University of Wisconsin – Superior Self-Study for the Higher Learning Commission
Welcome from Chancellor Renée Wachter

I am delighted to provide you with the Higher Learning Commission Self-Study for the University of Wisconsin-Superior. This document captures the extraordinary effort for and transformation of the campus over the past ten years and has been written by those who have devoted their time and talent on a daily basis to the University’s fulfillment of its unique mission as Wisconsin’s Public Liberal Arts College.

Framed within the ethos of a liberal arts tradition, the study portrays through a description of processes, outcomes, and vignettes the dedication of the University community to live our shared values and to build an environment that provides an extraordinary personal experience for our students. From inception of the formulation of this document, the Self-Study Team has engaged with the broader campus faculty and staff population. The result of these conversations is an honest depiction of how the mission is lived across the many facets of campus life, how we strive to continually improve our work in the never ending quest for continuous improvement, and how we seek more effective ways for serving our constituents.

The Self-Study also is a foundation piece for implementing plans as we look to our future. The dynamic nature of the operating environment in which we must fulfill our mission behooves us to adapt and think innovatively. Our strategic planning process includes this institutional self-appraisal as a necessary fundamental departure point, a frank assessment of our present state and basis upon which we must build as we set our course for navigation in coming years.

I hope that you find the narrative of the work of the University to be a compelling one and illustrative of our singularly focused dedication to the mission. At the same time, we anticipate your help in shaping our future as we engage with you for sharing of your experience and insights with regard to our work.

Thank you for your commitment as peer reviewers to the advancement of national higher education, and we look forward to your visit to our campus.

Renée M. Wachter
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The Provost and the Coordinator would like to acknowledge the efforts of the Steering Committee, Criterion Team Members, and thank all those who made contributions, great and small, to the completion of the Self-Study.

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- Ms. Emily Borra, Student Senate President
- Ms. Elizabeth Blue, Professor; Interim Dean of Faculties
- Mr. Graham Garfield, Student representative
- Ms. Vicki Hajewski Vice Chancellor for Campus Life/Dean of Students
- Ms. Janet Hanson, Vice Chancellor, Administration & Finance
- Mr. Jeffrey Kahler, Budget & Policy Analyst
- Mr. Ryan Kreuser, Director Residence Life; Chair, Academic Staff Senate
- Dr. Wendy Kropid, Professor, World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures/Chair, Faculty Senate
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- Mr. James Miller, Enrollment Research & IRB Coordinator
- Dr. Peter Nordgren, Interim Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs & Outreach
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Ms. Mary Schoeler, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Chief Information Officer
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Ms. LeAnn Brown, Director, Institutional Research - Policy & Planning Analyst
Overview of the University of Wisconsin-Superior

“The future is always beginning now.”
Mark Strand – poet, 1934 – present

“For tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today”
African Proverb

“The University of Wisconsin-Superior fosters intellectual growth and career preparation within a liberal arts tradition that emphasizes individual attention and embodies respect for diverse cultures and multiple voices.”
UW-Superior Mission Statement

Arrangement of the Self-Study

UW-Superior’s Self-Study Report is arranged to provide an overview of the University of Wisconsin-Superior, response to the concerns raised by the Higher Learning Commission following its 2003 Site Visit, and in-depth evaluation of the five 2013 Criteria for Accreditation.

In the chapter that addresses HLC concerns, the University responds to the challenges identified by the 2003 HLC review team and discusses both the 2006 HLC follow-up report and the 2010 HLC focused site visit report. Supporting documents are available in the University’s Electronic Resource Room.

Each chapter that addresses the Criteria for Accreditation provides an introduction, followed by sections focusing on specific core components of that criterion; the core component discussion includes findings/recommendations and discussion. A summary concludes each criterion chapter.

In this report, the University provides ample evidence to support its self-evaluation. The supporting documents are accessible via embedded links within the text of the electronically submitted report. Additional primary sources are available in the electronic data repository. Embedded links may also lead to news releases, web pages, or other sources of evidentiary documentation. Live links are provided in instances where the University does not have control of content or where currency is relevant.
Introduction

The University of Wisconsin-Superior is a tight-knit academic community, where students and educators work closely together to grow and develop in an environment defined by our commitment to the principles of liberal education and to broad educational access and opportunity. As Wisconsin’s Public Liberal Arts College (and one of eleven comprehensive universities in the UW System), UW-Superior fosters intellectual growth and career preparation within a liberal arts tradition that emphasizes individual attention and embodies respect for diverse cultures and multiple voices. Embodying its commitment to the “Wisconsin Idea” in which the boundaries of the university should be the boundaries of the state, UW-Superior works tirelessly to bring educational opportunities to people of the region, the state, and beyond.

The University has served students and our community for one hundred twelve years, and plays a vital role in providing educational and cultural opportunities to our primary region of northern Wisconsin, northeast Minnesota, and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Many of our students are first-generation college students from rural communities or small cities. The University provides them with carefully articulated programs with the flexibility and openness of traditional liberal arts education while also providing the skills and knowledge necessary for successful career development. The University takes advantage of its small size by maintaining a supportive, student-centered approach, where students are nurtured to become productive leaders and citizens of the state, region, nation, and world. (History of UW-Superior and script)

Originally housed in a single building, the University now occupies a total of 19 buildings on 124 acres divided into north and south campuses separated by five blocks of private residences. The University is located in Superior, a city of 27,000 in northwestern Wisconsin. The cities of Superior and its neighbor Duluth, Minnesota, constitute the Twin Ports metropolitan area at the western tip of Lake Superior. The Twin Ports are 153 miles north of the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area. UW-Superior is one of several institutions of higher education in the immediate area, including The College of St. Scholastica, the University of Minnesota-Duluth, Lake Superior College, Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College, and Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College.
Students choose to attend UW-Superior for the same reasons they did in 1896 when the institution opened its doors as a Normal school, seeking high quality educational opportunities to what was then an isolated region.

Today, UW-Superior serves nearly 3,000 students and, while 52 percent of students are residents of Wisconsin and another 38 percent come from neighboring states, the University also welcomes students from more than 30 countries. Distance Learning programs, which originated in the 1970s as traditional correspondence offerings, now extend access to high caliber liberal arts education via the internet, spreading opportunities into the farthest corners of the state. And although the smallest of the Wisconsin comprehensive universities, UW-Superior boasts strong research institutes and centers that provide support to businesses and communities throughout the region while providing students with opportunities for hands-on research. In this way, UW-Superior truly epitomizes the Wisconsin Idea.

