addition to the regular cycle of APR, new academic majors are required to undergo a five-year review through UW System to provide oversight and to ensure that new programs are meeting their promised objectives. After review, a formal report is generated and forwarded to the Provost, Chancellor, and Board of Regents for reaffirmation.

The third policy that ensures academic currency and appropriate levels of performance for both undergraduate and graduate students is the credit hour policy and out-of-classroom productivity standard. 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.

Fourth, required course evaluations provide critical information to measure student perceptions of currency and level of performance in a course. Department rules set the expectations for instructors to do 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 are able to see student feedback on course expectations and provide feedback on currency and level of performance.

The fifth check on currency and level of performance is to examine how programs serve the region's economic needs. UW System policy requires that program array and offerings serve employer and regional needs. With UW-Superior's change of mission, serving the region's needs is of critical purpose. In 2014, UW-Superior commissioned Burning Glass to analyze occupational outlook for each UW-Superior degree program. Academic programs were asked to analyze these results and identify opportunities to better serve regional needs. Further, part of the University's Strategic Plan: Superior Visions 2020 asks programs to form advisory groups to ensure currency and appropriate performance levels of graduates.

Finally, the institution has a long-standing and well-established commitment to integration of Liberal Arts High Impact Practices (HIPs). There are six deeply embedded research-based effective pedagogies that are integrated throughout the academic departments and programs: Academic Service-Learning (AS-L), Senior Year Experience, Global Awareness, Undergraduate Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity (URSCA), Writing across the Curriculum (WAC), and First Year Experience. These practices ensure that students are taught using research-based pedagogy in major and minors, General Education (soon to be University Studies Program), and in some co-curricular environments. HIPs are in the Strategic Plan as a program-based requirement. Numerous examples of HIPs will be used in this report as evidence.

3.A.2

Based on 2013 feedback from HLC, UW-Superior worked to articulate and differentiate learning goals for all of its academic degree and certificate programs. At that time, there were no learning goals for certificates; the undergraduate learning goals were confusing, overlapping, and repetitive; there were no graduate learning goals. This development is well documented and detailed within UW-Superior's 2015 Monitoring Report. In 2016, the University made significant progress in all of these areas.

Learning goals are articulated for all undergraduate learning including AA, AS, BA, and BS degrees. In November 2016, the Graduate Student Learning Goals were finalized and approved by
Faculty Senate; these relate to all MA, MSE, and post baccalaureate and post graduate programs. Also, all credit-bearing Certificate Learning Goals are finalized and published. All areas required by HLC now have clearly articulated learning goals and outcomes for student learning.

For undergraduate degree work, there is a differentiation between AA and BA/BS degrees. AA degrees require foundational liberal arts work primarily through the General Education (soon to be University Studies Program) curriculum. For those graduating with BA/BS degrees, the foundational work has been reinforced and further deepened through an additional discipline-centered focus in major and minor areas of study. The graduate learning goals are differentiated from the undergraduate learning goals and outcomes by practicing the goals and outcomes in professional settings and focusing on the scholarly inquiry and research aspect of advanced academic work. The certificate learning goals are differentiated by focusing on linkage to professional competencies.

3.A.3

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

UW-Superior offers on-campus, online, and dual credit courses. 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 policy, the learning objectives in all modalities must be present on all syllabi. These policies and processes ensure that program quality and learning goals remain consistent.

For program quality, online courses are additionally reviewed by Distance Learning staff for adherence to Quality Matters standards, a nationally recognized set of distance learning standards for teaching quality in online contexts. Departments and programs also review proposals for courses to ensure quality and consistency when a change of modality or delivery format is needed or added. The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) provides course design support, online Brightspace training (UW-Superior's learning management system), and ongoing professional development activities to support faculty and instructional academic staff 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 all other faculty and instructional academic staff. The content of these dual credit courses are vetted and approved by academic departments prior to offering. 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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The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

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

Argument

3.B.1

The current General Education curriculum, soon to be the University Studies Program (USP), is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution. UW-Superior is in the midst of a general education program change. The current General Education curriculum was reviewed by UW-System in 2014. This report summarized the background, HLC feedback, and future plans for general education at UW-Superior. This section (3.B.1) will examine both the soon to be former General Education curriculum and the incoming USP.

General Education's curricular mission is identical, and therefore appropriate, to the University’s mission. General Education curriculum aligns with the three main aspects of the University’s mission statement through its coursework and categories because it provides a solid liberal arts foundation to all undergraduates through courses in humanities, arts, sciences, and social science; it fosters intellectual growth and career preparation as indicated in the General Education learning outcomes; it “embodies respect for diverse cultures and multiples voices” through the six credits in the Diversity and Non-western (soon to be Global Awareness) categories.

In 2015, the General Education Committee requested all academic departments to provide input to align their General Education Core and Knowledge categories to the approved University Student Learning Outcomes using Faculty Senate procedures. This alignment works for the new USP as well. This alignment process ensured that General Education learning outcomes conformed to the HLC-recommended streamlining of the learning outcomes for the University and were not redundant or supplemental to them.

In Fall 2017, the General Education curriculum will transform and transition to the University Studies Program (USP), which was approved by UAAC Committee and Faculty Senate in 2014 in successive
layers of review. The USP mission statement clarifies the University's public commitment to multidisciplinary perspectives, commits to active teaching and learning pedagogy, and links a liberal arts foundation to successful major and minor disciplinary study and post-graduation life.

The process used to redesign General Education into the USP involved the General Education Committee, a Faculty Senate appointed group that is primarily responsible for these types of curricular change proposals. The General Education Committee worked for two years between 2013-2015 to research, re-design, and obtain formal approval to focus the foundational education of students to more active learning and pedagogically informed practices. The committee had a multi-day retreat with General Education experts from UW-Oshkosh. The new University Studies Program does not change the basic structure of the old General Education curriculum; therefore, it will continue to align with the University’s mission statement. However, to achieve the shift to USP and ensure that the courses align with UW-Superior's new student learning goals, all current General Education courses must redesign their content and pedagogy to comply with USP expectations.

All current General Education courses are required to submit applications and syllabi that reflect the new USP expectations, including regular assessment of student learning in item #5. The committee published a Faculty Senate approved schedule of review of all former General Education courses to transition to USP. The committee expects to have final re-application and review processes completed for all USP submissions by end of Spring 2017. This mandatory review for USP approval has strengthened the University's commitment to mission-centric foundational courses, active teaching, and assessment of student learning.

General education at UW-Superior (both current General Education and incoming USP) serves all two and four year students at the University and sets the academic content standards for transfer of all curriculum from other institutions for students continuing their education at UW-Superior. The upcoming catalog to be published in 2017 will reflect this commitment.

With the exception of Diversity and Non-western courses, the vast majority of General Education/USP courses are at the 100-200 level on a 400 level undergraduate level of performance scale. This demonstrates the University's understanding that general education is foundational, relevant, and meaningful to all undergraduate student learning. Note that graduate programs rely on completion of an appropriate four year degree that would have included general education requirements.

3.B.2

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 possess. UW-Superior has infused the vision and values of the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) “Liberal Arts and America’s Promise” (LEAP) Challenge into its comprehensive undergraduate curriculum. UW-Superior's distinguished faculty and staff are recognized leaders in the scholarship of teaching and learning. UW-Superior is an active founding member of the University of Wisconsin LEAP Initiative. These purposes are well recognized within the tradition of public liberal arts institutions.

The content 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
provides wide-ranging knowledge from multiple disciplines and ways of knowing in the traditional branches of liberal arts. The Diversity and Non-western (soon to be Global Awareness) Categories enable students to become responsible citizens and to prepare for the global economy.

General education’s specific contribution to liberal arts education is defined and operationalized in its learning goals. The current General Education learning goals were put in place in Fall 2012 and continue today. They were developed after General Education made its mission statement identical to the University’s mission statement. The goals place emphasis on active student learning in five areas: core skills (5 areas), intellectual growth, a wide exposure to many areas of study, issues of diversity, and interdisciplinary connections.

In Fall 2017, the new USP will be implemented. The mission of USP clarifies the University's commitment to preparing students for life and work, providing foundational knowledge and skills for advanced work in majors and minors, and engaging students in learning. The three University Student Learning Goals will become the learning goals of the University Studies Program. The General Education Committee assigned two Learning Outcomes to each of the goals of USP. The categories and number of credits in USP remain identical to those in the current General Education curriculum, a decision made after the General Education Committee researched general education requirements across the nation and found that its current program aligns with national comparables.

General education is grounded in the philosophy and mission of a public liberal arts institution. UW-Superior is a member of the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC). UW-Superior is the only Wisconsin institution to be a member of COPLAC since 2001. UW-Superior was recognized as the public liberal arts institution in the UW System in 1998.

3.B.3

Every degree program at UW-Superior meets the HLC 3.B.3 requirements. Degree programs are interpreted to be both undergraduate and graduate programs that offer majors and/or minors as well as the General Education (soon to be University Studies Program) curriculum.

The overarching assurance that all three of these student engagement areas are met is evidenced by the University's Undergraduate Student Learning Goals and Outcomes and the Graduate Student Learning Goals and Outcomes. These two sets of learning goals and outcomes are applied to assess student learning across all of the University's degree programs: AA, BA/BS and Graduate. Both of these sets of learning goals and outcomes include specific expectations that students will collect, analyze, and communicate information; master modes of inquiry or creative work; and develop skills adaptable to changing environments.

Collecting, Analyzing, and Communicating Information

The first HLC requirement is collecting, analyzing, and communicating information. Undergraduate students are required to have exposure to information and its uses through the learning goal labeled Creative and Critical Thinking. Specifically, Outcome b. requires students to analyze information to answer specific questions. For graduate students, Learning Goal #4 involves Scholarly Inquiry and Application, and Outcome #1 requires students to analyze, interpret, and draw meaning from qualitative and quantitative information. Taken together, all degree-seeking students experience an institutional commitment to information skills.
Specific General Education (soon to be USP) courses ensure that all four year students are exposed to information. These goals can most clearly be seen as met in WRIT 102: College Writing II, a required course. In WRIT 102, students collect and analyze information; they then must clearly communicate these findings through writing. These competencies are also attained in a required Natural and Physical Sciences: Laboratory Science class (for example, BIOL 111: Plants and People). All students must complete an appropriate Math course which involves analyzing quantitative information.

Undergraduates further deepen their understanding about information capacity in their major and minor. Most academic programs require student learning in information skills through communication requirements. Representative examples of these program learning goals are the Global Studies, Political Science, and Physics programs.

**Mastering Modes of Inquiry or Creative Work**

The second HLC requirement is that students will master modes of inquiry or creative work. Both undergraduate and graduate curriculum provide this requirement.

The Undergraduate Student Learning Goals and Outcomes explore general levels of modes of inquiry through the Creative and Critical Thinking goal with five specific outcomes related to modes of inquiry. Similarly, the Graduate Student Learning Goals and Outcomes in Learning Goal #1, Mastery of Content, has a specific outcome that students demonstrate and apply specialized knowledge and skills from within a discipline or field. Taken together, the University ensures that students at all degree levels are exploring modes of inquiry through these learning goals.

UW-Superior further deepens student understanding of modes of inquiry through disciplinary work at both undergraduate and graduate levels. For undergraduates, modes of inquiry are primarily learned in major and minor disciplinary work. UW-Superior offers 35 entitled majors and 43 minors. Each of these majors and minors (with various tracks or concentrations) provides disciplinary focused modes of inquiry through research, methods, or discipline-specific inquiry. UW-Superior offers 9 graduate degree programs, all of which must include scholarly or disciplinary advanced work. This work involves methodology, research, and modes of inquiry relevant to the discipline. Representative examples of undergraduate majors that have research or methods courses are Psychology, Legal Studies, and History. Representative examples from graduate programs that have research or methods courses include Counseling and Data Science.

For creative work, all undergraduate students must engage in one Aesthetic Experience course where they will articulate important questions, theories, and creative processes (ART 101). All graduate students will have completed an accredited undergraduate degree that would involve aesthetic experience and creative thinking in some fashion. All graduate students are required in Learning Goal #4 to think "critically and imaginatively" as part of their Scholarly Inquiry and Application.

**Developing Skills Adaptable to Changing Environments**

The third and final HLC requirement is ensuring that students engage in skills adaptable to a changing environment. For undergraduates, the USP mission is a good example of the public commitment to prepare students for post-graduation life. The foundational skills of communication, individual and social responsibility, and creative and critical thinking required in the Undergraduate Student Learning Goals and Outcomes are another example of preparing students for post-graduate life and
changing environments.

The student learning assessment process described in detail in Criterion 4.B also ensures that the University and academic programs are measuring student learning related to core outcomes. As part of assessment of student learning, programs are expected to alter curriculum to stay current with the changing world. The University ensures regular institutional oversight and review of student learning assessment and course content through its Academic Program Review process every six years. Some of this review focuses on the skills, abilities, and career opportunities each major offers. This ensures currency, relevance, and links between academic and real world skills.

Graduate students must also develop capacities to respond to changing professional environments. The Graduate Student Learning Goals and Outcomes ensure that these students are current in their profession's knowledge, that they explore disciplinary issues through scholarly inquiry, and that they master a field's or discipline's knowledge.

In addition, part of living in a changing environment is preparing students for careers. This commitment is part of the UW-Superior mission. As part of the Strategic Plan: Superior Visions 2020, academic programs are recommended to explore creating an advisory group. These advisory groups are intended to help to inform the academic programs and keep them current with market demands.

In 2014, UW-Superior commissioned a market analysis that looked at supply and demand for each of the academic majors. In addition to this information, the report also included relevant skills that were desirable for the careers. Academic programs used this data to inform their curricula. The University has required programs to examine the Burning Glass market analysis data to inform their curriculum and aid students in becoming workplace ready. Additionally, some academic programs offer professional development classes that focus on building skills that can be applied in a myriad of professional settings (for example, PSYC 300: Professions of Psychology).

3.B.4

UW-Superior recognizes the importance of exposing students to the human and cultural diversity of the world in which they live and work. Two categories within USP address this goal: Diversity and Non-western (soon to be Global Awareness). All students seeking an associate’s or bachelor’s degree must complete a course in both of these categories prior to receiving degree.

Additionally, the Undergraduate Student Learning Goals and Outcomes include goals and outcomes relevant to diversity.

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 standards that require syllabi that include a focus on cultural diversity, understanding of global systems, and application of knowledge to contemporary global contexts. The commitment to Global Awareness can be seen beyond disciplines traditionally associated with the teaching of diversity. For example, MATH 130: Elementary Statistics has been certified as a Global Awareness course.

Diversity specific minors provide more learning opportunities. The Global Studies minor, Gender Studies Minor, and the First Nations Studies Minor all explore specific facets of diversity.

UW-Superior has undergraduate courses that also offer students insight into the diversity of the human experience through the study of disability. These include courses in Special Education and Psychology.
UW-Superior's graduate programs also have a strong commitment to diversity in the Graduate Student Learning Goals and Outcomes. Specifically, Learning Goal #2 on Ethical Leadership and Social Responsibility and Learning Goal #4 requiring multiple 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 in Schools in the Educational Administration program.

3.5

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 and 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 quality. 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 department rules (see HBJD as example) for reviewing and evaluating all pre-tenure faculty. Written and oral evaluations are conducted to encourage benchmarks being met as well as for development and professional growth. Further, every five years after tenure, faculty members must undergo a post-tenure review process that includes an evaluation of scholarly output.

Additionally, UW-Superior offers Faculty Development grants to support faculty members in their scholarly agenda. Information about scholarly productivity can be found in annual reports (now triennial) completed by every academic department. This report shows that UW-Superior faculty and staff are highly engaged in scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge, including SoTL work. UW-Superior recognizes the outstanding scholarly productivity of its researchers and scholars through the website.

Students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge appropriate to their level through their majors and minors. For example, CJUS 492: Criminal Justice Issues, Policy and Reform engaged in over eight community partnered projects of applied research and was featured in the February/March 2017 Positively Superior magazine for this innovative work.

In addition, URSCA (one of the HIPs) is a critical part of the undergraduate education at UW-Superior. Academic programs that utilize this HIP as a pedagogy in the undergraduate curriculum use a guideline to scaffold meaningful research opportunities from introductory-level courses to capstone courses. There are currently 38 programs that have integrated URSCA into their curriculum.

The Center for URSCA also coordinates the Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF) program, which allows students and faculty mentors to engage in a funded, in-depth scholarly project that is then disseminated in the campus and other venues. Students who come from typically underrepresented populations or are first generation, and who are interested in pursuing a terminal degree, may also participate in the McNair Scholars Program on campus. UW-Superior has an established history of supporting McNair Scholars.