The University of Wisconsin System and the Wisconsin Idea

Public higher education in Wisconsin began as a single university at Madison supported by a series of Normal schools distributed across the state. The university and schools were to fulfill what has come to be known as the “Wisconsin Idea,” embodied in a speech to the Wisconsin Press Association by University of Wisconsin-Madison President Charles R. Van Hise, when he stated in 1904, “I shall never rest content until the beneficent influences of the University reach into every home in the Commonwealth, and the boundaries of our campus are co-extensive with the boundaries of the state.”

Theodore Roosevelt acknowledged Wisconsin’s commitment to education as a core value of a strong state and the value of a strong university when he wrote that “…in no other state in the union has any university done the same work for the community that has been done in Wisconsin by the University of Wisconsin.”

The Normal schools evolved into the colleges of the Wisconsin State University System, and in the early 1970s, the Wisconsin State University System merged with the University of Wisconsin to form the University of Wisconsin System, which now includes two doctoral universities, 11 comprehensive universities, 13 two-year colleges, and UW-Extension. An 18-member Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin

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System oversees all institutions within the UW System. The Governor of Wisconsin appoints Regents to seven-year terms. Students share in governance as well, with two Student Regents appointed to the Board for two-year terms. The Board of Regents appoints the President of the UW System and the Chancellors of each UW System institution. In partnership with UW System Administration, the Board of Regents is also responsible for oversight of academic programs, budgets (both operating and capital), general administration, and employment of faculty and staff members.

History of the University of Wisconsin-Superior

The University at Superior was authorized by the Wisconsin Legislature in 1893 and opened as Superior Normal in 1896. In 1916 the school underwent the first in a long history of successful accreditation reviews with the (then named) North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. UW-Superior has been accredited by that agency, now the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, continuously since that time. In the early 1920s, Superior became the first Normal school in the state to expand to a four year curriculum granting a Bachelor of Education degree. In 1926, the Institution received a new name, Superior State Teacher’s College (SSTC). A major curricular change was authorized in 1947 to provide a Bachelor of Arts degree. Three years later, Superior was also authorized to offer a Master’s degree. In 1964, the name “University” was applied to the nine institutions of the former Wisconsin State College System, recognizing the increasingly varied majors and degrees offered by the institutions. The current name – University of Wisconsin-Superior – was given in 1971, as a result of the merger between the Wisconsin State University System and the University of Wisconsin.

The Chancellor is UW-Superior’s chief administrative officer, responsible to the UW System for all facets of University activity. Administration has primary responsibility for finance and budget, facilities, and risk management. Students, faculty and academic staff participate in University governance through Student Senate, Faculty Senate, and Academic Staff Senate respectively. Per Wisconsin Administrative code, students have primary responsibility for the allocation of student segregated fees and for local policies concerning student life, services, and extracurricular activities, while faculty has primary responsibility for curriculum and academic policy. Faculty and academic staff have primary responsibility for faculty and academic staff personnel matters, respectively. With the recent abolition of collective bargaining for Wisconsin state employees, the
University has created a Classified Staff Advisory Committee to provide classified staff a voice in university affairs.

UW-Superior has evolved along with its name and academic program authorizations and is now recognized as “Wisconsin’s Public Liberal Arts College” among the 11 comprehensive universities in the University of Wisconsin System. UW-Superior is authorized to offer 27 undergraduate programs (including an individually designed major on campus and an interdisciplinary major via Distance Learning) and seven Master’s degree programs. In addition, the University offers a number of stand-alone academic minors and both credit and non-credit certificate programs. While the “comprehensive university” designation permits UW-Superior to award degrees through the Master’s and Specialist levels in the liberal arts and selected professional programs, it has been dedicated to the ideals of liberal education since 1947, when it became the first state institution to offer a Bachelor of Arts degree program outside of Madison. With the Special Emphasis accreditation Self-Study in 2003, UW-Superior renewed its commitment to that ideal and continue to work to fully implement recognized hallmarks of a liberal arts experience.

In the mid-1990s the University of Wisconsin-Superior moved to embrace identity as a public liberal arts college. In 1998, the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin designated UW-Superior as “Wisconsin’s Public Liberal Arts College.” In 2001, UW-Superior adopted a revised mission statement that reflected its new status:

*The University of Wisconsin-Superior fosters intellectual growth and career preparation within a liberal arts tradition that emphasizes individual attention and embodies respect for diverse cultures and multiple voices.*

That same year, the University gained entrance to the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC).

UW-Superior’s embrace of a public liberal arts mission built upon the Institution’s historic strengths and attributes. UW-Superior, the smallest four-year institution in the University of Wisconsin System, has long made undergraduate education – with a particular emphasis on close interaction between students and faculty – its central focus. The University continues its tradition of offering study in a range of arts and sciences disciplines, and faculty members across the disciplines share a strong commitment to the tradition of liberal education. At the time of UW-Superior’s 2001 admission into COPLAC, however, the university had yet to determine, on an institutional level, how it would concretely pursue its newly adopted mission.
Students at UW-Superior become part of a community. Academic programs stress collaborative learning and teamwork, offering multiple expressions of liberal arts high impact practices in classes. Each semester more than 600 students take part in courses with an Academic Service-Learning component, in which they enhance skills and knowledge learned in the classroom to assist community organizations, small businesses and schools. Student-athletes serve as role models by reading to school children and hosting university events, while many student organizations arrange service activities to benefit Superior and the university community. Students enjoy a student-to-faculty ratio of approximately 18:1. About 90 percent of our faculty and teaching staff hold the highest degree available in their fields.

During the past 10 years, UW-Superior has reconfigured a number of both academic and support departments to strengthen and enhance the multi-disciplinary nature of certain areas. Several individual academic programs and departments are accredited or approved by outside agencies, including the American Chemical Society; American Society for Transportation and Logistics; Association of Small Business Development Centers; Council on Social Work Education; National Association of Schools of Music; and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

The last few years have also been a period of significant change in leadership. After years of guiding the University towards discovering its identity as a liberal arts university, Dr. Julius Erlenbach retired in 2010. After a thorough national search Chancellor Renée Wachter was selected in 2011 to lead the University in further exploration of the liberal arts mission. Provost Christopher Markwood left UW-Superior after five years, providing an opportunity to build a strong partnership between the new Chancellor and the incoming Provost. In spring of 2012 Dr. Faith Hensrud, one of Superior’s own, was selected from among a national pool. Upon completion of the Self-Study, the new leaders are preparing to launch the University into its future with clear, “20/20” vision and continue on into new, data-driven, integrated planning.

In 2003, as part of UW-Superior’s regular accreditation process, the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (HLC-NCA) raised concerns regarding the degree to which UW-Superior had fully “operationalized” its stated mission as a public liberal arts college. The HLC-NCA Site Team specifically recommended that UW-Superior implement “generally accepted features” of a liberal arts educational experience and that core features consistent with that experience be integrated across the curriculum. While UW-Superior did receive its standard 10-year re-accreditation, the HLC-NCA asked the university to submit a December 2006 “Progress
Report” that specified the steps taken to further its stated mission as Wisconsin’s Public Liberal Arts College. Three major groups contributed to that effort: The Faculty Task Force on the Public Liberal Arts Mission, the NCA Working Groups, and the Strategic Planning and Budgeting Committee.

After UW-Superior completed the progress report, HLC also asked for a focused visit to “…validate the progress report filed in 2006 on the development of the liberal arts initiative on campus and to ascertain additional progress made by the institution toward fulfilling this aspect of its mission. Furthermore, the team was also tasked with examining the faculty development activities undertaken since the comprehensive visit in 2003 in relation to development of the liberal arts core” (HLC Progress Report 2010; HLC-NCA 2010 Focused Visit Report). The site visit was originally scheduled for 2008 but was postponed because state funding had delayed some of the implementation of the liberal arts initiative. The site visit occurred in March 2010, with positive results.

After the focused visit the Strategic Planning and Budgeting Committee (restructured and renamed the Continuous Improvement Planning Team (CIPT) during the intervening years) set about planning for UW-Superior’s next HLC Self-Study Report, scheduled for 2012-13. Many University member have been involved in contributing to the 2013 Self-Study document, some in several different roles.

In November 2010, the CIPT took upon itself the role of Steering Committee for the 2013 Self-Study Report. They identified potential team members based on the criteria, and appointed a self-study coordinator in December of that year.

The audience for the Self-Study is primarily the UW-Superior faculty, staff, and administration, in order to provide the underpinning for future progress. The goals for the current study process are to engage in a broad-based self-examination to identify current successes and areas of challenge, and provide focus and strategies for the new continuous improvement and planning process, Superior Visions 2020. While documenting the ongoing implementation of high impact practices emblematic of a liberal arts university, the Institution also seeks to provide evidence of a growing culture of data-driven decision-making at UW-Superior. Of course, the most basic goal is to provide documentation that demonstrates UW-Superior is in compliance with the HLC criterion for re-accreditation, as well as creating a foundation for the new HLC “Pathway” accreditation process.

UW-Superior’s self-study process was organized in accordance with the five criteria to be addressed:
A self-study team was developed for each criterion, with membership drawn from all areas of the University. Each criterion team was chaired by a member of the Continuous Improvement Planning Team. A Communications team was also organized. A timeline with benchmarks for progress was created. In early 2011 the coordinator, team leaders, and criterion teams met several times to discuss the themes within each criterion and to identify evidence to be collected in support of those themes. The work of the teams was facilitated by access to electronic documents that were made available via a shared drive.

New draft criteria were announced at the HLC Annual Conference in April 2011 and subsequently approved by HLC in February 2012. UW-Superior made necessary modifications to realign its self-study with the new criteria.

A University kick-off, organized by the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL), was held during opening week Fall 2011. Dr. Cia Verschelden was enlisted to introduce the HLC process to the entire Institution as well as meet with the team leaders. A marketing campaign, employing the phrase, “did you know that,” helped keep work on the HLC Self-Study at the fore of University communications. The Chancellor and Interim Provost also made regular progress reports during governance meetings.

The task of collecting evidence revealed certain work that still required University-wide discussion. As the year drew to a close team leaders continued to monitor progress on outstanding areas. By January 2012 teams were on their way to fleshing out the self-study report. HLC Liaison, Dr. John Taylor, met with the Steering Committee in January to provide additional feedback on the new criteria. The Federal Compliance Assurance team was formed and began verifying that UW-Superior met those requirements. Preliminary findings were presented to the University via two open forums conducted in April 2012, and comments and suggestions were further incorporated into the working document.

Team leaders continued work on draft writing during the summer. As detailed within the full Self-Study below, the impact of a devastating flood in June 2012 required several members to step back for a time as they dealt with the aftermath. Other team members stepped forward to assure continued progress was made towards completion of the self-
study. The Federal Compliance Group and the Communication Team continued their work throughout the summer and fall.

In October 2012 a near-final draft of the self-study report was released to governance groups and the university at large. Two weeks were provided for review. Feedback was sought during three sessions arranged for public comment, and email comments were also solicited. The university community was asked to identify areas requiring clarification, as well as any omissions or inaccuracies. In addition, Governance groups were asked to provide endorsement of the self-study as accurately portraying the institution and its efforts. The final Self-Study Report will be available for viewing on the UW-Superior HLC website for all students, faculty, staff, administration and community members.
Response to HLC Concerns of the 2003 Self-Study

In 2003, in the context of UW-Superior’s regular 10-year re-accreditation process, the HLC site team raised concerns regarding the degree to which the University had fully “operationalized” its recently adopted mission as a public liberal arts college. While UW-Superior did receive its standard 10-year re-accreditation, the HLC asked the University to submit a December 2006 “Progress Report” to specify the steps that the University would take to further its stated mission. In response to this charge, UW-Superior engaged in a multi-year process of review, planning, and implementation designed to institutionalize its public liberal arts mission. This process led to a number of specific curricular and co-curricular initiatives (for which the institution received supplemental funding from the University of Wisconsin System) as well as streamlining of program requirements and curricula. In 2010, an HLC site team evaluated the steps taken and determined that UW-Superior had made “excellent progress.” The chief concerns raised by the 2003 team and a summary of the University response follow.