Graduate students at UW-Superior produce advanced level thesis work. In the past year, 7 theses were completed, thereby adding to the pool of knowledge in their specific disciplines.

Research is a highly valued aspect of UW-Superior identity and strategic direction. The Strategic
Plan: Superior Visions 2020 includes several metrics that involve research collaborations between faculty, students, and the broader community. For example, Goal 2 in Strategic Plan Initiative 2 relating to Thriving Partnerships commits the University to supporting more research partnerships with the community to meet the research needs of the region. Despite UW-Superior's small size, the campus is home to four research institutes: Lake Superior Research Institute, Great Lakes Maritime Research Institute, Transportation and Logistics Research Center, and Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve. UW-Superior also currently employs a part-time Program Manager who helps faculty and staff identify, apply for, and manage external grants. UW-Superior is the fifth highest research grant institution within UW System with $2,202,703.68 of grant monies per year.

UW System has recognized the importance of research at UW-Superior by funding a multi-year Growth Agenda grant for a total of $266,700 to establish a strong URSCA program on the campus. At the conclusion of the Growth Agenda grant at the end of academic year 2015-16, UW-Superior retained the URSCA Director, and the Provost and Chancellor committed to continue funding URSCA through 2018. Finally, the University values research at such a high level that the UW-Superior Foundation is raising funds through its new campaign in order to provide direct financial assistance to faculty and students for research, creative work, and discovery of knowledge.

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

Argument

3.C.1

UW-Superior has both sufficient numbers of and continuity in its faculty 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 for student performance, academic credentials for instructional staff, and involvement in assessment of student learning).

Sufficient Numbers of Faculty Members

UW-Superior employs sufficient numbers of faculty to allow the institution to maintain a healthy student-to-faculty ratio. The student-to-faculty ratio is 16:1. As of Spring 2016, the campus employs 158 full and part time instructional faculty, academic staff, and lecturers/adjuncts. The University's current student-to-faculty ratio is comparable to a number of COPLAC institutions, for which ratios range from 13:1 to 17:1. UW-Superior enjoys the lowest student-to-faculty ratio within the UW System four year comprehensive universities. Other UW campuses have ratios ranging from 18:1 to 23:1, with an average ratio of 20.6:1.

Continuity of Faculty Members

The University has put consistent and strong measures in place to support and promote continuity of its faculty members.
Because of the centrality of instructor quality to its mission, UW-Superior has a rigorous process to recruit and screen qualified applicants. All departments who have received approval for a faculty or full-time renewable instructional academic staff hire must go through this campus search and screen process. Early on in the process, while submitting the written application to search, each hiring department is required to submit a strong mentoring plan to support the new hires in each area.

Newly hired faculty and instructional academic staff go through a formal semester-long orientation to the campus and its processes in the Fall semester following hire. This process, once called NFO and now called PETL, has been in place for nine years and has been designed, refined, and implemented by CELT.

Both faculty and instructional academic staff are expected to meet written expectations set by University personnel rules and by departments for teaching, scholarship and creative activity (in the case of faculty), and service. This is further discussed in section 3.C.3. The retention and review process for instructional academic staff and faculty is a vital part of UW-Superior’s commitment to maintaining high standards of faculty and staff from time of hire throughout their careers. Currently, Faculty Senate has charged departments with reviewing their by-laws to ensure that these documents are in compliance with both UW System and University personnel rules.

In recent years, a large number of senior faculty members have retired. In the past five years, there have been 40 retirements and 30 resignations among the faculty. Partly, this is due to changing societal demographics, which affect all of Higher Education. In Wisconsin there is an additional set of circumstances affecting faculty and other employees. One particularly difficult development is the increased payments towards retirement and other benefits by faculty and staff at a time when pay raises have been nonexistent or minimal. The climate in Wisconsin created a focus from 2012 to 2016 at UW-Superior on Program Prioritization and belt tightening, which had a chilling effect on the campus. At UW-Superior, this prioritization reduced the faculty by eight positions, through attrition and program closure. The cutting environment could have made offers from other institutions more attractive. Faculty who resigned indicated that they left for a variety of reasons, including better salaries elsewhere. Despite these recent challenges, UW-Superior continues to recruit high quality faculty and works to make the institution an employer of choice through strong retention efforts from date of hire to successful tenure.

**Faculty Classroom Roles**

UW-Superior provides sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty to fulfill faculty classroom roles and responsibilities. Faculty classroom roles include teaching, guiding learning activities, and providing student feedback, including using research-based pedagogies like High Impact Practices. UW-Superior has sufficient faculty staffing in all current program areas to fulfill classroom roles, sometimes by using creative methods to ensure class staffing, such as overloads and adjunct hires.

The University is managing a delicate balancing act relating to overloads. Due to budgetary constraints, UW-Superior has used adjuncts and, to a lesser extent, overloads to faculty to manage changing faculty and instructional academic staff demographics in departments, as well as the increasing demands of distance education. Under the most recent Provost, the focus was on hiring adequate numbers of adjunct staff rather than overloading the current faculty and full-time instructional academic staff.
At the same time, in the past several years, there have been increased numbers of entering freshmen, along with increasing numbers of Distance Learning students. Due to the increased enrollment, the use of overloads has temporarily come into play to ensure students new to UW-Superior can enroll.

Faculty Non-Classroom Roles

The non-classroom roles identified in this standard are curricular oversight, oversight of expectations for student performance, establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff, and involvement in assessment of student learning. This sub-section addresses these four areas.

Non-Classroom Roles: Role of Faculty in Curricular Oversight

The genesis and maintenance of the curriculum rests firmly with the faculty and instructional academic staff per HLC recommendation. As mentioned in section 3.A, faculty oversight of curriculum is well established at UW-Superior (and throughout UW System) via the vehicle of shared governance. Course changes, curricular adjustments and proposals, and undergraduate and graduate academic policies pass first through academic departments then to Undergraduate Academic Affairs Council (UAAC) or Graduate Council for close review. UAAC or Graduate Council then send recommendations for action or review to Faculty Senate. Through the senate level, all curricular decisions are handled by the faculty and instructional academic staff. Some curricular decisions (such as new majors) may require the approval of the Dean of Faculties and Graduate Studies, Provost, Chancellor, and/or the Board of Regents.

Non-Classroom Roles: Role of Faculty in Setting Expectations for Student Performance

Faculty play a central role in establishing expectations for student learning. Through the model of shared governance, the faculty has established common learning goals and outcomes for the University. Learning outcomes are noted by major in the University catalog. These departmental and University-wide learning goals are also noted on course syllabi. Instructors establish outcomes for a specific course (e.g. ART 445, BIOL 100 DL, BUS 495, SW 365, and WRIT 401). The University has requirements about what is expected when building a syllabus.

Faculty also shape the direction of the undergraduate curriculum as a whole through the selection and adoption of University-wide pedagogical strategies: Liberal Arts High Impact Practices (HIPs). As part of the Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) Challenge, UW-Superior’s faculty adopted six HIPs: Global Awareness; Senior Year Experience; Writing across the Curriculum; First Year Experience; Academic Service-Learning; Undergraduate Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities. From these six, faculty members select what pedagogical strategies work best for meeting the course and program learning goals.

Non-Classroom Roles: Role of Faculty in Establishing Academic Credentials for Instructional Staff

UW-Superior employs faculty and instructional academic staff who are required to possess academic credentials appropriate for the University mission and student population. Please refer to Criterion 3.C.2 for a fuller discussion and evidence in support of this argument.
Non-Classroom Roles: Role of Faculty in Assessment of Student Learning

To underscore the importance of assessment to the faculty (and the whole of UW-Superior), the Strategic Plan specifically mentions the importance of developing a systematic structure and process for assessment.

Faculty are involved annually at the program and department levels in the assessment of student learning. In fact, student assessment is initiated and driven by faculty. This is fully described in Criterion 4.B in detail.

Additional Non-Classroom Roles of Faculty

Faculty are also strongly engaged in non-classroom roles other than the four specified above. Other important non-classroom faculty roles at UW-Superior include

- **Academic advisement:** Traditionally, UW-Superior faculty have carried out academic advising with assistance from the Center for Academic Advising. Beginning in Spring 2016, academic advising has been transitioning to a Shared Advising Model. Today, faculty continue with academic advisement of juniors and seniors and with transfer students. Academic advising is a shared responsibility with faculty highly involved in creating MOUs with the Center for Academic Advising and handling the majority of advisement in a student's junior and senior years.

- **Student organization advisement:** There are numerous student groups at UW-Superior. Faculty usually serve as advisors for groups operating from their discipline areas.

- **Service:** Community service, service to the department and University, and service to the profession is required by departmental rules.

- **Scholarly and creative activity:** Engagement within their fields or disciplines is expected of faculty. Expectations for scholarly and creative activity are laid out in the Unclassified Staff Handbook and the campus rules (Appendix A) and in the various department rules.

In recognition of the many roles faculty occupy, the Strategic Plan has focused one of its initiatives on reducing committee assignments across campus. Faculty Senate has taken measures in the past two years to combine, streamline, and do away with numerous committee assignments.

3.C.2

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.

Criteria for instructor qualifications are set with each hire at the time of the initial hire. UW-Superior has an updated Faculty Minimum Qualifications policy that was proposed, reviewed, and approved by Faculty Senate in October 2016. Prior to the updating of this policy, the University had followed the general requirements articulated in the 2012 version of the policy. The 2016 policy on hires governs all teaching qualifications in all program types. It discusses how exemptions to the policy may be
obtained in emergency cases and is HLC compliant.

There is language in all consortial agreements and collaboratives that establishes appropriate faculty and instructional academic staff credentials, with appropriate limited exceptions such as for an Extension Associate who may be needed but not a faculty member.

Dual degree programs tend to be with universities abroad. They must be accredited in the host country. Language is inserted requiring the instructor abroad meet minimum qualifications for faculty and instructional academic staff. Criterion 4.A includes more substantial details on dual degree programs.

The UW System Administrative Policy 185 (to be replaced by a new version in Fall 2017) lays out the criteria for approving instructors for concurrent enrollment 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, or, if there is a master’s degree in another area, the instructor would require an exception.

The Dean of Faculties and Graduate Studies maintains an updated database of faculty curricula vitae. The University maintains resumes and transcripts for all faculty and instructional academic staff.

3.C.3

Both faculty and instructional academic staff at UW-Superior are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures. Faculty are evaluated by student course evaluations (included in the peer review process) and through annual departmental peer review. Faculty have to meet or exceed criteria established for them in the Unclassified Staff Handbook, University personnel rules, and within the department personnel rules regarding teaching. UW-Superior does a thorough job of evaluating instructors, who also undergo student evaluation. Part of the Strategic Plan calls for using evaluation processes to reward excellence in faculty members.

Faculty and instructional academic staff are expected to meet written expectations set by University personnel rules and by departments for teaching, scholarship and creative work (in the case of faculty), and service. Review for faculty occurs with standards for promotion, tenure, retention, annual review, and post-tenure review (this process is also discussed in 3.B). Faculty under review create and present portfolios to their departments for review of their teaching, scholarship, and service. The University is almost finished transitioning to online portfolios for all types of reviews.

Similarly, instructional academic staff have written expectations for teaching and service. Instructional academic staff are reviewed annually in a process initiated by HR that involves a written review of the staff person 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 up for various forms of review. Notice of upcoming faculty personnel actions and instructional academic staff review is provided to chairs, faculty, and instructional academic staff in writing each August.

As academic departments revise their by-laws to remain consistent with UW System and University personnel rules, this process is likely to become more standardized and consistent across campus. In
December 2016. Faculty Senate charged all departments on a rotating schedule over the next several semesters with updating their personnel by-laws to be UW System compliant. The Dean of Faculties and Graduate Studies Office has supplied all departments with a checklist to aid in this revision process.

3.C.4

UW-Superior has both 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 an area of ongoing change as increased resources are being developed.

UW-Superior requires faculty and 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.3 above). This review ensures currency.

Professional development for instructors is supported primary through two offices: the Dean of Faculties and Graduate Studies Office and the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL). The Dean of Faculties and Graduate Studies Office facilitates a Faculty Development grant application each year; approved funding assists with research and travel to conferences. The Personnel Council of Faculty Senate recommends grants and amounts to the Dean.

CETL 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, CETL facilitates a travel grant application process each year to support professional attendance and presentations at teaching-related conferences; in 2015-2016 over 90% of grant applications were funded. In addition, the new Student Success Grants offered through CETL (up to $35,000) are directly related to faculty and staff professional development as well as to student success and retention.

UW-Superior’s Distance Learning Center offers $5,000 a year in the form of professional development and travel grants to help faculty and instructional academic staff become more adept at online teaching. Distance Learning and CETL offer a summer course for faculty and instructional academic staff to become familiar with best practices within the field of distance education. Further, as part of a revenue sharing model, academic programs that teach some distance learning courses and concurrent enrollment programs are provided a small amount of professional development money for each student that is enrolled in a class.

To begin their teaching careers at UW-Superior, full-time faculty and instructional academic staff are required to participate in the Promoting Excellence in Teaching and Learning (PETL) orientation, held Fall semester each year. Those who teach part-time are invited to attend an adjunct orientation that is also offered by CETL.

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.

Further, as part of the UW System, UW-Superior has access to programs put on through the Office of Professional and Instructional Development (OPID), also known as the Faculty and Instructional Development Council. OPID offers signature annual programs to enhance the skills of UW System
educators including faculty college, Wisconsin Teaching Fellows and Scholars Program, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Lesson Study Project and the OPID Spring Conference.

Examples of Resources under Development

The UW-Superior Foundation is also trying to increase support for faculty research and development through its new funding campaign.

Devised in response to Strategic Plan Initiative II, the Center for Community Engaged Learning (CCEL) will support faculty and instructional academic staff in linking directly to community professionals and organizations that can promote currency in the disciplines.

Due to decreased state funding, some areas of campus have a greater need for new equipment. These needs have been catalogued and a funding plan is included in the Campus Master Plan.

3.C.5

As a primarily teaching institution, UW-Superior’s central mission encourages faculty and instructional academic staff to be highly accessible to support student inquiry.

The High Impact Practices, particularly URSCA, have brought students and faculty mentors together in the spirit of inquiry as well. URSCA has promoted student research in multiple ways including poster sessions, Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships (in partnership with the Foundation), mini-grants to support student-faculty research relationships, and a Day of Celebration.

Another HIP, Senior Year Experience, has afforded students opportunities to share research results, original essays, original works of art and music in a public venue. Students create these in classes and also independently with input from faculty mentors and advisors.

Instructors are also accessible on the UW-Superior campus 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. Advising is another opportunity for faculty to be accessible to students to answer questions about their present experience and to work out plans for their future. Many mentorship relationships of long standing grow out of these advising sessions.

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 (career plans, work with faculty on activities other than coursework, discuss coursework outside of class, discuss academic performance with a faculty member).

This support by faculty and instructional academic staff for student inquiry will receive a boost from two initiatives in the Strategic Plan. UW-Superior students are to be involved in two experiential learning activities and three HIPs before graduation. Students and all instructional staff will also have the opportunity to share inquiry opportunities through the call within the Strategic Plan that all students participate in two co-curricular activities through their major and minor program of study.
3.C.6
UW-Superior staff members providing supporting services to students are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.

Types of Positions and Qualifications
Those providing such services fall into one of two major employee group categories: non-instructional academic staff and university staff (formerly classified staff). The Unclassified Staff Handbook describes each kind of position: academic staff in 7.1.4 and university staff in 7.1.7. Academic staff primarily have appointments with the administration of higher education programming; they sometimes hold research appointments. University staff provide technical, administrative, and/or maintenance support.

Instructional academic staff qualifications were discussed in 3.C.2. All titles, compensations, position expectations, and ongoing evaluation for academic staff are set out in section 7.2 of the Handbook. These are established under the Wisconsin Administrative Code, sections 9 through 14, and define these positions across the UW System. This group is represented and supported by its senate.

Under the current state government, classified staff is now known as university staff. Each position description and its qualifications are designed to fit the position and program for which the support person is being hired. This group is represented on campus by its senate.

When UW-Superior is hiring in these categories, the position descriptions include a section on required qualifications. 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 searches and descriptions.

Training, Orientation and Professional Development
All new employees have support available when entering the UW-Superior workforce. HR has the expectations and resources needed by new employees on its website. Academic Staff Senate has been developing an orientation process for incoming academic and university staff across campus since Fall 2015.

HR provides professional development opportunities like subscriptions to Lynda.com for all staff members. CETL offers weekly workshops, brown bag events, and presentations for faculty and staff on a wide variety of topics.