“CURRICULAR REVIEW AND REFORM WHICH WOULD LEAD TO A MORE FOCUSED CURRICULUM BUILT AROUND KEY STRENGTHS, FEWER MAJORS AND AN INCREASED CONSOLIDATION OF DEGREE PROGRAMS.”

Between 2003 and 2005 the University completed a comprehensive review of curricular offerings and requirements. This review led to a significant reduction in both the number of specialized curricula within existing major entitlements and in the required credits within majors and minors. Since 2006, the University has added new major entitlements in Sustainable Management and Health and Wellness Management. Both of these new majors are interdisciplinary distance learning programs offered in partnership with other University of Wisconsin institutions for which the University received additional funds from the University of Wisconsin-Extension. With the exception of these two new major entitlements, the number of distinct undergraduate curricula (majors and specialized sub-majors) has remained roughly constant since 2006.

In response to the difficult budgetary environment, and at the request of the faculty Planning and Budgetary Council, UW-Superior’s Faculty Senate has asked academic departments to engage in a thorough review of their course and program array. This review will be completed in the 2012-13 academic year and may lead to additional streamlining and consolidation of program array and requirements. (For more information see the Report of the Planning and Budgetary Council to Faculty Senate.)
In response to the concerns raised by the site team, the University identified five priority initiatives to establish clearly identified common features of UW-Superior’s undergraduate liberal arts experience. The five initiatives are:

- Academic Service-Learning
- First-Year Experience
- Global Awareness
- Senior Experience
- Writing Across the Curriculum

The University developed detailed plans for the implementation of each of these five initiatives. All five initiatives, to varying degrees, have been institutionalized and integrated into the daily practice and culture of the institution. Reflecting their permanent place within the undergraduate experience, these initiatives are now designated as UW-Superior’s Liberal Arts “High-Impact Practices.” Undergraduate research has also been identified as a sixth Liberal Arts High-Impact Practice. (For more information on the initial development of the five initiatives see the 2006 Progress Report and 2010 Progress Report.)

In 2007, UW-Superior received base budget increase funding to assist with implementation of the five designated public liberal arts initiatives. This funding provided an $849,800 increase in UW-Superior’s base budget to support full implementation of UW-Superior’s public liberal arts mission. Among the items funded by the base budget increase were:

- New faculty positions related to the five public liberal arts initiatives
- Staffing for a Center for Academic Service-Learning
- A Writing Across the Curriculum Coordinator and additional staffing for the University Writing Center
- Expanded staffing in the Office of International Programs
• A First-Year Experience Coordinator housed in Student Life and a First-Year Seminar program housed in Academic Affairs.

In 2008, the University incorporated the five High Impact Practices into its updated strategic priorities. The initiatives are also central to the UW-Superior Academic Plan adopted and presented to the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin in the fall of 2009. Institutional and financial support for five designated initiatives has remained a priority even as the University has faced cuts in its base budget over the past four years, with only modest reductions being made in funding for the five initiatives.

“ENHANCE THE UNIVERSITY’S COMMITMENT TO LANGUAGE LEARNING”

Since the 2003 HLC visit the university has doubled faculty devoted to language instruction from 2.0 to 4.0 ‘full time equivalents (FTE) by adding new positions in French and Mandarin Chinese, languages in which UW-Superior previously did not offer coursework. The University has also added minors in French and Chinese to the existing minors in Spanish and German. After significant growth in enrollments in beginning and intermediate language courses between 1994 and 2001, enrollments leveled off for a number of years. Since 2007, with the introduction of Chinese and French coursework and growth in Spanish enrollments, overall enrollment in beginning and intermediate language courses has again experienced significant growth. (NCA 2006 Progress Report; 2010 Progress Report). The following graph shows the annual number of student enrollments in all languages and by individual language between 1994 and 2012.
Annual Beginning and Intermediate Language Enrollment

1994-2012

“REVIEW AND REVISIONS OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM TO REFLECT THE REVISED MISSION”

Following the HLC 2003 Site Visit, the University completed a review of its general education program. While the review did not call for significant changes in the basic structure of the general education program, it did recommend that the goals of the program be more clearly defined and that steps be taken, including implementation of a revised assessment program, to ensure that all courses within the program advance the program goals. Modest progress was made in addressing these recommendations prior to the HLC 2010 Focused Site Visit. The 2010 site team made a number of specific suggestions regarding general education, among which was the creation of a stand-alone general education committee that would be charged with oversight of the general education program, including the development of more focused learning outcomes and the implementation of an assessment plan.
Since the 2010 site visit, UW-Superior has created a stand-alone General Education Committee. The University has also adopted the following revised and highly focused learning goals for the general education program:

1. Communication – Students demonstrate effective communication skills in writing, speaking, reading and listening.
2. Critical Thinking – Students engage in critical thinking based on multiple forms of evidence.
3. Creative Expression – Students develop skills in creative expression, including abstract thinking.
4. Diversity and Global Citizenship – Students demonstrate empathetic and ethical thinking based on knowledge of the diversity of human experience.
5. Interdisciplinary Connections – Students connect knowledge and methods from a variety of disciplines through courses across the general education curriculum.

The committee has begun work on developing an assessment plan to address these learning goals. The process emphasizes faculty/staff engagement. An all-day workshop on general education assessment held in June 2012 was attended by 54 faculty and staff, representing a significant percentage of all those who teach in the general education program.

“FOCUS FACULTY AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT THE PUBLIC LIBERAL ARTS MISSION”

Over the past decade UW-Superior has given the public liberal arts mission an important place in faculty/staff recruitment, retention, and professional development activities. The mission is referenced in all faculty position announcements. During the interview process, the Provost meets with each candidate to discuss the unique mission, vision, and values of UW-Superior. Newly hired faculty members participate in a 13-week New Faculty Orientation program that includes discussion of the public liberal arts mission and UW-Superior Liberal Arts High-Impact Practices.

On-going faculty and staff development programs include the University’s Enhancement Day, organized by the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL). Enhancement Day launches each semester at UW-Superior and provides a day of workshops, roundtables, and keynote sessions. In August 2010, Enhancement Day focused on the high-impact practice of Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC), with a keynote and intensive workshop led by UW-Madison’s WAC Director, Dr. Bradley Hughes.
CETL also hosts ongoing “campus conversations” that provide a platform for faculty/staff discussions on aspects of the liberal arts, and in June 2012 CETL co-hosted (along with the Interim Provosts’ Office and the Assessment Office) a summer institute for faculty and staff on Improving Student Learning in General Education through Assessment.