Both the Academic Staff Senate and the University Senate award professional development grants each year.

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.
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3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

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

Argument

3.D.1

UW-Superior provides numerous student support services suited to the needs of its student populations. To begin, it is important to understand what those populations are in order to review and understand the student support service array.

The student population of UW-Superior reflects the diversity of the community with a high percentage of students who are nontraditional (49%), first-generation (48%), and/or low-income (41%). Sixty-eight percent (68%) of students qualify for support services. Approximately 17% are from diverse ethnic communities. International students comprise 9.2% of the student body, the second largest percentage in the UW System, only second to UW-Madison.

A premier example of the types of student support services offered is the Educational Success Center (ESC, formerly Student Support Services). It serves the needs of all UW-Superior students by providing free academic and social support activities. Some programs within ESC do have eligibility requirements (which supports direct services to underrepresented racial and/or ethnic minority [URM] and Pell-eligible students). There are seven main areas of service: TRIO Student Support Services, Disabilities/ADA Services, Tutoring Services, Testing Services, Bridge Program, Development Education and Instruction, and Specialty Services.

The Office of Multicultural Affairs and Office of International Programs provide specific services and mentoring to students from diverse ethnic backgrounds and to international students. The First Nations Center provides direct support for Native American students.

In addition to the above mentioned, UW-Superior offers a broad range of services designed to provide a comprehensive network of support to students, including academic, co-curricular, 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.

The following services are in the category of general support provided to students:
Curricular support services include the following resources dedicated to providing targeted forms of assistance to students that will allow students to succeed academically, spanning college readiness, tutoring, and learning skills:

- Center for Academic Advising
- Distance Learning Center
- Writing Center

The following co-curricular forms of support services provide a range of programming and resources that equip students with ways to adapt to university life and thrive:

- First Year Experience Programs support a diverse group of students in their academic and social transition into the University through numerous events including Weekend of Welcome, Friends & Family Weekend, and others.
- Veteran & Nontraditional Student Center supports and serves military veterans and their families as well as nontraditional students.
- Office of International Programs provides services to international students, exchange students, and for study abroad.
- English as a Second Language (ESL) supports international students to learn English at the college level.
- Gender Equity Resource Center works to create a safe environment within the campus community through programming related to all genders and sexual identities.
- Career Services counsels students as they explore, develop, and pursue their academic major and career plans.
- Center for Engaged Community Learning provides connections between academic programs, students, and community partners for research and community engagement opportunities.
- McNair Program provides opportunities for first generation and underrepresented students for advanced, mentored research opportunities.
- Summer Undergraduate Research Fellows Program (SURF) provides one-to-one mentoring to students selected to complete research.
- ASSIST 2.0 alert program allows instructors to click on a warning icon on class rosters which alerts academic advisors of students’ challenges.

This wide range of high-value services are actively promoted so that students become aware of and are encouraged to take advantage of these programs and resources.

3.D.2

UW-Superior provides learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. This is true for both incoming and ongoing students.
Various enrollment management offices work together to achieve this. The Admissions and Registrar’s Offices, for example, work with the Academic Advising Office to place students appropriately, directing them into courses and programs for which students are adequately prepared.

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 30% of incoming students require remedial courses and thus sections for math and writing courses are developed to meet the need each semester. These courses assist students in developing the required skills for college-level work.

Under the current Shared Advising Model, all entering freshmen are assigned to a professional advisor who follows each student's progress closely, offering careful and thoughtful academic advisement, as well as referrals for other needed support. This careful advising follows them to graduation.

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

UW-Superior has undertaken two new initiatives in 2016 to assist early student success. One is the Supplemental Instruction Program (SI). This program has produced early successes for students, and the University will continue to develop its use. The second example is the 15 to Finish Initiative. This commitment is Initiative 3.2.1 in the Strategic Plan and is designed to ensure all freshmen are taking 15 credits in their first year to be on track for four year graduation. Data is still being analyzed for the first semester, but the University anticipates this will aid graduation rates. Both initiatives represent UW-Superior's commitment to providing intentional support to students for academic success.

3.D.3

UW-Superior provides thoughtful and comprehensive academic advising suited to its programming and the needs of its students.

Historically, UW-Superior utilized a faculty-centric model for academic advising. After discovering that this model had some flaws, specifically advisor availability during peak registration periods and lack of structured assessment, the University adopted a new, shared advising model during Spring 2016. In tune with the transition to this model, the Center for Academic Advising created a comprehensive new advisor training and an advisor handbook. This training is offered to all professional advisors and to newly hired faculty advisors. New faculty spend one year teaching before they are trained to do advising. They receive a caseload of advisees during the Fall semester of their second year.

This new 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. The professional advisors are subject matter experts in assigned departments. They attend their assigned department's meetings, receiving training and updates from those departments, and share information regarding students in their majors or minors. Faculty now 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 such as major or career-specific information or course sequencing recommendations.

Each academic department had an opportunity to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding with the Center for Academic Advising. These agreements outline the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved. In addition to these agreements, both faculty and professional advisors will use a student record system (PeopleSoft) to maintain notes and documentation related to advising appointments. These notes will be viewable by both the professional and faculty advisors. This ensures continuity for students and collaboration between advisors.

3.D.4

UW-Superior provides 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 (seminar rooms to larger tiered classrooms), and scheduling occurs appropriate to courses. The majority of classrooms include technology (computer, projector, video, and audio equipment). Interactive television rooms allow courses to be delivered at distance sites; this technology needs to be updated. Alternative web-based models are beginning to be used and will likely replace the ITV rooms in time.

As computers are an essential academic tool, UW-Superior has 22 computer labs for student use. Computer replacement for faculty and instructional academic staff is not sufficient. There should be an ongoing replacement plan developed for the University, including development of funding sources. The University is working on this plan through Foundation funding and other initiatives.

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 online and via phone. Developments in this area should be addressed as well with an updated plan.

Jim Dan Hill Library maintains printed and electronic resources needed by students and faculty. The Library maintains access to numerous databases, as well as making materials available through interlibrary loan. Hours, including days and weekends, help meet student needs and schedules. Faculty are able to access online library resources from their offices. Because approximately 30% of students are distance learners and students more commonly access resources through the e-databases and other online resources, the Library staff provide online services for consultation and assistance.

To access both Information Technology and the 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. Because
they were created when Swenson Hall was opened in 2011, the psychology and language labs are up-to-date.

A challenge experienced in maintaining up-to-date laboratories in the sciences and arts has been the cost. In 2009, the Student Senate approved a differential lab fee to help purchase necessary lab equipment for the sciences. Critical laboratory equipment needs for Visual Arts and Music are being addressed in the Campus Master Plan. Upgrades are needed for some equipment, with a lack of ongoing funding available to do so.

Arts and music are active majors and co-curricular activities at UW-Superior. Performance spaces include the Thorpe Langley Auditorium and Multicultural Center in Old Main, the ballroom in the Yellowjacket Union, and the theater and art exhibit spaces in Holden Fine and Applied Arts Center. While performance spaces are sufficient, there are some concerns about outdated seating and equipment in those spaces.

3.D.5

UW-Superior provides its students with various pathways to acquire guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.

Many academic majors offer junior and senior level research methods courses; a number also have research application courses in the senior year. These courses provide direct instructor guidance and support to students in learning discipline-specific research skills and introduce them to information literacy within their disciplines.

A number of the academic programs have integrated URSCA pedagogy into their curricula. These programs provide scaffolded curriculum in discipline-specific research methods. Between 10 and 20 students each year are able to have advanced research learning experiences in the Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship program. The McNair Program works with about 15 students each year on research related projects. Many majors offer independent study in research in their areas of discipline.

Jim Dan Hill Library provides numerous reference librarians and support staff to ensure that information literacy and research services are available online and face-to-face for students and faculty. There are an inter-institutional set of databases and resources, a fully interactive searching mechanism for research, and newly remodeled study facilities to support research and learning. Information literacy librarians are available to visit classes to educate students on the research options and information resources available on campus. Online students have the same opportunities to obtain assistance to these resources.

Technology Services provides free professional development training on a variety of topics, including research, from Lynda.com.

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3.E - Core Component 3.E

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

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

Argument

3.E.1

UW-Superior’s numerous co-curricular programs are suited to the institution’s mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.

UW-Superior hosts a wide variety of co-curricular programs and student organizations all of which are expected to compliment the institutional mission, as well as contribute to the students’ experience on and off campus. This past year, the Division of Student Affairs realigned the mission of the division to complement the University mission. The Division of Student Affairs enhances the University mission and is committed to providing a comprehensive University experience through student-centered programs, services, and facilities. Student Affairs plays an integral role in co-curricular programming for students.

Considering UW-Superior's size, there is a huge range and variety of co-curricular experiences available to students.

The Department of Student Involvement offers programs, services, and involvement opportunities that directly engage students in activities that support their intellectual growth and community engagement. Student Involvement programs focus on leadership, volunteerism, and student organizations. These programs intentionally link curricular and co-curricular experiences that strive to match students’ personal and professional interests. Furthermore, Student Involvement released a self-led, at-your-own-pace leadership certificate program called Launching Leaders in September 2015. This program is available to all students and offers students an introduction to campus and community involvement, while providing pathways to personal growth and development.

Some student organizations, associated with a major or minor on campus, directly compliment the educational experience of students at UW-Superior. For example, Inkblots and Psi Chi are two Psychology clubs; they sponsor a trip to a regional conference that allows students to present research and interact with scholars and students in that field. The Mock Trial team provides a courtroom experience for students interested in Legal Studies and Criminal Justice. Other events are tied to community engagement and activism such as Cultural Night (sponsored by WSA), Soul Food Dinner, and Speak Out Superior.

UW-Superior also offers a variety of study away and study abroad opportunities for students. These programs range from trips lasting two to four weeks to year-long opportunities. The Office of International Programs hosts several student organizations that help to engage the University
community in a discussion about and respect for diversity. One student organization, the World Student Association, which is open to all UW-Superior students, hosts the annual Cultural Night.

UW-Superior's Career Services works in partnership with faculty, staff, and employers to provide students with career-building opportunities and resources. This is facilitated through one-on-one appointments with students, presentations in the classroom and to departments, mock interviews, and large scale events such as hosting the Head of the Lakes Job Fair.

Residence Life also plays a major role in shaping the lives of UW-Superior students. One particular initiative that contributes to the educational experience of the students is the Residential Living Communities. These communities allow UW-Superior students to live in communities with other students who share their interests and goals.

Through their programs and facilities, the Department of Campus Recreation provides the campus and community with an array of recreation and wellness opportunities that foster active and healthy lifestyles.

Student Health & Counseling Services supports student well-being by providing health education, prevention, promotion and treatment, ultimately influencing academic achievement and connectedness with campus and community.

There are numerous offices and student groups performing outreach and supportive services to a diverse groups of students including the Office of Multicultural Affairs, the Veteran and Nontraditional Student Center (VNSC), Gender Equity Resource Center (GERC), and the First Nations Center. Each of these examples illustrates a monetary and program commitment to providing students a rich co-curricular set of experiences to enhance their learning.

UW-Superior students largely agree that the co-curricular programs available to them advance the University’s missions. For example, in the 2016 campus climate survey, 62.4% of respondents said that the co-curricular activities enhance their "ability to interact with people who are different from myself" (diverse cultures). A similar number said that the activities enhance their ability to value and respect work with people who are different (63.9% and 65.3%, respectively).

Additionally, the UW-Superior Athletics program recently revised its mission statement to better represent its connection to the University’s mission statement. The Athletics mission statement states that they will provide “student-athletes with a holistic collegiate experience that fosters personal growth through academics, athletics, community involvement, and leadership development.” Athletics is a critical part of UW-Superior and the switch to a new conference (from WIAC to UMAC, except for Men's and Women's Hockey), the expansion of roster numbers, and the addition of new sports indicate that UW-Superior believes athletics positively contributes to student learning.

All of these activities are funded to some degree, sometimes to a significant degree, by student segregated fees. Previously, distance learning students did not have access to many of these student-funded services. Starting in 2017, however, undergraduate distance learning students will pay 25% of the segregated fees, therefore granting them access to campus services. Currently, graduate students who take classes on campus also pay these fees.
UW-Superior documents its contributions to the student educational experience by promoting its mission and showcasing and disseminating information related to it about research, community engagement, service-learning, and economic development. As a secular institution, the University does not have a specific religious or spiritual purpose that it promotes and supports.

In 2015, UW-Superior revised its mission to more strongly focus on a commitment to improving the lives and livelihoods of people in northwestern Wisconsin and northern Minnesota.

UW-Superior strives to create and maintain connections within the surrounding community through the development of the Center for Community Engaged Learning (CCEL). The CCEL was formally established after an 18 month planning phase that stemmed from the Strategic Plan. The CCEL is a one-stop shop for all community engaged learning that occurs on campus, including Academic Service-Learning (AS-L); Undergraduate Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities (URSCA); Career Services; and the research institutes. The CCEL will help UW-Superior accomplish a long-term goal of being admitted into the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification by 2020.

AS-L is an integral part of the UW-Superior liberal arts mission. Seventy-one courses and 143 community partners allow students to spend 5 to 40 hours per semester engaging in volunteer and internship opportunities. These opportunities directly align with classroom learning outcomes, while the students apply what they are learning in the classroom to assist with the needs of the community. Largely because of UW-Superior's service-learning strengths, the University, in 2015 and 2016, was named to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. The 2017 application to the honor roll is pending.

UW-Superior has responded to the needs of the geographic region by housing four major research institutes directly tied to the well-being of the region. Some research institutes focus on economic issues and others are tied to environmental issues. The four institutes are the Lake Superior Research Institute (LSRI), the Transportation and Logistics Research Center (TLRC), the Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve (LSNERR), and the Great Lakes Maritime Research Institute (GLMRI).

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3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Summary

UW-Superior provides a high quality education through all of its degree and certificate offerings, regardless of location. 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 new University Studies Program is congruent with UW-Superior’s mission, undergraduate student learning outcomes, and HLC expectations. The University's long-standing commitment to Liberal Arts High Impact Practices is evident across the curriculum.

UW-Superior is properly staffed with sufficient credentials to achieve the mission. 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 co-curricular programs and enhanced learning in alignment with the specific needs of its students. Advising has been enhanced to provide strong 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 demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

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

Argument

4.A.1

UW-Superior maintains a practice of regular program reviews to ensure the quality of its educational programs. UW System requires each of its institutions to review academic programs on a cyclic 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 (i.e., undergraduate major and minor programs as well as graduate programs, regardless of the mode of delivery) in depth on a departmental basis according to a 6-year review cycle approved by the Faculty Senate. The review consists of a detailed analysis of each program housed in the department that includes the program’s resources, outcomes, needs, and plans (for example, the Department of Business and Economics (DBE) review submitted October 1, 2014; Department of Social Inquiry (SI) review submitted April 26, 2013). The APRC reads each review in full and issues a concise summary of its observations and recommendations to the originating department (for example, the response to...)
the previously cited DBE review and response to the SI review).

The Planning and Budgetary Council (PBC), a council of the Faculty Senate, and the department under review are then invited to contribute responses before the review package is formally received by the Faculty Senate and the Provost. In accordance with UW System Policy and the recently revised APRC template, the APRC will now submit an annual report summarizing the program reviews completed each year. This information will be provided to inform the Provost’s decision as to whether each program should be “a) continued in its present form; b) changed in form or direction; c) strengthened and reviewed earlier than the regular review cycle; d) consolidated with other programs; or e) phased out.”

In addition to the comprehensive review, each department submits an annual review of its academic programs, including a report of student learning outcomes with both direct and indirect measures and actions taken or planned based on the assessment findings. The annual report is reviewed by the Dean and Provost to identify strengths, opportunities for improvement, and recommendations.

The process and instruments of academic program review are themselves subject to review, revision, and approval to accommodate the changing needs of the University and to reflect a commitment to continual improvement. An example is the complete overhaul of UW-Superior’s program review template by the APRC which was accomplished primarily in Summer 2014. The new template reflects the current realities faced by UW-Superior in the form of increased attention to assessment of student learning, to retention and completion of students, and a more focused and data-driven approach to the entire process. The new template is explicitly linked to a group of datasets on these topics.

The new template was approved by Faculty Senate in January 2015 for use in all academic program reviews due in Fall 2016 or later. The first review under this template was submitted by the Department of Human Behavior, Justice, and Diversity (HBJD) in Fall 2016, with contributions from faculty and other key stakeholders within four programs: Criminal Justice/Legal Studies, First Nations Studies, Psychology, and Social Work. The new template is a living document, with plans underway as of Fall 2016 to further improve the template, strengthen its emphasis on student learning outcomes, and integrate it with a revised reporting structure for all academic departments. APRC provided feedback to HBJD, and the department submitted their responses back in full cycle completion.

Additionally, after UW-Superior underwent an exhaustive program prioritization exercise in 2013-2014 due to fiscal challenges, the APRC created a hybrid program review template to allow programs under review in the following two years to make effective use of their prioritization reports without needlessly duplicating effort by writing a separate, but related, program review self-study. The hybrid model was approved on this temporary basis by Faculty Senate and has been successfully used through Spring 2016.

Lastly, a further requirement of the UW System is the periodic review of each institution’s general education program. During the 2014-2015 academic year, UW-Superior's Faculty Senate approved a new general education review template. This template was used in a pilot review of UW-Superior's General Education curriculum in 2014.

4.A.2

UW-Superior evaluates all the credit that it transcripts through a credit for prior learning process,
language testing, and, as needed, a retroactive credit process.

**Credit for Prior Learning Process**

UW-Superior has a set standard and process for awarding credit due to prior learning. The concept and standards are described in detail in the University catalog which outline the specific processes involved. The credit for prior learning opportunities include Credit through Portfolio (CTP), College Level Exam Program (CLEP) and Defense Activity for Nontraditional Education Support (DANTES), Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and departmental examination.

CTP 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. The course WRIT 298: Prior Learning Portfolio Development gives instruction on the correct completion of a portfolio to be considered for credit by an academic department. Once reviewed by the department, the student receives a P (pass) or F (fail) grade for the course for which credit is being sought. Credits awarded will not count toward the 30 resident credits required for graduation.

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. Students may transfer up to 32 semester credits acquired through credit by examination, which include AP and IB (a minimum score of 4 or 5 to transfer and 6 or 7 to fulfill a program or general education requirement) and CLEP and DSST/DANTES (computer-based exams administered online).

Credit by examination can also be pursued through departmental examination under the purview and evaluation of the responsible academic department. Students must make arrangements with the appropriate department, complete the online form, and pay the pre-determined fee ($25). The Registrar's Office posts successfully completed examinations on the student’s official transcript under a “Test Credit” heading.

Evaluation and transcribing of military credits is also clearly noted in the catalog under the transfer credit policy. 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. A copy of the electronic military transcript is required to determine eligibility. In awarding credit, UW-Superior follows the recommendations of the American Council on Education (ACE). The Transfer Specialist works with the appropriate department chair in determining an applicable equivalency or substitution. A maximum of 32 credits may be transferred to UW-Superior for those with military experience.

**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 B- or higher 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 UW-Superior catalog clearly links and provides information on the policy for transfer of credits from both regionally and nationally accredited domestic educational institutions. Approval of this policy is governed by the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Council (UAAC). A well-defined description of transfer requirements for both articulation agreement and Memorandum of Understanding transfer guides is posted on the Admissions, Transfer Student, and Transfer Guides website.

All courses accepted for transfer must be similar in nature, level, and content to a course or courses in UW-Superior's approved curriculum and applicable to one of the academic programs to meet requirements in the major or minor. Continuing education courses and remedial courses are not transferable.

Students transferring from international institutions are required to submit original or authenticated copies of all transcripts, diplomas, mark sheets, and certificates from all post-secondary schools with official English translations if the required documents are not in English. A 2.0 GPA is required for admission to most programs. In some cases, students transferring from international institutions may require additional evaluation by an external agency for credit evaluation. A list of acceptable agencies UW-Superior utilizes in this situation is available on the National Association of Credential Evaluations Services website. International students are also required to provide proof of English language proficiency. Details about how students can provide proof of English language proficiency are available on the International Transfer Students Application website.

In cases in which course equivalency is undetermined, the Transfer Specialist works with the appropriate department chair in determining an equivalency or substitution, based on a full course syllabus, translated into English, and supplied to UW-Superior by the international transfer student.

4.A.4

UW System faculty set standards and maintain control over the curriculum per UW System Administrative Policy 102 which states, “The UW faculty, with oversight by Deans, Provosts, Chancellors, and higher education accreditation agencies, are responsible for developing, implementing, and reviewing high-quality program offerings in ways that leverage academic strengths and respond to emerging workplace and societal needs.”

At UW-Superior, faculty establish pre-requisites and maintain the rigor of courses. Creating a new course or changing an existing course requires departmental approval followed by approval by the UAAC or the Graduate Council, councils of the Faculty Senate. Identifying prerequisites for a course are required elements in the University’s standard course approval form (item #20). The approval form for a new University Studies Program course (replacing the former designation of "General Education") is even more rigorous.
Once a course is approved, the course description with all course prerequisites are indicated in the course catalog and are coded into the PeopleSoft system to prevent students from enrolling in courses for which prerequisites have not been met. Overrides of course prerequisites are permitted only upon signed approval of the course instructor. In individual cases where a student has registered for a course in an upcoming semester while enrolled in a prerequisite course and subsequently fails to complete the prerequisite course with a satisfactory grade, the instructor is notified by email and prompted to decide whether the student should still be enrolled in the upcoming course notwithstanding.

Expectations for student learning are described and available on the University catalog web page in which all associate’s, bachelor’s, and master’s degree requirements are indicated. Students achieving a bachelor’s degree must maintain a grade point average of 2.0 or above for all undergraduate credits and achieve the Undergraduate Student Learning Goals and Outcomes through taking courses from the prescribed General Education (soon to be University Studies Program) curriculum array and in the major. Students achieving a graduate degree must maintain a 3.0 grade point average to remain in satisfactory academic standing and also demonstrate they have achieved program-specific and Graduate Student Learning Goals and Outcomes.

UW-Superior maintains academic quality in part through a minimum qualifications policy for all instructors, which was approved by Faculty Senate in 2016. In particular, this policy applies to dual-credit (also known here as dual-enrollment) programming, amplifying a UW System policy requiring that all instructors possess at least a master’s degree for undergraduate courses unless a waiver is granted by the academic department offering the course.

In addition, instructors of dual-credit courses must be approved in advance by the academic department hosting the course. In the case of dual-credit courses, a faculty supervisor is assigned from the relevant academic department. The faculty supervisor must sign a contract stipulating that s/he will visit the high school classroom at least once per semester, will be available for questions from the dual-credit course instructor, and will archive course assessment materials.

Access to Learning Resources

UW-Superior maintains an extensive array of learning resources. These include the on-campus Jim Dan Hill Library, in a dedicated building, and Student Support Services (now Educational Success Center) located in Swenson Hall, which houses an Academic Support Center and a Mathematics Tutoring Lab. There is a Writing Center, which provides consultations both on campus and online. Tutoring is also available at the Yellowjacket Union and in Residence Halls. All of these resources are available to students without additional charge. The University also provides local support for the D2L Brightspace learning management system and Lynda.com available to both students and staff. In addition, students can seek help from tutors online through a third-party service provider, STUDENTNEST, at no additional charge.

Disability Support Services (DSS), also located in Swenson Hall, provides services to students with identified disabilities. DSS fosters an inclusive environment and assists faculty and advisors in making accommodations for students in the classroom or in other learning environments.

The Residence Life Department employs Resident Assistants that are required to hold 2-3 hours per week of study time with residents on the floor of their residence hall. Residence Life also has a first-year Residential Living Community that focuses specifically on providing academic support and
resources to students through Peer Mentors.

All of the aforementioned campus units are operated and staffed by University employees, including faculty, staff, and student employees.

4.A.5

UW-Superior maintains specialized accreditation for those professional programs in which graduates would not otherwise be able to reasonably or maximally utilize their degrees and/or for select programs of exceptionally high quality. These include programs in education, social work, business, and music.

Department of Music

Accreditation by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) assures students of the highest level of review and involvement in the program. NASM requires a comprehensive review and self-study and hosts an on-site review team every 10 years with an extensive report by Music. A handbook available through NASM outlines the requirements and guidelines to achieve and maintain approval (only 600 institutions meet these due to its selective nature). The most recent reaffirmation of accreditation was awarded by NASM in June of 2008 for the baccalaureate programs of the BA/BS in Music, the Bachelor of Music Education, and the Bachelor of Music in Performance. A full report for reaccreditation was just submitted in Spring 2017.

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.

Department of Educational Leadership

Accreditation for the Teacher Education Program at UW-Superior, including education related graduate degree programs, is governed by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI). Without DPI approval, a student receiving a degree in teaching or as an educational professional (e.g., school counselor or superintendent) would not be eligible to obtain a Wisconsin license. To maintain DPI approval, UW-Superior hosts a site visit from DPI every April and follows a continuous review process (CRP) to address key issues related to the program. Wisconsin’s DPI maintains a list of approved educator preparation programs. UW-Superior currently maintains 18 baccalaureate major programs, 21 undergraduate minor programs, 14 graduate programs, and 3 concentrations on the approval list (please note that DPI employs a finer-grained definition of "program" than does UW-Superior, so these counts will differ between the two). As further quality
assurance, 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.

In addition, 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 also the marriage and family track as part of those licensure requirements. In addition, this past year there have been extensive changes under the MPSW14.01 revisions to which the program has submitted the required changes to stay current before the 2018 deadline. In addition, the Counselor Education Program clinical track also stays current with the Minnesota Board of Behavioral Health and Therapy statutes and programmatic licensure processes. The Marriage and Family Therapy track also maintains current standing with the Minnesota Board of Marriage and Family Therapy. The school counseling track stays current with the Minnesota Department of Education in addition to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

**Transportation and Logistics Management Program**

The BS/BA in Transportation and Logistics Management was formerly accredited through the American Society of Transportation and Logistics (AST&L); as of 2015, with the merger of AST&L and the American Production and Inventory Control Society (APICS), accreditation is no longer offered for academic programs. However, students graduating through June 2020 will still be eligible for certification in transportation and logistics.

[Additional accreditation information](#) for individual programs can be found in the UW-Superior catalog.

**4.A.6**

UW-Superior uses multiple methods to assure that its academic programs prepare graduates for advanced study or for careers. The University evaluates several indicators of student success, such as employment rates, admission rates to programs of advanced study, and participation rates in High Impact Practices like internships, service-learning activities, and research endeavors.

At UW-Superior, all available means are utilized to collect indicators of post-college success from alumni and other sources. One important method of collecting this information is through alumni follow-up surveys. Summary reports of alumni surveys by Career Services are available on their website from 2003-2004 forward. Since 2011, collecting data on the placement of graduates has been required by [Wisconsin Statute 36.65](#), which applies to all UW System universities. The analysis is coordinated by the UW System Office of Policy Analysis and Research. In collecting and analyzing alumni data, UW-Superior follows the guidelines developed by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE).

Response rates to the UW-Superior alumni survey have been as high as 86% in recent years. Results show that UW-Superior is effective in preparing its students for the future. In the 2013-2014 survey, for example, over 95% of alumni were either employed or enrolled in an educational program, and 1.8% were in the military or not seeking employment. In the survey of 2016 graduates, 72.9 percent of the respondents reported that they agreed or strongly agreed that their undergraduate experience at UW-Superior “prepared me for the next step in my career path.”
In 2013, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) began assisting Career Services in its data collection and analysis. In 2015-2016, the OIE became the primary home for survey dissemination, data collection, analysis, and reporting. The OIE made modifications to the survey as a result of the UW System’s alumni survey standardization process. Additionally, in the 2016 survey administration, UW-Superior’s Student Learning Goals and Outcomes were added. This inclusion provides self-reported evidence of learning from the students' perspective. After May 2017, the OIE will launch an alumni survey to completers of UW-Superior’s graduate programs, as well. This has not been conducted historically, but a draft is in place.

One of the most significant commitments UW-Superior makes to post-graduation preparation is the institution’s long-standing investment in Liberal Arts High Impact Practices (HIPs). The University has committed to six HIPs, has included them in the Strategic Plan and metrics, and has infused them across the undergraduate curriculum. AS-L and Senior Experience are particularly relevant to 4.A.6. AS-L directly places students in community and in-field learning opportunities with community partners, thereby creating real world experiences that prepare students for post-graduation careers. Senior Year Experience is a culminating experience where seniors conduct research, prepare public posters, and demonstrate capacity in the Student Learning Goals and Outcomes. These HIPs are directly relevant to preparing students for post-graduation life. NSSE data demonstrates that these practices are highly valued by students and are frequently used in courses.

Finally, in conjunction with the Strategic Plan, UW-Superior stakeholders set goals for job and graduate school placement rates of the undergraduates. These goals were formalized in a memorandum from the Director of Institutional Effectiveness.

Sources

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

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

Argument

4.B.1

UW-Superior has established appropriate student learning goals as well as effective processes and protocols for the assessment of program-specific and University-wide goals at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. UW-Superior has embraced the need and importance of continuous improvement with assessment of student learning outcomes.

Over the past several years, UW-Superior has clarified unified learning goals that focus on Communication, Individual and Social Responsibility, and Creative and Critical Thinking. A revised set of goals was adopted through the governance process in November 2014. Progress through December 2015 is detailed within the HLC Interim Report Reviewer Analysis, which was acknowledged as good progress.

More recently, in Fall 2016, the faculty in seven graduate programs at UW-Superior identified a common and more advanced set of learning outcomes for students in the graduate programs. The Graduate Student Learning Goal and Outcomes are aligned with the undergraduate student learning goals and outcomes. These graduate goals involve Mastery of Content, Ethical Leadership and Social Responsibility, Communication, and Scholarly Inquiry and Application.

These two sets of common learning goals now govern the curricula of undergraduate, graduate, and co-curricular programs at UW-Superior.

Additionally, every General Education (soon to be University Studies) course has been aligned to at least one of the three categories of the Undergraduate Student Learning Goals and Outcomes. As General Education courses were reviewed for acceptance into the new University Studies Program (USP, explained fully in Criterion 3) beginning in Spring 2016, faculty and instructional academic staff included which learning outcome each course is intended to meet. All USP courses must commit to ongoing systematic assessment (see Item #5) as part of their approval into the new USP, a new change.

At the graduate level, programs have mapped their program-specific outcomes to the common learning goals, as well. The mapping done in 2016 at all levels was an essential step toward identifying key assessments and developing the strategy to evaluate them.
Finally, the largest of the co-curricular units, Student Affairs, mapped its programs and student employees to the Undergraduate Student Learning Goals and Outcomes in Spring 2015. Meanwhile, several other co-curricular units did not have clearly articulated student learning goals (although each had unit goals or purposes), such as Athletics, the Jim Dan Hill Library, the Office of International Programs, Career Services, the Center for Academic Advising, and the Educational Success Center, all of which adopted the undergraduate goals and planned assessments thereof as explained in the following section. Mapping was the critical first step toward assessment protocols.

Across undergraduate, graduate, and co-curricular programs, the goals now form the centerpiece of all assessment activities. UW-Superior has implemented effective processes for the assessment of the goals in its undergraduate, graduate, and co-curricular offerings.

Systematic Process and Protocols for the Assessment of Undergraduate Programs

Undergraduate major programs, whether delivered online or face-to-face, have implemented an annual assessment process and protocol since 2011 which has been strengthened and clarified, becoming more systematic, since 2014-2015. This increasingly systematic assessment routine has strengthened the foundation for the culture of assessment at UW-Superior.

At the undergraduate level, all major programs report their assessment results annually, making curricular changes when needed each year (see Psychology as an example). In September 2016, the Assessment Coordinator reported that 30 programs assessed their seniors annually. While curricular changes are not mandated or linked as yet to resource allocation, they nevertheless occur at the program (and department) level where improvements are needed based on a commitment to improving student learning and the assessment results. The undergraduate assessment protocol at UW-Superior has systematically evolved in several ways:

- The Assessment Coordinator began giving programs feedback on their annual assessment reports in December 2014. This practice ensured that every program conducted assessments and that areas in which faculty or staff needed professional development in regard to assessment were identified.
- A standing Assessment Committee was created in 2015. This group advises the Assessment Coordinator. One of its main functions is to read and offer feedback on all programs’ assessment reports (about 30 per year) as noted above. This feedback is then used at the program level to generate changes to curricula as needed to improve student learning.

With the adoption of the Undergraduate Student Learning Goals and Outcomes, the assessment protocol for undergraduate programs proceeds in the following systematic way each year:

1. Programs submit assessment reports in September each year.
2. During the Fall semester, the Assessment Coordinator and the Assessment Committee read and offer feedback on these reports.
3. Throughout the Fall semester, programs plan their assessment projects for the upcoming Spring semester, usually coinciding with the Senior Capstone presentations or other course offerings. Programs file an assessment plan in December/January.
4. Data is collected in Spring semester from a variety of Senior Capstone presentations, courses, and events.
5. Program faculty and instructional academic staff analyze and discuss their results and identify what potential curricular changes may be appropriate throughout Summer and into Fall
semester, reporting them in September as noted above.