Further, faculty and staff participate in ongoing book clubs that support the liberal arts mission. Recent titles examined include *Why Choose the Liberal Arts?* (Mark William Roche) and *Engaging Ideas: The Professors Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom* (John C. Bean).

More about the University’s commitment to faculty and staff development toward fulfilling the liberal arts mission is found in the chapter entitled “Criterion Three: Teaching and Learning – Quality, Resources, and Support.”
Criterion One. Mission

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

Introduction

The University of Wisconsin-Superior articulates its public liberal arts mission through written publications, web materials, strategic planning and budget priorities, and through its day-to-day operations. Since its designation as Wisconsin’s Public Liberal Arts College in 1998 by the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System, the university has worked to systematically foster liberal learning through the adoption of a set of liberal arts high-impact practices that are emphasized across the curriculum and co-curriculum. Liberal education is further emphasized through the University’s adoption of Institution-level undergraduate liberal education learning goals that define a set of common learning expectations for all undergraduate students, regardless of major.

The University’s strategic planning efforts have focused on the mission and the Liberal Arts High-Impact Practices (HIPs). The academic plan, enrollment planning, outreach activities, hiring practices, new faculty orientation, and an emphasis on Inclusive Excellence and student-centeredness all demonstrate UW-Superior’s commitment to its public liberal arts mission and its obligation to the state and region through service to its constituents.

The mission of the University of Wisconsin-Superior states:

The University of Wisconsin-Superior fosters intellectual growth and career preparation within a liberal arts tradition that emphasizes individual attention and embodies respect for diverse cultures and multiple voices.

To accomplish these ends, the University will:

a. Provide students with a carefully articulated and comprehensive foundation in liberal studies as a base for all degree programs
b. Award baccalaureate degrees in selected fields in education, the arts and the humanities, in the sciences and social sciences, and in business
c. Offer graduate programs in areas associated with its undergraduate emphases and strengths

d. Extend its undergraduate and graduate resources beyond the boundaries of the campus through distance learning programs

e. Expect scholarly activity, including research, scholarship and creative endeavor, that supports its programs at the associate and baccalaureate degree levels, its selected graduate programs and its special mission

f. Engage in appropriate inter-institutional relationships to enhance educational and service opportunities

g. Foster, with University of Wisconsin-Extension, the development of cooperative and general outreach programming and the integration of the Extension function with that of this institution

Over the past decade, UW-Superior has moved to fully embrace its identity as a public liberal arts college. The University has addressed the 2003 concerns of the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association (HLC-NCA) of Colleges and Schools regarding the degree to which UW-Superior had fully “operationalized” its stated mission as a public liberal arts college. UW-Superior has implemented “generally accepted features” of a liberal arts based educational experience and integrated its emphasis on liberally educating its students across the curriculum.

As a result, today, UW-Superior takes pride in its designation as Wisconsin’s Public Liberal Arts College, and in providing its 2,800 undergraduate and graduate students with quality academic programs and supportive co-curricular programming. UW-Superior recognizes that a solid liberal arts education offers the knowledge and skills needed to perform on the job and to be a contributing members of society, while quality professional training provides specific knowledge and skills to succeed in teaching, business, science, the arts, and other disciplines. UW-Superior seeks to accomplish both by focusing on its strengths; a highly accountable academic experience in an intimate, supportive environment with first-rate faculty, in first-class facilities.

Additionally, the University clearly understands its role in a multi-cultural society. UW-Superior has established practices to explore how to better meet the needs of this diverse society through our programs, and focused retention strategies to improve our students’ ability to succeed and graduate.
Finally, UW-Superior has developed a structure that supports its commitment to the public good which is evident by the work of the University’s research centers and institutes, its emphasis on Regional Economic Development through participation in NorthWERD, Academic Service-Learning and Undergraduate Research, and its outreach and educational efforts provided by the Center for Adult Education and Outreach.

**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.)

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**FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The University of Wisconsin Superior has clearly articulated its mission as Wisconsin’s Public Liberal Arts College, and is guided daily by this mission. Awareness of, and commitment to, the public liberal arts mission is shared not only by faculty and staff at the University, but also by the UW System and its Board of Regents.

Through the self-study process, UW-Superior examined the evidence that demonstrates how the University lives its public liberal arts mission, as outlined in the following findings and recommendations for continuous improvement:

- The report of the 2010 HLC focused site visit indicates that UW-Superior has made significant progress toward institutionalizing the commonly accepted components of a liberal arts institution. This includes the implementation of the University’s Liberal Arts High Impact Practices; and the Liberal Education Learning Goals.
- UW-Superior’s strategic planning documents and their supporting reports clearly reflect the University’s emphasis on its mission; and guide the University in
setting annual priorities, and making decisions as to where to invest scarce resources.

- The University’s academic plan and its program review process help to ensure that UW-Superior has the appropriate program array to meet the needs of our constituents within the region.
- UW-Superior has developed enrollment and retention strategies and student support services to meet the needs of its student population to ensure success for both traditional and non-traditional students in undergraduate and graduate programs though both face-to-face and online instruction.

Recommendations:

- Better articulate the University’s mission to the public. While faculty and staff understand the value and importance of providing a liberal education to students, it is clear that UW-Superior has more work to do to help students, prospective students, parents and the public understand the value of the University’s public liberal arts mission. A recent study conducted for UW-Superior by a higher education marketing firm, Stamats, demonstrated a need for this, as did a separate Summer 2012 consultant report focused on recruiting and retention. A branding effort began in Fall 2012 to address these concerns and to more fully articulate the University’s mission to the public.
- Continue to assess and improve the University’s integrated planning and budgeting process. In 2012-13 UW-Superior begins the second year of an integrated planning and budgeting process. This process helps the Institution better align resources with the institutional priorities outlined by its mission. The University reviewed this process after year one, and has made adjustments that will be implemented this year. It will be important to continually assess and improve the integrated planning process, as the University seeks to enhance the transparency and effectiveness of its planning and budgetary process during challenging fiscal times. Full discussion of the structure of the integrated plan is discussed in Criterion Five.
- Examine the University’s program array. Through the academic planning process, the University’s program array must be examined from a broader institutional level to ensure that the Institution is meeting the needs of its regional constituents; by investing in those programs that fit within its mission; and supporting the needs of individuals and businesses.
- Implement focused enrollment and retention strategies. The next four years will bring an emphasis on expanding the incoming student recruitment areas in order
to fulfill the mission and provide the needed support in order that the core student population succeeds. It will also be a time to implement specific results-oriented retention strategies to meet the University’s Growth Agenda obligations to increase the number of individuals who complete their degrees.