There is a clear, systematic plan in place for assessment across the University for 2015-2018.

The undergraduate major programs first systematically assessed a UW-Superior Student Learning Goals (Goal 1: Communication) in 2015-2016. Within each program, most faculty assessed graduating seniors based on their Senior Capstone projects. For Goal 1: Communication, three rubrics were created drawn from Association of American Colleges & Universities rubrics on oral, written, and expressive communication. A significantly large number of students who were assessed across 20 programs at the University met the Communication Learning Goal.

**Systematic Protocol and Process for the Assessment of the Goals in the General Education Curriculum**

In addition to assessing the undergraduate majors, the General Education (soon to be University Studies) faculty conducted their first complete assessment in 2015-2016. The Fine Arts category was selected, as all of these courses meet Goal 1: Communication. Ten faculty members from Art, Writing, Communicating Arts, and Music assessed 144 students' writing on May 19, 2016. About 1/3 of the involved courses were online sections. Results from the General Education assessments of 2015-2016 were reported to the University.

Goal 2 on Individual and Social Responsibility is being assessed currently in Spring 2017 and results will be shared with the University in late Spring 2017. AS-L courses were selected as the vessel for this assessment effort with a rubric used to assess student learning. The instructors debriefed in February 2017 with full University briefing expected soon.

A clearly defined plan exists for ongoing assessment of the General Education (soon to be University Studies Program) curriculum over the next three years. This provides evidence for the embedded report of a systematic protocol.

**Process and Protocols for the Assessment of the Goals in Co-Curricular Programs**

Assessment efforts began in co-curricular units in 2015-2016. Beginning in January 2016, a Co-Curricular Assessment Task Force, appointed by the Provost, identified the units that would be responsible for assessing student learning in this domain. The task force reported its recommendations to the Chancellor’s Cabinet on March 7, 2016. Meanwhile, the 13 units under Student Affairs conducted a pilot assessment. The pilot entailed mapping the 13 units to the student learning goals and conducting a survey to assess the student learning of student employees within Student Affairs. The findings of the survey helped Student Affairs identify and improve its weaknesses and led to making plans such as strengthening expectations in student employee handbooks and creating individual professional development plans for student employees.

The co-curricular pilot allowed the Assessment Coordinator to help plan assessment projects across the other co-curricular units. In Fall 2016, Athletics, the Jim Dan Hill Library, and the Office of International Programs each filed assessment plans for Spring 2017. Meanwhile, the Center for Academic Advising had already implemented an internal assessment using on-the-spot surveys for advisees regarding their satisfaction with their experiences in Academic Advising. While the internal
assessment questions were not tied to the shared student learning goals, Academic Advising used the survey results to make improvements in Academic Advisement.

As of March 2017, some co-curricular units are awaiting the mapping process and administering their first assessments of student learning. Along with the Center for Academic Advising, both Career Services and the Student Success Center (now Educational Success Center) have been delayed due to unexpectedly high staff turnover and restructuring. These units will plan their assessment protocol in late Spring 2017.

**Process and Protocols for the Assessment of Goals in Graduate Programs**

Finally, as noted previously, in Fall 2016, the Graduate Council at UW-Superior created and approved appropriate and more advanced goals for students in the graduate programs. The faculty in most graduate programs already had established a robust assessment plan within the discipline as several programs are part of multi-campus consortia, such as the MS in Sustainable Management, or they needed to meet Wisconsin’s Department of Public Instruction (DPI) standards, such as the PK-12 Counseling licensure program. Spring 2017 will see the first University-wide reporting of graduate student assessment results.

**Summary of 4.B.1**

Throughout UW-Superior, the 2015-2018 Assessment Plan has intentionally and systematically integrated all facets of the University (academic programs, General Education/University Studies, co-curricular units). This is a significant change from past assessment efforts which were done in silos, indicating a clearer, cleaner protocol to require and employ assessment results per the embedded report.

**4.B.2**

All academic programs have student learning objectives that are assessed within the programs through course-specific assessments, assessments of senior capstone projects, and through other program-specific assessments. In addition, all undergraduate curricular programs have an assessment plan and protocol that involves the annual assessment of each program’s contribution in fostering student achievement in the areas identified within the Student Learning Goals at UW-Superior.

As mentioned previously, the University has an Assessment Coordinator and an Assessment Committee that evaluates all assessment results from all undergraduate curricular (and some co-curricular) programs on an annual basis and then provides feedback to those individual programs and key stakeholders on the results. This provides evidence that the University is systematically collecting, reviewing, and analyzing assessment data as required for the embedded report. In addition, plans are underway to assess the achievement of the institution’s shared learning outcomes for all co-curricular programs as well as students in the graduate programs.

One of the most significant commitments the University has made to effective assessment of student learning is the full integration of Liberal Arts High Impact Practices (HIPs) across the undergraduate curriculum. HIPs are a best practice pedagogical tool to meet learning goals and outcomes within courses and programs. This ensures quality of pedagogy and maximizes the likelihood of good
student learning outcomes by using research-based effective practices. UW-Superior has adopted six HIPs, most with standards of quality practice: AS-L, First Year Experience, URSCA, Senior Year Experience, Writing across the Curriculum and Global Awareness. The standards ensure effective integration of HIPs and were reviewed and approved through Faculty Senate between 2011 and 2016. The Strategic Plan requires 3-2-1 HIPs integration in all programs, which makes it an institutional commitment. HIPs are also part of the Assessment Plan for 2015-2017 as a core centralized component that connects to academic majors and minors, the University Studies Program, and co-curricular units. By using HIPs, the University proactively seeks to strengthen student learning, thereby making assessment of that learning easier by front-loading proven effective teaching practices.

UW-Superior also has made a commitment to evaluate the effectiveness of the institution as a whole (curricular and co-curricular) in helping students achieve the valued student learning outcomes. This provides evidence for item (2) in the embedded report. For example, UW-Superior recently revised its survey of all graduates at the undergraduate level to include specific questions about how their UW-Superior education enhanced verbal and written communication, individual and social responsibility, and critical and creative thinking skills. All of these areas are directly related to Student Learning Goals and Outcomes. These survey results allow for indirect University-wide assessment data that can be aggregated across curricular and co-curricular programs and disaggregated by program if a sufficient response rate can be achieved by program. Preliminary assessment results suggest that most UW-Superior graduates from the undergraduate programs believe their education at UW-Superior prepared them well in all shared Student Learning Goals. Results also suggest that adjustments may be needed within the curricular and co-curricular programs to more effectively prepare students to be creative within Learning Goal 3: Creative and Critical Thinking.

Other strategies to assess the degree to which the University prepares students with respect to all shared Student Learning Goals are being actively discussed and considered. One option is to adopt common assessments such as modified AAC&U rubrics to assess student learning outcomes related to all Student Learning Goals to allow for the aggregation of data. Another is to examine responses to specific items within the NSSE survey that are aligned with UW-Superior’s Student Learning Goals. Because the NSSE is another indirect measure of student achievement, data from this assessment (conducted on the campus every three years) could provide converging evidence regarding the University’s contributions to achieving the shared learning goals for all students.

This year, UW-Superior conducted an assessment hosted by Educational Testing Service in which student learning in the area of Civic Competency and Engagement was assessed. This assessment will result in a University-specific report within 8-12 weeks after the field testing, and this University-wide data may provide information regarding the degree to which UW-Superior prepares students in civic engagement and fosters respect for diversity as these areas are central to the mission.

University-wide assessment results will be reported to key stakeholders (department chairs, General Education/University Studies Committee, the governance groups, and the Chancellor’s Cabinet) in Spring and Fall 2017. Taken as a whole, there is evidence to indicate that assessment data is being systematically collected, reviewed, and analyzed within undergraduate programs and that it soon will be in co-curricular and graduate programs per the embedded report.

4.B.3

In the early years of assessment at UW-Superior, "closing the loop" was not always the focus of
assessment. Indeed, the focus of assessment efforts on campus was on making arguments about the need for assessment, establishing common learning goals, establishing a routine, and collecting data. However, upon the adoption of the Undergraduate Student Learning Goals, the assessment process has emphasized “closing the loop” by using the information gained to improve student learning in two main ways.

At the undergraduate major level, academic programs use their results to make changes in their curricula when assessment results identify areas in need of improvement. This increasingly common practice provides evidence of data being employed to generate appropriate changes in curricula required in the embedded report. In the annual assessment reports filed by programs across campus, programs propose specific changes in curricula that address assessment results. Two examples provide evidence of this practice.

Psychology had been dissatisfied with student writing based on assessments conducted under the Liberal Education Learning Goals (since replaced by the three University-wide Student Learning Goals). In an effort to improve the writing competencies of students, the program created and evaluated a Writing in Psychology course in Spring 2016. The program's 2015-2016 assessment report notes additional plans to scaffold scientific writing throughout the curriculum to further help students attain writing competencies in the major.

Legal Studies & Criminal Justice noted in their 2015-2016 assessment report that there were issues with oral communication and written communication in seniors. As a response, the program instituted mapping to identify pre-senior courses that could teach effective oral communication skills and created a new Writing across the Curriculum initiative being implemented in 2017 to improve writing skills.

At the institutional level, two projects in 2016 were an effort to increase the use of assessment data University-wide to improve curricula. First, in May 2016, the first-ever cross-disciplinary assessment of the General Education curriculum took place, as described and linked in 4.B.2. Findings from this project allowed the instructors to focus specifically on students' ability to "engage in an exchange of ideas integrating diverse perspectives." The results were disappointing. Faculty found that student discussions with each other were superficial and polite, as they most often avoided voicing any discord or disagreement. Instructors improved their pedagogies by modifying their writing prompts and modeling approaches to debate within the classroom environment to increase student confidence and skill in this area. The results and faculty reflections on the data were reported at an all-campus workshop in August 2016.

Second, UW-Superior is endeavoring to understand the extent of student learning across the University by aggregating results from assessments at the academic major level. As a result, the Assessment Committee spent time analyzing the findings from each program report and calculating the number of students found acceptable versus unacceptable in assessments of University Goal 1: Communication. Aggregated results showed that of the 314 students assessed via Senior Capstones last year, the faculty found 302 acceptable in regards to their Communication skills. This example of aggregating data is demonstrating a commitment to review, analyze, and employ assessment data as required in the embedded report.

Although UW-Superior has made institution-wide efforts, the program-specific approach to assessment is most valued by faculty and staff. It emphasizes the autonomy and responsibility of individual programs and units, and their faculty and staff, for student learning. The goal will be to strike a balance between the enthusiasm that program-specific assessments engender in faculty and staff with implementing bigger-picture changes in curricular and co-curricular programs based on
institution-wide results.

4.B.4

Like many universities, UW-Superior has shifted over the years from a disciplinary-specific, content-based curriculum to one developed to ensure that all students can demonstrate competencies in important student learning outcomes. Because of this and other reasons, UW-Superior engages in best practices of outcomes-based assessments of student learning.

A key example of good assessment practice is the evolution of the General Education curriculum into the University Studies Program (USP). In order to be approved as fulfilling the requirements of the USP, all courses needed to address specific Undergraduate Student Learning Goals depending on their category within the USP. The new USP was created with the Undergraduate Student Learning Goals and assessment in mind. As such, the General Education (soon to be University Studies) committee created an assessment protocol which instructors who apply for course adoption to the program agree to participate in on a rotating basis (item #5).

Another best practice adopted by UW-Superior is the direct assessment of student learning through the assessment of products students themselves create. These include writing samples, presentations, portfolios, or other products that are appropriate to the discipline. In undergraduate majors, assessment is based on the faculty member’s direct rating or judgment of a student’s original work, whether written, oral, creative, or other demonstration of student achievement. For instance, the Senior Capstones required of all bachelor’s degree-seeking students are culminating projects that are assessed on key learning outcomes.

Furthermore, these student products are embedded into the required curricula. While in some cases third-party exams are used to evaluate success in achieving valued learning outcomes (for example, the Teacher Education program using the national Praxis II to judge student learning and success), most assessment measures are drawn directly from the students’ products as they pertain to learning in their coursework.

Perhaps the strongest element of best practices at UW-Superior is the active participation of the faculty and instructional academic staff in assessment, which occurs in three main ways. First, a committee comprised of faculty and instructional academic staff is responsible for planning and organizing the assessment routine each year. In 2015, a 3-year assessment plan was created and passed through governance. To support this plan, the Assessment Committee also created rubrics that faculty and instructional academic staff can adopt for assessing student presentations and products.

The second way in which faculty and instructional academic staff participate in best practice methodologies is through the support of the CETL. This occurs in the form of professional development opportunities and workshops surrounding best practices in assessment. Throughout 2015 and 2016, for example, CETL made seven such opportunities available, which were attended by approximately 50 faculty and instructional academic staff members:

- November 10, 2015: Meaningful Assessment of Student Learning
- November 12, 2015: PETL session on Assessment for New Faculty
- January 13, 2016: Kicking Assessment Panel and Mapping Workshop
- February 9, 2016: Gen Ed Assessment Explanation of Plans
- February 11, 2016: Dept/Program Assessment Help and/or Planning
October 13, 2016: Using Data to Help Underrepresented Minorities
November 10, 2016: Gateway Assessments

Finally, the most important way in which faculty members lead assessment efforts at UW-Superior is by conducting assessments within their own academic units, analyzing these results to make appropriate curricular or pedagogical changes with an emphasis on improving student success, and considering feedback from the Assessment Committee. The University's strongest work has been in the undergraduate majors and minors, the General Education/University Studies transition, the graduate programs, and co-curricular units primed for growth in assessment practices in 2017. All of these examples provide evidence that UW-Superior has made steady and strong progress toward the three requirements of the embedded report.

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4.C - Core Component 4.C

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

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

Argument

The 2015 UW-Superior Monitoring Report addressed the status of the campus enrollment management plans. This 2017 Assurance Argument will address what the campus has done since December 2015 related to recruitment, retention, persistence, and completion.

4.C.1

UW-Superior has defined goals for student recruitment, retention, persistence, and completion. The University is aware that enrollment must grow to address ongoing decreases in state funding for higher education and the need for increased tuition revenues. Thus, the core enrollment management goals that the University has set include recruitment, retention, persistence, and completion considerations. Data is kept and analyzed on each of these four areas.

The University has had defined enrollment goals for 2013 through the present but experienced different iterations of goal setting dependent on leadership, assessment of campus enrollment targets, and re-calibration of tuition revenue targets consistent with mission. The 2013 Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan was oriented toward fifteen recruitment goals and nine retention goals as summarized in the 2015 Monitoring Report. Many of those goals were achieved by 2016 but some of them were no longer relevant in a rapidly changing campus environment relative to enrollment management. As a result of the achievement of the 2013 SEM Plan and the need to move on, the 2013 SEM Plan was recently retired by Chancellor Wachter.

Between 2013 and 2017, UW-Superior has taken steps toward clarifying its enrollment management goals and recalibrating how these goals are achieved. The University has honed its focus on recruitment, retention, persistence, and completion as the key indicators of enrollment success. Three important steps led to the current clear goals in these areas.

First, the Strategic Plan: Superior Visions 2020 set clear expectations on recruitment, persistence, and retention. The metrics which operationalized Initiative 3, Goal 1 specified target goals for
recruitment by category and targeted actions. The metrics that operationalized Initiative 3, Goal 2 related to retention were equally specific on implementing a shared advising model to increase retention as well as setting specific targets for both retention and graduation rates. The Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Management (VCEM) and Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs (VCAA), in consultation with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, have monitored these rates carefully over time and recalibrated the targets as needed.

Second, 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. UW System required these goals in an effort to set performance metrics for retention and completion as well as address the equity gaps within each institution.

Third, 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 is currently being piloted in Spring 2017. These three layers of goals ensure that the University is managing enrollment management strategies on an annual, cyclical, and semester basis.

The established goals are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to UW-Superior's mission, student populations, and educational offerings. UW-Superior is a public liberal arts institution requiring a small faculty-to-student ratio and individualized attention to ensure student success. The current goals recognize that the University needs to maintain realistic enrollment management goals while also growing tuition revenue within realistic limits.

The size of the incoming freshman class of 2016-2017 is an indication that growth is occurring within realistic planning efforts. The Spring 2017 weekly update from the Chancellor shows that UW-Superior is retaining more students. It should be noted that 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 must include a recognition that some students will struggle and not persist.

Finally, UW-Superior has an array of educational offerings (majors and minors) that allow students to pursue a range of studies along with providing the option of Individually Designed Majors/Individual Designed Studies that allow students to self-design their educational offerings. Taken as a whole, these educational offerings allow for maximum opportunities for students to pursue studies that can maximize the likelihood of student success, persistence, retention, and completion.

4.C.2

UW-Superior collects information on student recruitment, retention, persistence, and completion through the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE). This office prepares public documents and campus reports that summarize current and past data on these topics. The collaborative relationship between the OIE and the VCEM ensures a steady stream of data collection to inform the institutional commitment to recruitment, retention, persistence, and completion as well as guides the day-to-day operations of all units within the division of Enrollment Management.
The University analyzes the retention, persistence, and completion data at the institutional, divisional, and departmental level. At an institutional level, the Strategic Planning Core Team (SPCT) and Chancellor's Cabinet review institutional data provided from the OIE on recruitment, retention, persistence, and completion. These groups share the data during Opening Week activities designed to update the University on key topics, such as enrollment management. The OIE provides department-oriented data on recruitment, retention, persistence, and completion to academic departments, and annual (soon to be triennial) report templates require departments to address their recruitment and retention patterns and plans to increase both.

While UW-Superior has ongoing challenges with retention, persistence, and completion rates, the University has significantly enhanced its capacities to collect and analyze data through the excellent work of the OIE and the thriving partnership between the OIE and the VCEM.

4.C.3

UW-Superior takes active steps at the departmental and institutional level to use information on student recruitment, retention, persistence, and completion to make improvements and to create initiatives as warranted by the data. Several examples illustrate these actions.

Departmental Decision-Making

At the departmental level, academic departments monitor retention and graduation rates by major over time. Annual data reports specific to each academic department have been provided to the department chairs beginning in January 2014. Departmental annual reports (soon to be triennial reports) now include retention plans and use program-specific data to identify what is currently working and to create action plans to increase retention when needed. An example is found in the Department of Human Behavior, Justice and Diversity’s 2013-2014 report, which discusses possible explanations for non-retention patterns (law degrees becoming less attractive) as well as planned initiatives that have arguably led to increased retention and completion rates (such as Legal Studies partnering with Continuing Education to offer certificates to provide shorter timelines and milestones toward program completion). Other programs are doing similar work.

New initiatives continue to evolve related to teaching, learning, and curricular development at the departmental level. The developmental (remedial) and fundamental Mathematics Programming Initiative is a good example. Institutional research data on “gateway” courses demonstrated that fundamental mathematics and other courses presented a significant obstacle to student persistence. Heather Kahler, Senior Lecturer in the Mathematics and Computer Science Department, conducted research in 2014 on the ALEKS online math instruction program’s impact on student satisfaction when taking developmental math courses at UW-Superior. The research produced one statistically significant result: when using the ALEKS program, there was an increase in the number of students indicating, “I am generally enthusiastic about coming to math class.” This research is an example of retention-focused work being done to analyze factors that can improve persistence in developmental math courses that otherwise can present challenges to student success.

Institutional Decision-Making

Many other data-driven decisions have been made at the institutional level. Since aggregated trend data indicated enrollments were not improving at an acceptable rate, the University created and hired an executive level position reporting directly to the Chancellor that transformed the way the campus
addresses enrollment management. The Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management (VCEM) position replaced the former Assistant Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management position that reported to the Provost. The investment and successful hire of a VCEM marked a significant institutional commitment to the critical importance of enrollment to the future health of the University. While there is current transition in staffing this position, alternative coverage plans are in place, and the plan will continue uninterrupted.

In addition, because the first to second to third year retention rates were low, the Chancellor's Task Force on Student Retention was created in January 2016 with the charge of generating specific initiatives that would improve student retention and aid students in achieving successful completion in a timely manner. This inclusive team met in Summer 2016 under the co-facilitation of the VCEM and Dean of Students (once again demonstrating an understanding that Student Affairs and Enrollment Management were critical collaborative partners). Although leaders were aware of the low retention rates, the task force did further data analyses and found several factors that created difficulties for students. First, the task force found the DFW rates were exceptionally high in some gateway courses. In addition, many courses required for a major were scheduled during the 10:00AM to 2:00PM timeframe, thus creating course scheduling conflicts for students. Further, it was discovered that many students were taking less than 15 credits per term due to scheduling conflicts and advisement issues. As a result of the data analyses and a review of the best practice research on student retention, the task force generated twelve specific initiatives designed to improve retention rates and, therefore, completion rates. The October 2016 Mid-Semester Status Report to the University indicated substantial progress on most of these twelve initiatives, and the University remains committed to its implementation as long as ongoing data reviews support the continuation.

Further, under the new leadership of the VCEM, University efforts on recruitment, retention, persistence, and completion have been consolidated and streamlined. A myriad of past committees were consolidated into the Enrollment Management Committee. This team meets monthly to review data, analyze results, and offer recommendations or actions to be taken to move the needle on enrollment patterns. The VCEM report became a standing agenda item on the Chancellor's Cabinet and Chancellor's Staff as a step toward enhancing communication and establishing the priority of recruitment and retention for the University. The VCEM created the BEE EM-formed Newsletter, an electronic newsletter to keep the University community apprised of enrollment management actions, offices, and services. The EM website was re-written and updated in August 2016, and a direct link was made to the OIE as a significant step to demonstrate the relationship between data and action. The OIE and the VCEM coordinate regularly on key documents such as the FactBook that highlights key recruitment, retention, persistence, and completion data and actions. New innovations to improve recruitment, retention, persistence, and completion are constantly being considered.

UW-Superior has invested significant funding into other recruitment and retention initiatives. One example is the Superior Innovations Grant Initiative launched in Fall 2015. The Superior Innovation Initiative was launched as a new effort “to encourage innovations (big and small) that will allow UW-Superior to increase student enrollment (recruitment and retention) and enhance revenue for the institution.” Four “Big Innovation” and nine “Small Innovation” proposals were approved “based on tight linkage with the Strategic Plan” and funded for a total budget of $150,188. Funded programs that specifically targeted increased retention and completion rates included Business Administration/Management Professional Degree Completion Program; Residential Living Communities; Pre-Engineering Associate Degree; Building Perseverance, Resilience, and Success; Living, Learning, and Leadership; and LGBTQ-Friendly Campus.

Another example is the CETL Student Success Grants. In Fall 2016, CETL offered over
$20,172 in grant funding to facilitate additional retention efforts. Seventeen proposals were submitted and reviewed to determine their potential impact on student retention. Seven were funded based on their link to best practice retention initiatives. Each proposal had to demonstrate a clear connection to the data indicating where improved retention efforts could maximize student success.

Another example was the data-based decision to switch athletic conferences from the WIAC to UMAC (a more competitive conference environment for UW-Superior). All sports except for Men's and Women's Hockey were shifted. Since institutional data indicated participation in college athletics was correlated with student success, the University added more athletic teams as a means of increasing opportunities for student participation. UW-Superior also advocated for and obtained UW System funding to support student involvement in athletics.

In addition to the above examples, the University implemented various new initiatives with retention, persistence, and time to degree in mind. These include a Shared Advising Model to enhance retention in the early years. Due to student concerns identified through student interviews and feedback, the Faculty Senate approved the new Shared Academic Advising Model (SAM) to improve the quality of student advisement. This SAM is a product of the University’s Retention Committee and is informed by extensive research on best practices for student retention. The Academic Advisement Center regularly collects data (through the ASSIST program and other means) to determine if an individual student is underperforming, absent, or displays other signs of being academically at risk so that the student can be contacted in a timely manner.

Other initiatives in response to enrollment, retention, and completion data include

- Implementing a Supplemental Instruction Program in which upper level students are hired to provide additional academic support to students in key courses (initial data reviews indicate this initiative has led to improvements in student success)
- Creating pathway sheets to be used by advisors and students to ensure timely degree completion (example provided)
- Developing a summer math Boot Camp to be implemented in Summer 2017 for students who perform poorly on the Math Placement Test
- Revamping the ASSIST early alert system to respond to student issues more promptly and effectively
- Piloting the 15 to Finish Initiative to promote successful four year graduation rates
- Creating the UW-Superior Enrollment Management Priorities Initiative of 2015
- Developing the “Success Net” peer-to-peer mentoring and leadership program initiatives implemented by the Veteran and Nontraditional Student Center
- Implementing the Office of Multicultural Affairs PEER mentoring program (which found that students from historically underrepresented populations who participated in the program were retained at a significantly higher rate than the non-participants as shown by 2013 and 2015 studies)

In summary, the University is committed to making data-based decisions and making improvements when data and other sources of information indicate changes are warranted. Further, efforts have been strengthened to allow for the ongoing review of institutional data to determine which newly developed initiatives result in desired outcomes.

4.C.4

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 OIE 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 annual (soon to be triennial) 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 from 2012 through 2014, 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 (OPAR). 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, annual assessment reports, periodic review of its General Education curriculum, external accreditations, and documentation of the success of graduates through employment rates, admission rates to advanced study, and alumni surveys. Transfer of credits 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 are mapped to University outcomes for all programs at the graduate, undergraduate, and general education levels.
- Undergraduate programs submit annual assessment plans and reports, receiving feedback from a faculty-led committee.
- Assessment reports require each program to discuss how it uses outcome data analysis to inform continuous instructional and programmatic improvements.

While UW-Superior has experienced ongoing 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 measures.

Sources

There are no sources.
5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

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

5.A - Core Component 5.A

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

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

Argument

5.A.1

UW-Superior has maintained the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered. Each of the four components of this criterion will be addressed separately below.

Fiscal Resources Sufficient to Support Operations

UW-Superior has sufficient fiscal resources to support all of its operations. On this campus that means supporting on-campus programming and online, or Distance Education, programming in both undergraduate and graduate programs.

UW-Superior has a well-developed process in place for monitoring expenses and budget. There are numerous UW System policies to ensure proper fiscal management within its component institutions including UW System Regents Policy Documents 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 financial composite ratios have remained in or above the zone for public institutions for the past three reporting years (see Federal Compliance Appendix J).

UW-Superior is one of the 13 comprehensive universities within the UW System. The UW System has an overall operating budget of $6 Billion which is approved by the Board of Regents on an annual basis. The State of Wisconsin faces budget challenges and that has resulted in the state
decreasing funding to state agencies, including the UW System. Budget reductions received by UW System from the state are allocated to each individual campus. The document Annual Budget & Fee Schedule 2016 provides an overview of the annual budget of the entire UW System and each campus individually, as well as shows the impact of recent budget reductions on each campus and their use/reduction of fund balances in the past fiscal year. General Purpose Revenue (GPR) is state appropriated revenue (fund 102) allocated to campuses as "budget authority" and is combined with tuition revenue (fund 131) to create the campus base budget. As noted in the Annual Budget & Fee Schedule 2016 document, GPR funding to UW-Superior decreased 5.5% ($1,633,543) from FY15 to FY16 ($29,505,335 vs. $27,871,792).

Overall, since state funding reductions started, UW-Superior has experienced a decrease in the amount of $1.795 Million over the past six years. The notes on slide 7 outline these reductions and were presented to the University community as a mid-semester update in March 2016.

Adding further difficulty to the budget situation is the fact that all UW System campuses have been under a tuition freeze for the past four years, and the Governor and state legislature have proposed extending the tuition freeze for in-state undergraduate students for an additional two years. The combination of the tuition freeze and the reduction in GPR funding has provided challenges to UW-Superior in the area of financial resources.

UW-Superior knew about the coming fiscal challenges as early as Fall 2012 Opening Week. These challenges are comparable to other similarly sized universities across the country. The administration has continued to update the University community on these fiscal realities through weekly Chancellor email messages and Opening Week briefings.

Another taxing reality is that, despite being the smallest university in the UW System, the UW-Superior must also provide all the infrastructure and services of a larger comprehensive campus.

In addition to the tuition freeze and the budget reductions that have been imposed by the state, UW-Superior is also managing a structural deficit of approximately $2.5 million. The deficit is due to reductions in the past biennium in state funding, insufficient resources to cover operating costs in athletics, and declining enrollment.

Between 2013 and the present, UW-Superior has responded to the fiscal challenges and realities by taking numerous decisive steps. First, the University engaged in numerous cut strategies through Program Prioritization. As the evidence proves, this resulted in cost savings of approximately $995,868 by outsourcing services (custodial services and grounds maintenance), approximately $159,816 in administrative reorganization savings, a 15% across-the-board reduction in supplies and expenses budgets, and identification of increased efficiencies. The University also participated in a voluntary separation program, which resulted in 19 retirements resulting in $350,467 in savings by FY17. The bookstore has also been outsourced as a cost savings measure.

Second, the University developed growth strategies to increase enrollments and add budget capacity. Analysis of the budget shows that UW-Superior needs to consistently enroll at least 2,235 full-time on-campus students in order to generate $17 Million in tuition revenue annually to meet its revenue target and ongoing campus fiscal needs. Solid efforts have been undertaken to work toward this goal, including

- Development of innovations in curriculum and grants to attract and to retain students;
- Revamping of the campus advisement model;
- Collaboration with UW-Extension in creating several business programs (example: MA in
sustainable management); • Multi-faceted, robust enrollment (including Retention Action Committee in 2016, Chancellor's Task Force on Student Retention in 2016, and Enrollment Management work described in 4.C) and retention efforts; • Retooling of graduate programs in education through collaboration with Academic Partnerships (AP), a strong move designed to increase enrollments in graduate degrees; • Ongoing fundraising efforts by the UW-Superior Foundation and a new campaign in 2017 to increase budget capacity on the campus.

Taken as a whole, these growth strategies are designed to manage budget issues by growing revenue.

The University has additional funding sources and the description of those funds can be found in the Fund Appropriation Tutorial. These funding sources are specific in nature, constituting 55% of the overall University budget, and are used to provide additional assistance to support the mission of the University. Revenue is generated and expended in the areas of auxiliary services, program services, grants, financial aid, and federal indirect costs.

UW System has supported UW-Superior and its unique mission within the state. UW System has given a number of one-time allocations totaling $11,047,280 over the past four years to help the University address both its budget challenges and targeted areas for growth and support of its mission. This support has enabled UW-Superior to establish a tuition reserve of $1,000,000 that can be used on a one-time basis to address strategic priorities and future budgetary needs.

While these actions have improved the state of the budget, additional work still needs to be done. The Program Prioritization process was one critical step in reducing the structural deficit within Academic Affairs. However, it did not alleviate enough of the budget issues and therefore further review and action will likely be needed within the Academic Affairs budget in the near future.

Student involvement is supported through Segregated University Fees (SUF) which are fees in addition to tuition which can only be expended on the specific purpose(s) for which they were created. SUF are further identified as allocable and non-allocable: allocable SUF are fees that provide substantial support for student activities and services, while non-allocable SUF are fees that are used to support long-term commitments for fixed financial obligations, staff salaries, ongoing operating costs of University-owned or -controlled buildings, and similar commitments for student unions, health centers, childcare centers, and recreational sports centers. Segregated fees provided $2,731,352 in revenue in FY16 to support the auxiliary services provided to students. Students play a vital role in reviewing segregated fee rates and budgets each year.

UW-Superior is taking clear, decisive steps toward ensuring continuing sufficient fiscal resources.

Human Resources Sufficient to Support Operations

UW-Superior has sufficient human resources to support its operations and has been providing its programs using these resources wherever and however they are delivered. It should be acknowledged that, although overall the University has sufficient staffing, UW-Superior is working on right-sizing human resources in particular units that may or may not be sufficiently staffed. Human resource decisions are made deliberately and carefully to ensure right sizing within units and across campus.

The University employs 158 full- and part-time faculty and instructional academic staff to deliver on its primary mission of instruction. The total number of full- and part-time staff for the campus totals 410, for a Full Time Equivalency of 355 employees. This equivalency includes non-teaching staff
who are essential to running the campus. These positions include executive administrative staff, middle level management, clerical support, and skilled craftsmen.

There are continuing efforts to discern means to reduce personnel costs, while not negatively impacting campus operations. The decisions made in 2014 to outsource certain auxiliary operations (such as the bookstore and custodial services) are specific examples of efficiency measures and cost saving efforts. Overall, the University is staffed sufficiently to support all operations.

Facilities Sufficient to Support Operations

The UW-Superior campus has well-equipped facilities in place to support its operations and programs wherever and however they are delivered.