Discussion

THE PUBLIC LIBERAL ARTS MISSION AND PLANNING DOCUMENTS

In 2004 with much University involvement, UW-Superior adopted five liberal arts initiatives to help “operationalize” the mission: Community Service Learning (later redefined as Academic Service-Learning); First-Year Experience; Global Awareness; Senior Experience; and Writing Across the Curriculum. A sixth area was added in 2011 focused on Undergraduate Research. The liberal arts initiatives, and the progress made to date, are discussed fully in Criterion Three. The initiatives provided a cornerstone on which the University has developed and implemented its public liberal arts mission.

In 2008 the University incorporated the public liberal arts initiatives into its updated strategic priorities; and in 2011 renamed the initiatives the Liberal Arts High-Impact Practices. The high-impact practices are central to the UW-Superior Academic Plan, which was first adopted and presented to the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin in the fall of 2009, and which has been updated twice since that time. The Academic Plan clearly supports UW-Superior’s public liberal arts mission.

As part of the University of Wisconsin System, UW-Superior advances the UW-System’s vision, known as the Growth Agenda for Wisconsin, while the University’s institutional mission is focused on providing a sound liberal arts education. UW-Superior is a member of the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges and the Association of American Colleges and Universities and partners in the Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) program.

In 2009, in order to gauge progress toward fulfilling the mission and to bring greater cohesiveness to assessment endeavors the University requested admittance to the Higher Learning Commission’s Assessment Academy. The University was accepted into the Assessment Academy in 2010; and chose to assess the Liberal Education Learning Goals (LELGs), since revised with faculty approval in Fall 2010. These LELGs are:
The ability to think and make connections across academic disciplines
- The ability to express one’s self through multiple forms
- The ability to analyze and reflect upon multiple perspectives to arrive at a perspective of one’s own
- The ability to think and engage as a global citizen
- The ability to engage in evidence-based problem solving

Further discussion and evidence demonstrating the progress made to assess these goals is discussed under Criterion Four.

PROGRAMS, STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES AND ENROLLMENT PROFILE

UW-Superior’s academic program array and emphasis on teaching align well with its public liberal arts mission. With 27 undergraduate and seven graduate programs UW-Superior offers the appropriate program array for the University’s size (2,800 students) and its mission. The Institution’s academic program review and academic planning processes help to maintain that alignment.

As a public institution UW-Superior is very committed to meeting the needs of all students who are seeking a university degree. The Carnegie Classification labels UW-Superior as a very high undergraduate, public Master’s Small institution (with ACT mean scores of 22 for the most recent class). The University focuses on serving students who demonstrate success in diverse ways, and thus utilizes a holistic admissions approach. In alignment with its commitment to inclusive excellence, UW-Superior embraces responsibility for providing educational opportunities to students from diverse backgrounds, and does not seek the elite stature that is sometimes assumed in liberal arts colleges.

UW-Superior draws students primarily from Wisconsin and Minnesota but also enrolls students from 28 other states. Six percent of UW-Superior students are international students from 30 different countries. The University’s enrollment profile has shifted between 2003 and 2012. These changes include a relatively stable enrollment of first-year students, an increase in the number of students completing their bachelor’s degree online, and a significant decrease in the number and percentage of graduate students. In addition, there has been a reversal in the proportion of new transfer students and new freshman between 2003 and the Fall 2012 incoming class.

Other changes in student population reflect the region’s overall decline in population, with a subsequent decline in the number of high school graduates. The profile of those
high school graduates is modified by increased completion rates among underrepresented minority students. Consequently, enrollments of underrepresented minority (URM) students increased slightly to seven percent of the University’s student population. American Indian student represent the largest population of URM students at UW-Superior, which is appropriate, as the University is located in a region that is home to six Native American Tribes.

The University is examining these trends and implementing strategies to address them, as the Institution seeks to maintain its commitment to the region while increasing its overall enrollment to 3500 by the year 2025 as part of its pledge to the UW System Growth Agenda. Those strategies include providing the support necessary to improve the first-to-second year retention rate; and the six-year graduation rate. These strategies will be covered in more detail under Criterion Five.

Crucial to improvement of student retention and graduation rates is the University’s emphasis on student success. The University has a student support services structure in place to ensure the needs of students are being met. Further, in May 2012 three Institutional leaders participated in a two-day Access to Success Workshop, which has helped the University select – and begin to make improvements on – a few specific strategies identified by the University’s Student Retention committee. Continued efforts toward student success in Fall 2012 include development of aggressive plans (with short term goals between 30 and 120 days) as recommended by a Retention Consultant in August 2012.

Also in August 2012, the Institution’s organizational structure was changed to bring greater focus and integration between Academic Affairs and Campus Life. The reorganization moved the Campus Life Vice Chancellor and all affiliated reporting units under the Division of Academic Affairs. It additionally developed a Student Success Center to better integrate the following areas: Academic Advising, Student Support Services, Multicultural Center, Career Services, and First-Year Experience.

Criterion Three provides additional detail on the student support services, and demonstrates the importance of their role and contribution to the University’s mission.
ensure a transparent and inclusive process to be used in budgetary and strategic planning. This process linked the strategic planning efforts of the University’s Continuous Improvement Planning Team (which developed institutional priorities) with the biennial budget cycle. The integrated planning process involved creation of an Executive Budget Group with representation by all Cabinet level officers and the chairs of the Faculty Senate, Academic Staff Senate and Student Senate. The Executive Budget Group makes recommendations to the Chancellor that aid decision-making related to funding of institutional priorities. Opportunities for greater University input into the planning and budgeting processes occur during the year; and include open forums and governance input. This process will be addressed fully in Criterion 5.C.

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.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Following a thorough review of all planning documents and supporting materials that are posted online, the University is confident that it has the public documents in place to ensure that its mission, vision, values, plans and priorities are widely articulated.