UW-Superior’s list of proposed capital improvement and/or projects vies for its share of capital dollars against all other UW System institutions. With the most recent state budget reductions, a decrease in funding for capital and maintenance projects occurred statewide. UW-Superior, however, is well-equipped, as two new campus buildings were completed within the last six years; major repairs were completed at the Jim Dan Hill Library in 2012 after the flood; replacement of campus steam lines occurred during the summers of 2013, 2014 and 2015; and the majority of buildings are rated as “good” (minimal renovation) and “satisfactory” (limited renovation).

The University has a track record of successful master plan development and implementation as well. The current Campus Master Plan was presented to and approved by the Board of Regents at the December 2014 meeting. The campus plan will be the guiding document in project selections for sustainable development over the next 20 years. This plan was intentionally integrated into the institution’s Strategic Plan through Strategic Initiative IV, Goal 3, Action Step 1 and Strategic Initiative IV, Goal 3, Action Step 3.

Technology Sufficient to Support Operations

UW-Superior has sufficient technology resources in place to support its operations and programs wherever and however they are delivered. Technology Services offers supportive services to the student body, faculty, and staff. In addition, it also has the responsibility to ensure that campus technology needs are maintained and grow appropriately as technology is developing rapidly.

The Chief Information Office (CIO) position at UW-Superior has been vacant for the past four years. In the interim, three Information Services Supervisors (ISS), who report to the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, have been employed. These three ISS positions manage and oversee the Technology Services division. The Technology Services organizational chart outlines the specific technology components that each of them oversees.

Technology Services provides a wide 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. A full list of the services, resources, and staff is found on the Technology Services website.

In addition to the Technology Services support provided, the University also employs an Instructional Designer who works with instructors on the design and development of their online and hybrid or blended courses. The Instructional Designer is a Quality Matters certified, National Peer Reviewer for online and hybrid courses and designs and leads various new online instructor training programs. The Information Services Supervisors have put together and submitted to the UW System a Technology
Services Strategic Direction Update every year since 2013, which provides an outline of planned projects and identified technology needs for the campus.

While the University provides technological support, it is also investing in technology in a number of ways, including the investment of approximately $100,000 in a fiber optic study and the upgrading and maintenance of technology. The University manages these decisions through the University Technology Committee.

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. In fact, in the most recent Campus Master Plan, it is noted as the top priority. The plan calls for addressing the dire conditions of the fiber optic and telecommunication system. The current infrastructure is not capable of future requirements for campus data, voice, video, DDC, and fire alarm reporting.

5.A.2

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 consult with 1.D.2 for more details on the relationship between UW-Superior and UW System.

5.A.3

The goals incorporated into the mission statement or elaborations of mission statement are realistic in light of the University's organization, resources, and opportunities.

These goals are also embodied within the Strategic Plan. This is a living document that is revisited (at a minimum) annually by the Strategic Planning Core Team (SPCT). The SPCT revisits timelines, tracks progress, and ensures plan accountability. Each goal and initiative has its own set of metrics to define success outcomes.

The campus organization sets the stage for how the University mission and associated goals are to be accomplished. In recent years, UW-Superior has reorganized several areas to better support the mission and to leverage limited resources. For example, in the past, marketing was done in various areas around campus. Now, all areas of marketing have been streamlined and merged under University Marketing and Communications. This made marketing and communications more consistent and efficient. Another example is the creation of the division of Outreach and Alternative Delivery, which brought together Continuing Education, Coop Extension, Small Business Development Center, and the Distance Learning Center. Bringing these areas together extended the undergraduate and graduate resources through alternative delivery and, in collaboration with UW-Extension, fosters the development of cooperative and general outreach programming.

UW-Superior has also invested in areas that support the elaboration of the mission but also provide critical experiences and opportunities and promote retention and enrollment growth. For example, URSCA, which was funded beginning in 2010, promotes, recognizes, celebrates, and provides resources and opportunities for research, scholarship, and creative activity in all academic disciplines for students, faculty and staff. Most recently, the campus committed to the creation of a Center for Community Engaged Learning which will focus on engaging inter-institutional
relationships and foster community partnerships to enhance educational and service opportunities for students.

Fiscal, structural and human resource decisions since 2013 have been mission driven. The campus will continue to be informed by a strong mission commitment.

5.A.4

UW-Superior’s hiring practices and policies ensure that all faculty and other staff are appropriately qualified and trained. Criterion 3.C.2; 3.C.3; 3.C.4 provide in-depth descriptions regarding the qualifications, professional development, and evaluation of all faculty and instructional academic staff on campus; Criterion 3.C.6 provides in-depth description regarding the qualifications, evaluation, and professional development opportunities for all staff providing supportive services. HR manages the qualifications and training for UW-Superior staff, and CETL supplements with specific professional development for faculty and instructional academic staff. Staff and faculty are evaluated annually on their performance according to their appropriate protocols and procedures.

UW-Superior employs student employees in multiple positions. Student staff are hired and trained within their respective hiring departments. The Student Employment Office works with supervisors of student staff each Spring to complete evaluations of all student staff. Additional leadership training is offered to all students through the Department of Student Involvement.

5.A.5

The University has a well-developed, but evolving, process in place for integrated planning and budgeting. It also has a well-developed process for monitoring expenses.

UW-Superior's Integrated Planning and Budgeting Process (IPBP) has made great strides since the 2015 Monitoring Report. The IPBP works to ensure that all planning, budget, and assessment activities throughout every level of the organization are effectively linked and coordinated. All activities are driven by the University's vision, mission, and academic priorities both online and on campus.

During UW-Superior’s 2013 HLC site visit, planning and budgeting was identified as an area of concern for the campus. The 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 focused on creating the IPBP. The proposed IPBP process was vetted through and approved by Academic Staff Senate, University Staff Senate, Faculty Senate, Student Government Association, and Strategic Planning Core Team.

The IPBP has been an evolving process over the past few years and will continue to evolve until it is completely integrated. This new IPBP was implemented in Summer/Fall 2015. This process includes the submission and review of the annual departmental budget requests and annual reports (soon to be triennial reports for academic departments) as well as the allocation of funds. Budget requests and annual reports are submitted from academic and non-academic departments. Recently, academic units chose to switch reporting to triennial timing. These requests include and are based upon the longer-term plan for that unit. Budget requests focus on appropriate activities for the following fiscal year. These requests are directly associated with the planned activities, services, and initiatives within that department, program, or unit. Budget Request Templates are provided to each reporting unit. Annual
(or triennial for academics) reports focus on identifying the goals of the department or unit, whether those goals were met and to what extent, and how goals were measured.

Since Fall 2015, one full cycle of the new IPBP has been completed, with a number of successes as well as some lessons learned. While some needed changes were identified, the University is confident that future cycles of the process will be improved and even more effective.

The IPBP committee evaluated the new process and provided recommendations for needed changes to the Strategic Planning Core Team (SPCT) in June 2016. As a result, the Student Services Annual Report and Budget Request forms were condensed to eliminate unnecessary information from convoluting the process. It was determined that assessment had been missing from the Student Services Annual Report and was therefore added. Additionally, submission and review timelines were adjusted to improve efficiency.

The process in Summer/Fall 2016 has been more thoroughly integrated and strategic than ever before. SPCT focused on fund allocation processes more fully in 2016-2017. Before this academic year, budgets were allocated based on what the area had received in past years, with little consideration of alignment with the Strategic Plan or mission. The second cycle (Summer/Fall 2016) included an improved process for allocation. Budget requests from both academic and non-academic units were completed and submitted to SPCT. All the requests were compiled by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness into a spreadsheet. Each SPCT member reviewed the requests and scored them based on their alignment with the Strategic Plan. On November 29, 2016, SPCT met and discussed how requests were scored by each member. By the end of the meeting, they had compiled a set of recommendations that were forwarded to the Chancellor. In addition they also took into consideration outstanding campus needs not covered in the budget requests. The outstanding campus needs list was updated and discussed in conjunction with the SPCT recommendations. The Chancellor’s Staff forwarded their recommendations to the Chancellor on December 15, 2016. The recommendations were posted in the campus shared drive, and the University community was given the opportunity to provide their feedback to the Chancellor before the end of January 2017. The final budget allocations will be decided upon by the Chancellor.

The IPBP will again be reviewed and revised as needed in Spring/Summer 2017. The need for consistency of assessment and the need for departments to articulate how assessment data is used to inform planning have already been identified as revisions needed for the next cycle. While the campus has made progress, more work on identifying key performance indicators (KPIs) and consistent use of assessment in making budget decisions needs to be done. Therefore, review of the IPBP is a standing agenda item for the SPCT to ensure the areas for improvement are addressed as part of the Strategic Plan.

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5.B - Core Component 5.B

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

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

Argument

5.B.1

Board of Regents

The governing board of UW-Superior is the Board of Regents of the UW System. This Board is knowledgeable about UW-Superior; it also provides oversight of UW-Superior’s financial and academic policies and practices, while meeting the legal and fiduciary responsibilities needed to properly govern a university system and its institutions.

Authority is vested in the Board by Chapter 36 of the Wisconsin Statutes and all responsibilities are summarized in that statute.

UW-Superior maintains a strong relationship with the UW System Board, its President, and Offices. Numerous groups, including each institution’s chancellor and provost and UW System Representatives for academic staff, university staff, faculty, and students, meet monthly in statewide meetings with their peers. Leaders of the Representative groups attend, observe, and sometimes report directly to the Board at the meetings. Chancellors and provosts attend all Board meetings, being called upon regularly to share news and activities from their campuses. There is a strong reporting structure as well; the purpose of this is to keep UW System and the Board informed of the broad array of activities of each campus. These relationships enable the Board to remain very knowledgeable about UW-Superior. In fact, because of these relationships, the Board has been able to effectively support UW-Superior during both healthy times and during the recent series of budget crises.

The UW System is headed by the Board, which has numerous functions reporting either directly or indirectly to it. There is a UW System President who reports directly to the Board and oversees the operation and management of the UW System. A number of functions report to this person. Both the Board and the UW System are served by an Office of Internal Audit and by a General Counsel. Chancellors report to the Board and work closely with the UW System President.

Please consult with 2.A and 2.C for additional details and information.
5.B.2

UW-Superior has and employs policies and procedures to engage its external and internal constituencies in the governance of the University. The good relationship with UW System and the Board of Regents was summarized in 5.B.1; 2.A; and 2.C. This section will focus on internal constituencies such as administration, faculty, academic staff, university staff, and students. The University has an institutional culture grounded in the principles of shared governance.

Shared governance is a collective decision-making process in which University administrators, faculty, academic staff, university staff, and students participate. Central to shared governance is the idea that collaboration is necessary between all groups to ensure and promote the mission of the University. Shared governance, above all, is to make sure that policies are enacted, with the input of the various constituencies, which guide strategic decisions within the University. Shared governance assures that diverse perspectives and collective wisdom inform such decisions, strengthening the University’s foundation for success. Shared governance, however, does not require decision-making to be through consensus. Shared governance is a vehicle to ensure that there are opportunities for all constituencies to provide input and to inform decision-making.

Wisconsin Statutes Chapter 36 establishes the statutory parameters for shared governance within the UW System. The four primary constituencies are represented by governance groups and the administration interfaces with these groups. The University’s administration includes governance representatives in critical groups such as the Chancellor’s Cabinet. The Chancellor and/or Provost or their designee also attend governance meetings of the four constituencies as a means of opening the lines of communication and collaboration between administration and the various campus constituencies.

Faculty governance provides faculty with the opportunity to participate in academic review and recommendation, educational policy making, and recommendations regarding personnel matters. Faculty become engaged in governance through individual initiative; service on departmental, Faculty Senate Councils and committees, and other University committees; and service on the Faculty Senate. Per their by-laws, Faculty Senate is made up of one representative from each of the 12 academic departments as well as one at-large senator. The faculty of the University elect a chair for the Faculty Senate from their ranks annually. The Faculty Senate's 5 councils (Academic Program Review; Graduate; Personnel; Planning and Budgetary; Undergraduate Academic Affairs) ensure full participation in shared governance from macro to micro details. Please consult with 2.A for more details.

The Academic Staff Senate (AcSS) is the recognized governing body for all academic staff, both instructional and non-instructional. The AcSS consists of nine academic staff who are elected per the election process outlined in the AcSS by-laws. Senators can be from any unit or department on campus. AcSS duties include monitoring adherence to the policies and procedures of academic staff as provided in the Unclassified Staff Handbook, developing policies and recommendations in the best interest of academic staff that are consistent with the goals and mission of the University, receiving and reviewing concerns from academic staff, serving as a channel for official communication from the Chancellor or Provost or Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs on issues regarding academic staff, and reviewing and disseminating professional development grants. A key governance committee for Academic Staff Senate is the Personnel Compensation Committee, which is responsible for reviewing promotion requests and title changes using Unclassified Policy Guideline 1 and making recommendations to the Provost. This committee is also responsible for reviewing and making recommendations on Emeritus requests of academic staff.
The University Staff Senate (USS) is the recognized governing body for all university staff. The USS serves as an advocate for university staff as well as for their ongoing professional development opportunities. The USS consists of 9 university staff members who are elected, per the guidelines in their by-laws. The USS is charged with promoting a positive professional environment for all university staff employees, creating and reviewing policies and procedures that affect university staff, supporting professional development activities, encouraging informed communication among university staff and within the broader University community, and serving as an advisor to the Chancellor and other University administrators. The USS is also responsible for reviewing and disseminating professional development grants and reviewing and making recommendation of Emeritus requests of university staff.

The Student Government Association (SGA) serves as the voice of the students. Their by-laws outline the SGA's roles and responsibilities. The purpose of the SGA is to represent the interests of the students of UW-Superior in the governance of the University, working collaboratively with the administration, faculty, staff, students, and student organizations of the University, the UW System, and with the local community in order to provide the best possible University environment and educational experience. The SGA has three main councils and committees. 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. 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. The Segregated University Fee Allocation Committee (SUFAC), in consultation with the Chancellor, has the primary responsibility of allocating segregated university fees.

Shared governance requires strong communication between administrators and campus constituencies, clarity of the roles played in various kinds of decisions encountered by the University, and an understanding of the responsibilities and limits of shared governance constituency groups in making ultimate decisions. In some cases, these shared governance constituency roles are established by law, Board approval, and, in other cases, by campus structure and custom. This is an area in which greater consistency, definition, and clarity about which governance groups should receive and/or approve various campus documents, policies, and procedures would be beneficial.

UW-Superior has a number of committees and councils in which administration, faculty, staff and students participate on an annual basis. These committees provide necessary and valuable recommendations and advice for shared governance and decision-making. All constituencies on campus have committees that provide this inclusive input. Committee assignments are made annually unless the membership is on a rotating cycle. The governance groups have major responsibilities for committee assignments, again indicating the role of shared governance and inclusive participation in University decision-making.

5.B.3

Administration, faculty, academic and university staff, and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

The governance structures that ensure effective contribution and collaborative effort around setting academic requirements, policy, and processes have been thoroughly described and discussed in the section on shared governance in 5.B.2.
Depending upon the nature and breadth of the academic requirements, policies, and processes under review, the different governance groups and constituencies are to provide input and feedback. Ultimately, in consultation with faculty, the Chancellor is responsible to design curricula, set degree requirements, determine academic standards, establish grading systems, define and administer institutional standards for faculty peer evaluation and screening of candidates for appointment, recommend individual merit increases, administer all funds. The Provost or Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs serves at the request of the Chancellor and is the person who oversees and maintains all academic units and related activities.

All undergraduate and graduate academic curriculum and policy matters must pass through a parallel, well-established faculty governance review and approval processes. This process may be initiated by a department, an administrator, a campus committee, the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Council (UAAC) or the Graduate Council (GC) of the Faculty Senate when questions relating to curriculum or academic policy and procedures arise. AP 1117 governs approval for undergraduate academic matters. The Curriculum Approval Chart sets out the kinds of academic actions which need approval as well as the various kinds of approvals each needs. Some actions must go through all levels of governance review, and others may simply be a report to the Registrar (who sits, along with the Dean of Faculties, as an ad hoc member of UAAC). The UAAC reviews all proposed academic curricular, policy, and procedural items and makes a recommendation to the Faculty Senate on what action should be taken.

AP 1601G 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 GC is an academic policy-making body for the Graduate Faculty and Graduate Programs. Some graduate level academic actions must go through all levels of governance review, and others may simply be a report to the Registrar (who sits, along with the Dean of Faculties, as an ad hoc member of the GC). The GC 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.

All five constituencies interact and collaborate primarily through the vehicle of campus committees, and the governance chairs are members of the Chancellor’s Cabinet. UW-Superior has a series of both standing committees and ad hoc, short term committees created to address specific tasks. There are four kinds of campus committees and councils (see discussion in 5.B.2.). A full listing of all University standing committees and councils, their charges, and membership makeup, which are governed by or convened through the various governance groups and/or administratively, is available on the Provost’s website.

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5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

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

Argument

5.C.1

UW-Superior utilizes the Integrated Planning and Budgeting Process (IPBP) which is the basis for long-range strategic planning, division and departmental planning, and continuous improvement. The IPBP is the mechanism the institution uses to support the mission, vision, and core values of the University and to achieve its stated outcomes and continuous improvement goals in a manageable and sustainable way.

In the past four years, UW-Superior has undergone a campus-wide strategic planning process; has conducted and acted upon a Program Prioritization review in response to state and institutional fiscal issues; has developed the IPBP; has created the Strategic Planning Core Team (SPCT) with broad representation from all governance groups to provide ongoing accountability for achieving success on metrics within the Strategic Plan in concert with the IPBP; has evaluated the first year cycle of the IPBP.

Criterion 1.A.3 describes how the 2013 HLC site visit to UW-Superior identified concerns regarding the campus planning and budgeting process. In response, during the 2014-2015 fiscal year, the University revamped its former planning body to create the SPCT. This team had two related charges. The first was to provide accountability in the implementation and evaluation of the Strategic Plan. The second was to create an integrated planning and budgeting process. This process, once designed, was carefully reviewed by Academic Staff Senate, University Staff Senate, Faculty Senate, Student Government, and SPCT. The new process was first approved and implemented in the 2015-2016 academic year.

Academic and non-academic departments both (on-campus and online) submit budget requests and annual reports (soon to be triennial for academic departments). Annual reports include a review of the past year's activities, achievements, and unit data, as well as a review of assessment mechanisms utilized. The academic department assessment plans and reports are shared with the Dean, the Assessment Coordinator, and the Assessment Committee as described fully in Criterion 4.B. These individuals review the annual reports to determine the progress toward identified goals and offer feedback to departments on how to strengthen their assessments of student learning as well as offer
input on methods to improve student learning when evidence points to an area of weakness. Please consult Criterion 5.A for additional details.

**Budget requests** focus on funding needs or desires for the upcoming fiscal year focused on the planned activities, services, and initiatives within that department or program and their direct link to the mission, vision, and Strategic Plan of UW-Superior. During the 2016-2017 fiscal year, for example, all budget requests were linked to the Strategic Plan: Superior Visions 2020 Initiatives and Metrics. The SPCT then evaluated each budget request based on the strength of its connection to the Strategic Plan before making final funding recommendations to the Chancellor's Staff.

After completing the first year of implementation of the IPBP process, the IPBP committee reviewed and evaluated the new process and provided recommendations for needed changes to the SPCT in June 2016. Those changes have been implemented for the 2017-2018 cycle. Consult with 5.A for more details. The SPCT will continue its ongoing evaluation of the process annually. Next year, for example, all academic departments will be asked to tie each funding request to a Strategic Plan: Superior Visions 2020 Initiative or Metric (as was required by the non-academic departments in Fall 2016) before they submit budget requests to the SPCT and the IPBP.

5.C.2

The University links its processes for evaluation of operations with planning and budgeting. All academic departments produce an annual assessment report and budget proposal as noted in other sections. The University intends to more directly align assessments of student learning reporting practices with reports to the SPCT to ensure the IPBP process effectively links and integrates planning, budget, and assessment data through every layer of the organization for the 2017-2018 fiscal year. All non-academic units also produce budget requests and annual reports.

The SPCT has discussed how the use of assessment outcomes, as well as key performance indicators (KPIs), could strengthen the budgeting process. During the 2016 review of the newly implemented IPBP, this opportunity was identified. One initial step was to update the annual report and budget request forms for FY18 to now include questions asking for data on measurable outcomes and other evidence of student learning.

5.C.3

**Development of the Strategic Plan**

Numerous opportunities were created to engage internal and external constituency groups in the strategic planning process. University members, businesses, employers, community members, alumni, and students were engaged in the development of the Strategic Plan. Through open forums, surveys, and focus groups, feedback was sought from these valued constituents in 2013 and 2014.

Research groups used data from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness as well as outside data sources (for benchmarking purposes), such as IPEDS. In December 2013, the research results from each team were presented in an open session to the University community and to the Strategic Planning Steering Committee. The University community was invited on multiple occasions to offer feedback and suggestions for the planning process through the website.

UW-Superior also hosted a strategic planning listening session for UW System on October 14, 2015.
The session brought key community members and leadership to the table to discuss the vision for higher education in Wisconsin, specifically in the northwest region of the state. The Chancellor and Director of University Relations were in attendance and listened to community members speak about UW-Superior and its connection to the surrounding area. The economy, education, and other topics were discussed.

Thus, Strategic Plan: Superior Visions 2020 and the UW System Strategic Framework were developed with significant input from both internal and external constituencies.

Ongoing Integrative Planning and Budgeting Process

As noted in Criterion 5.C.2 and Criterion 5.C.3, campus constituencies are given multiple opportunities for input into the planning and budgeting process.

5.C.4

UW-Superior plans on the basis of a sound understanding of state support, additional sources of revenue, and its current capacity. Plans by UW-Superior anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in its sources of revenue, such as enrollment data, the economy, and state support.

As noted in Criterion 5.C.1, UW-Superior uses annual reports (soon to be triennial from academic departments) from all units in its planning process (IPBP). These reports identify successes and achievements, as well as areas of challenge, giving the SPCT and administrators a picture of the state of its units. These reports for each unit and department may be accessed by any University member online through the IPBP shared drive.

University administrators are in close touch with UW System administration and the efforts it makes with the legislature in regard to support for public higher education. Campus leaders have been effective advocates in attracting UW System support to assist with transitioning in response to revenue shift and decreases and have also supported a number of the campus initiatives to reduce costs and increase enrollments.

UW-Superior pays close attention to changing demographics; changing methodologies for reaching and retaining students; changing technology advances which can positively affect instructional strategies, opportunities for innovation, and possible areas of collaboration to increase its enrollments and fiscal solvency. It is increased enrollments and enhanced efficiencies that must make the difference in an era of shrinking state revenues.

UW-Superior responds as nimbly and quickly to these ever-changing environments as possible; this awareness and relevance is reflected throughout the Strategic Plan, a living and flexible document, which has provided a blueprint for campus planning and response efforts. For example:

- High school graduation numbers are decreasing in the key feeder schools northwest Wisconsin, specifically Superior High School. In response to this, the Twin Cities Enrollment proposal was developed to recruit students from Minnesota's Twin Cities metro area (Minneapolis, St. Paul and surrounding areas). It was funded by a grant from the UW System Growth Agenda to specifically target and market students from the Twin Cities region. The results of this work have led to an increase in enrollments from this area.
- In Fall 2015, the University was given funding from the UW System to vigorously engage in strategies for increasing enrollment. Approximately $200,000 of this budget was used to foster the development of innovative programs to increase enrollments and retention in the short term.
Some proposals were large initiatives (like new academic programs); some were smaller (like changing a process on a smaller scale to support enrollment and retention initiatives). The innovation grants were awarded in Fall 2015 and implementation began in Spring 2016.

- The University’s Office of International Programs has developed effective strategies to recruit and support international students. In Fall 2016, international enrollment surged to a record 216, a 55% increase from Fall 2013. UW-Superior has the second highest percentage of international undergraduate students, 9.1% in the UW System, second only to Madison at 9.2%.
- The University also helped to open the English as a Second Language Institute (ESLI) in Spring 2014. The ESLI is hosted by the University. Students live in the residence halls and may participate in all international student activities. This program implementation has contributed to international student enrollments as well.

5.C.5

Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization. Anticipating emerging factors is an area in which planners at UW-Superior have put significant effort over the past few years. For example, knowing the declining rate in high school graduates in the region, the Chancellor charged a Task Force on Retention in Spring 2016 to review the research on proven strategies to improve retention rates and to recommend effective strategies for implementation on the campus. The Chancellor's Summer Retention Task Force developed 12 strategies and many have been implemented to date.

The Strategic Plan: Superior Visions 2020 was designed to be a deliberately flexible document, subject to ongoing revisions and updating in order to respond nimbly to societal changes. The SPCT takes the lead in flagging needed changes in the Strategic Plan and monitoring action plans to achieve success.

In response to the Strategic Plan, changing demographics, and the University's obvious need to increase its revenue, the programs within enrollment management created an enrollment plan. This plan anticipates changing demographics and reaches out to existing and new student populations. Planning efforts also incorporated technological advances by converting courses to online instructional modalities, utilizing a CRM for outreach, and improving the campus presence via the website and social media.

Another example highlights the University's commitment to address emerging trends: UW-Superior's partnership with Academic Partnerships. Over the course of several years, the graduate programs in education experienced declining enrollments that made several degree programs fiscally unsustainable. Several factors contributed to the enrollment trends over time, but two factors seemed predominate. One was the lack of an effective marketing campaign. The other was the mode of delivery (primarily face-to-face courses on campus) that made it difficult for professional educators to return to campus to complete graduate work. In response, UW-Superior partnered with an outside entity, Academic Partnerships, to help reformat course delivery and to market educational programs. This partnership is expected to increase enrollments significantly over the next three years. These revamped programs began enrolling students Spring 2017. Enrollments are expected to increase each semester, eventually bringing the number of new graduate students well over 200.

Under Criterion 5.C.4 a number of other timely enrollment initiatives were addressed as well, including the recruitment of international students.

Technology Services has developed the Technology Services Strategic Direction which outlines campus technology projects and related goals. As previously noted in Criterion 5.A, the Technology
Services unit has had to adapt in the absence of a Chief Information Officer. In lieu of a Chief Information Officer, the University has a **University Technology Committee** that meets regularly to discuss software and technologies and to develop campus information technology plans. This committee will play an integral role in any strategic planning from Superior Visions 2020. The technology section of the Strategic Plan is currently on hold due to fiscal concerns, but the committee continues to implement and improve technology on campus.

Over the past several years the University has seen an increased demand for distance education and alternative delivery. This is an area with significant growth potential. In response, the University has invested in a **position** for an Executive Director of Alternative Delivery and Outreach. This person provides planning and fiscal administration for Distance Education, Continuing Education, Cooperative Extension, and Small Business Development: all potential growth areas for the University.

In addition, technology is becoming increasingly key in on-campus classrooms. As a result, **CETL** provides continuous support in the area of technology as it relates to teaching and learning. Currently, the office has a full-time **Associate Media Specialist** who provides media production and technology transfer support to the CETL mission, working with faculty, instructional academic staff, and academic departments, serving both campus-based and alternative course delivery. This individual is also a campus representative to UW System's **Learning Technology Development Council** (LTDC). CETL sends monthly **messages** and hosts **workshops and webinars**, which includes one-on-one training involving the use of technology in the classroom.

Numerous academic programs have strong elements of globalization in their curricula. These may be found within singular courses (in **Political Science**, for example) or integrated across the entire curriculum (**Social Work**, for example). These curricula are revisited on a regular basis and revised to keep up with disciplinary trends related to globalization. A number of these programs have developed **study away** options. For example, **acapella choir** recently performed in Italy, China, Brazil, and throughout Eastern Europe and Canada. Other academic programs have led **short term study away** opportunities in Mexico, Bali, Bosnia, Costa Rica, France, Argentina, and Germany. **Long term study away** options have included China, Italy, Korea, Costa Rica and Scotland. The campus has a **Global Awareness HIP** initiative and a **Global Studies minor** as noted in Criterion 3.B.

The **General Education** (soon to be University Studies Program) curriculum has a Non-western and a diversity requirement that each have numerous options of courses with globalization foci, as explained in detail in Criterion 3.B.

As noted previously, the University enrolls increasing numbers of **international students** and this adds to the global student presence on the campus. This is due to the recruiting and outreach conducted by the **Office of International Programs**.

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5.D - Core Component 5.D

The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

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

Argument

5.D.1

As indicated in the 2015 Monitoring Report submitted to HLC, UW-Superior has continued to make strides in documenting the performance of its operations. This can be documented through the monitoring and progress of the Strategic Plan: Superior Visions 2020, the Integrated Planning and Budgeting Process (IPBP), and through the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE).

**Strategic Plan: Superior Visions 2020**

The Strategic Planning Core Team (SPCT) is responsible for monitoring the progress of UW-Superior's Strategic Plan that commenced after HLC's visit to UW-Superior. The Strategic Plan: Superior Visions 2020 details four main initiatives, summarized as Student Experience, Thriving Partnerships, Achieving Excellence, and Resource Management.

Since the plan was developed, documentation of its performance and progress occurs in two main ways. First, one key individual on campus is responsible for ensuring action steps associated with goals are progressing. Reports for each action step are submitted either electronically to SPCT or are delivered directly to SPCT during a meeting. Progress is documented monthly within the SPCT meeting minutes, and a semester review captures the progress made over that period of time. In addition, each summer, SPCT collects and documents the progress made within each of the four initiatives on the SPCT metrics. The metrics are also updated to forecast action steps needed to accomplish the numerous goals listed within each of the four initiatives. Progress on the Strategic Plan is communicated to the University community by email updates.

One area UW-Superior has developed but has not actualized to its potential is the Strategic Plan Dashboard. As created, the dashboard should be the hub of all strategic planning progress. While it exists and has been piloted for its potential value, the University is still clarifying how the dashboard will allow better monitoring of key performance. The role the dashboard plays in communicating and monitoring progress will be an agenda item at the SPCT Summer 2017 retreat.

**Integrated Planning and Budgeting Process**

Since the 2015 Monitoring Report, UW-Superior has continued to utilize, and continually improve, the University's integrated planning and budgeting process. More information on this process and the plans for continually improving it are detailed in Criterion 5.C.1.

**Office of Institutional Effectiveness**
UW-Superior, as a part of UW System, monitors its progress and performance mainly through the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE). The OIE submits UW-Superior accountability reports, which benchmark progress, that are then hosted on the UW System website. Other reports, such as the NSSE, Equity Score Card, and those dealing with Student Achievement, are administered by OIE. This documentation of the University's performance is accessible on the OIE website. Many of these results are also highlighted on the Superior Results page. The OIE is the key unit for gathering data and providing documentation and evidence of the University's performance.

5.D.2

Superior Visions 2020: Continually Improving

UW-Superior learns through closely monitoring and analyzing the progress by the Strategic Plan's metrics. The SPCT closely reviews both the large scale initiatives of the plan as well as the detailed action steps for each goal. This review has occurred monthly since the plan's inception. As a result of these reviews and analysis, the University has learned what is working and not working in the original conception of the Strategic Plan and has made numerous revisions in order to ensure that the key initiatives are realized in a realistic timeframe within resource capacities.

Specific examples of these revisions (and therefore what the University has learned) are allowing departments more time to develop high quality advisory groups in the community; shifting the High Impact Practices timeline to ensure that quality standards are fully reviewed and approved through shared governance; and changing the granular emphasis on retention and recruitment goals to University-wide performance goals on these topics. In this way, the Strategic Plan has remained a living, evolving document that has guided UW-Superior over the past four years while allowing ongoing learning.

Continuing to Improve the Integrated Planning and Budgeting Process

UW-Superior has continued to learn from the new IPBP and to improve it. After completion of the first year of implementation of the IPBP, the IPBP Committee reviewed and evaluated the new process and provided recommendations for needed changes to the SPCT in June 2016. Those changes were implemented for the 2016-2017 cycle. SPCT will continue its evaluation of the process annually. Additional changes will be identified over time, so that future cycles of the process will be improved and made even more effective.

Utilizing Results from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to Improve the Campus

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) is regularly consulted by the Chancellor's Staff and the Provost's Leadership Team to review evidence and data gathered. The data is shared in some key capacity at every Opening Week all-campus gathering to inform the University community of its performance. The OIE also provides academic departments with specific data to inform their strategic planning, budget requests, and performance assessment. All levels of the University consult and rely on the expertise of this office to inform their daily operations and overall plans. See Criterion 4.C.3 for more examples and evidence.

UW-Superior is moving rapidly toward developing key performance indicators (KPIs), which will be used on the dashboard for the Strategic Plan and will guide macro-planning on budgeting, planning, and performance evaluation. These will begin development during the SPCT Summer 2017 retreat.
and be implemented in FY18.

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5.S - Criterion 5 - 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 institution plans for the future.

Summary

UW-Superior’s fiscal and human resources and its physical and technological infrastructure are sufficient to maintain its operations wherever and however its programs are offered.

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 Integrative Planning and Budgeting Process (IPBP) encompasses reporting and budgeting information from all of its units--academic, co-curricular, operational, and administrative--and is aligned with the Strategic Plan.

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There are no sources.