The review has revealed the following:

- UW-Superior’s mission is articulated publicly through the Strategic Priorities document. It was updated in 2011 and is found on the Institution’s website at http://www.uwsuper.edu/CIPT
• UW-Superior’s Academic Plan was last updated in 2011. It is scheduled to be reviewed every two years at a minimum or sooner, if the institutional priorities or strategic plan change.

• The University’s Unclassified Staff Handbook was revised in 2012, and also articulates the mission. It is provided to each new faculty and staff in the unclassified category at the time of hire.

• The University’s mission is embedded into the new hiring process. To help ensure that all employees are aware of the mission, each UW-Superior employee and student employee is provided with a wallet sized card that outlines the mission, values, and liberal education learning goals.

• Posters also display the mission, vision and values across the Institution.

• To further emphasize the University’s values, “Spirit of Superior” Awards are presented each year to individuals and units that embody the Institution’s values.

• Unit and departmental planning clearly links the unit and departmental plans with the University’s strategic priorities to help ensure that the University remains focused on the mission and priorities. Departments last updated their planning documents in February 2012.

Despite these positive findings, the University recognizes it can develop ways to ensure the mission is articulated to the public more effectively. For example, the current strategic planning document titled “Strategic Priorities” is not as fully developed as it should be to portray the extent of some aspects of our mission.

Between 2010 and 2012, UW-Superior experienced leadership changes at the highest levels, with the retirement of a Chancellor who had steered the University agenda for 14 years; and the departure of the Chief Academic Officer after five years. As of May 2012, new leadership is in place and ready to engage the University in a strategic planning process that will result in positioning for even greater success over the next 10 years. The strategic planning process will begin in April 2013. As a part of that planning process the following must be considered:

• Declining support and funding for higher education exacerbate the need for a renewed planning emphasis, while increased focus on accountability at the national and state levels leads to policy and reporting changes that must be considered as Institutional priorities are set and goals established.

• Efforts to develop a comprehensive Enrollment Management and Retention Plan must include enrollment targets, strategies and milestones to meet broader enrollment and retention goals; these will be developed in 2012-13.
Discussion

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The strategic priorities document and academic plan provide the mission, vision, values, priorities and goals for the University. The most recent Institution-wide strategic planning process was developed in 2006. The University engaged in a two-year process that was completed in 2008 and resulted in a strategic priorities document (which was last updated in 2011). University progress on these priorities will be evaluated in 2012-13 prior to initiating the next strategic planning process in April 2013, titled Superior Visions 2020.

In addition to the mission and values, UW-Superior’s Vision Statement is included in its planning documents. This, too, will be reviewed as part of Superior Visions 2020 planning process. The current vision statement reads:

>The University of Wisconsin-Superior shall be firmly established as a nationally recognized public liberal arts institution where the learning community emphasizes individual attention and promotes intellectual growth, personal development, career preparation, professional studies, and life-long learning in an atmosphere of individual dignity with respect for the diversity of human cultures. To this end, UW-Superior continually engages its students and the larger community in global research and discourse, and exposes all to challenging ideas that forge new models of responsible citizenship. UW-Superior will also celebrate its regional climate and multi-ethnic heritage on a vibrant and beautiful campus.

PLANNING PRIORITIES

The 2008-2012 Strategic Priorities document includes seven strategic themes that were developed as a result of the planning process: (1) Academic Excellence, (2) Culture of Respect, (3) Resource Management, (4) Continuous Improvement, (5) Enrollment Management, (6) Campus Life, and (7) University Image. Under each theme are identified goals. Every two years, the Continuous Improvement and Planning Team (CIPT) has committed to prioritizing an Institutional action plan from the identified improvement goals. Initiatives are to be accompanied by appropriate assessment and review criteria. In addition, utilizing shared governance and a variety of inputs, the CIPT will periodically review the strategic themes and goals and make adjustments as internal and external environments necessitate.
Faculty leaders expressed concerns in 2008 that the University’s strategic priorities document does not articulate the institutional priorities as effectively as it should. It was felt that there were too many goals, and the Institution did not effectively prioritize what was most important. This has been remedied to some extent by the integrated planning and budgeting process (which was developed in 2010-11 and first implemented in the 2011-12 fiscal year), and will be fully remedied in 2013 when the University begins a new institutional planning process.

The integrated planning process was first initiated in October 2010 when the CIPT presented the budget and investment priorities to the University. Each of the planning priorities developed for 2012-13 is associated with one or more of the seven strategic themes. All decisions related to funding, the budget lapse, and reallocation in 2011-12 were made with these priorities in mind.

In 2011, through the integrated planning process the University identified eight budget resource priorities for the allocation of staff time or funding. Strategic budget priorities are listed here with the strategic theme to which they relate printed in italics:

- Ensure adequate resources for our Liberal Arts High-Impact Practices (*Academic Excellence*)
- Ensure that academic offerings have adequate resources to advance quality and meet student needs (*Academic Excellence*)
- Develop appropriate growth strategies for quality distance learning programs that meet ever-increasing student demands (*Academic Excellence; Resource Management; Enrollment Management*)
- Enhance the support and resources for the faculty academic advising model (*Academic Excellence; Enrollment Management; Continuous Improvement*)
- Infuse strategies for Making Excellence Inclusive across the University community (*Culture of Respect*)
- Develop a Strategic Information Technology Plan that establishes a long-term technology vision and addresses infrastructure needs (*Resource Management; Continuous Improvement*)
- Develop a Strategic Enrollment Management Plan which includes strategies to improve retention and increase graduation rates (*Enrollment Management; Continuous Improvement*)
- Develop strategies to address faculty and staff compensation and flexible work schedules (*Culture of Respect; Continuous Improvement*)
The 2011 Strategic Priorities document explains how the University engaged approximately 250 constituents through a four-phase planning process that includes efforts focused on continuous improvement. One example of the University’s commitment to continuous improvement was to revise its Annual Report questions to ensure better alignment with the Academic Program Review process and questions. This revision, effective July 2012, will help expedite planning and decision making and feed into the seven-year program review process that each Academic Department completes. The Academic Program Review process is addressed more fully in Criterion Four.

ACADEMIC PLAN

UW-Superior updates its Academic Plan every two years with the most recent update in 2010-11. The Academic Plan describes the Institution and whom the Institution serves and provides an overview of each of the following areas: instruction, scholarship, creative activity and application of research, outreach and public service, economic development, and cultural purpose.

It is important to note that within the University’s mission, the emphasis on education, research, and outreach are at the forefront. Over the past 40 years, UW-Superior has positioned itself to be a national leader in all three areas. As evidence to the public good, the University has established and now hosts four nationally recognized research institutes and centers that contribute to regional and national interests of transportation, water quality, estuarine research and maritime commerce focused research. The four centers or institutes are the Lake Superior Research Institute, the Transportation and Logistics Research Center, Great Lakes Maritime Research Institute, and the Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve.

In addition, University outreach programs provide the community with expertise and support through its affiliation with the University of Wisconsin-Extension, with centers that focus additional efforts on the outreach mission. They include: the Small Business Development Center, the Center for Adult Education and Outreach, the Northern Center for Community Economic Development, and the Distance Learning Center. The role of all the centers and institutes in contributing to our mission will be further articulated later in this section.

The strategic priorities document and academic plan outline the nature and scope of the programs and services offered. These plans are further supported by the University’s continuing education plan and outreach plan and activities. Additional detail will be provided in section 1.D and will focus on the outreach of the Institution.
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.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

UW-Superior’s mission and values show that the University recognizes its role in a multicultural society. Both of these statements, widely published in University materials, publicly reinforce that the University values diversity.

Over the past 24 years, UW-Superior has implemented various diversity initiatives rooted in three University of Wisconsin System mandates: Design for Diversity (1988-1998), Plan 2008 (1998-2008), and Inclusive Excellence (2008- ). While the first two initiatives focused specifically on closing achievement gaps for underserved student populations and increasing racial/ethnic diversity among students and faculty/staff, the Inclusive Excellence (or “IE”) initiative aims at intentional integration of broader diversity and inclusivity efforts into core areas of the University. To explore specific strategies to make excellence inclusive across the University, the Chancellor’s Inclusive Excellence Task Force (CIETF) was created in 2010. In addition, the Continuous Improvement Planning Team (CIPT) identified “Culture of Respect” as one of the strategic themes in 2010, and integrated it into the strategic planning and annual reporting of all departments and units. CIETF compiled an IE strategic plan, “Making Excellence Inclusive” in Summer 2010 and submitted it to the Chancellor. This document was then shared with the Chancellor’s Cabinet and the Provost’s Leadership Team.

Furthermore, the University has conducted the following studies on student achievement gaps and University climate and shared the findings for improvement with the University community.

- The Equity Scorecard: The Equity Scorecard addresses achievement gaps for historically underserved students (i.e., African American, American Indian, Asian American, and Hispanic/Latino), focusing on access, retention, excellence, and
in institutional receptivity. UW-Superior began gathering and analyzing relevant data in 2008, and completed the study in 2010. Based on existing data, mainly from 2001-2007, this study found that students of color lagged particularly in the areas of admission and retention. However, the study did not include Distance Learning students. The CIETF reviewed the study and recommended actions to the Chancellor, including adding Distance Learning in future data sets. Had those students been included, the results would have reflected more positively.

- **Campus Climate Study**: In 2011, UW-Superior participated in the third tier of the UW-System Campus Climate Study Initiative and administered a survey (developed collaboratively with Rankin and Associates Inc.) to all students, faculty, and staff. While the overall response rate was just 23 percent, the survey results indicated the need to address harassment, discrimination, and prejudice based on employment categories, mental disabilities, and LGBTQ status. These results were shared with the University community in Fall 2011. In addition to this survey, the CIETF conducted follow-up discussions with various University constituents and submitted a set of recommendations to the Chancellor.

Efforts to address issues of diversity, inclusivity, and equity have been integrated into operations of various units. For example,

- The Provost’s Office instituted the Making Excellence Inclusive Award and Grant Programs in 2010.
- The UW-Superior Office of Multicultural Affairs, First Nations Center, Gender Equity Resource Center, and Disability Services have placed IE at the forefront of their missions.
- The Offices of Admissions, Campus Life, First Year Experience, and CETL have also included attention to diversity and inclusivity in their specific actions.

Students are also expected to develop skills and competencies critical to leadership roles in diverse communities. They are required to take one course in the General Education “Diversity” category. Major and minor programs also offer courses that address multicultural perspectives and skills. A number of co-curricular programs also provide opportunities for students and staff to learn about different cultures through various experiences and interactions.

Recommendations for additional work in this area include the following:
• To make additional gains that will ensure that the University is meeting the needs of all constituents while increasing access to higher education for minority students, it must create support mechanisms and a welcoming environment through inclusive practices.
• The University must implement strategies to increase its ability to attract and retain staff and faculty from underrepresented populations.

Discussion

ACTIVITIES RELATED TO DIVERSITY

This section highlights various programs that exemplify how UW-Superior addresses its role in a multicultural society. The 2010 Making Excellence Inclusive Report reveals how the University’s processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity, as appropriate to its mission, for the constituencies it serves.

UW-Superior addresses its role in a multicultural society through academic course offerings and various cultural presentations and experiences. Also, a variety of the University’s processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity. Criterion Three includes additional discussion of the academic focus on diversity that helps ensure the University provides experiences in the classroom to engage students and to expand their knowledge of the diverse world in which they live.

Additionally, many co-curricular diversity activities and opportunities are available for students and staff at UW-Superior. Some of these include receptions held each semester for both students and faculty/staff of color, cultural events such as the annual International “Cultural Night,” the annual Soul Food Dinner, the First Nations Powwow, and the annual American Indian Art Show. There are programs such as the New Student of Color Peer Mentorship Program, the Diversity Leadership Retreat, Boxes and Walls, Making Excellence Inclusive “Brown Bag” series, and “Coming Out Week” activities.

Students, faculty and staff participate in recruitment and community connection activities, such as College Student for a Day, Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness, or “GEARS” Program, (formerly Youth Summer), Cyber-Summer Pre-College Programs, and Making the University Accessible (a collaborative effort between UW-Superior and area public middle and high schools to help future students and their families better understand the opportunities of higher education).
UW-Superior collaborates with other Twin Ports higher education institutions to sponsor events such as the Native American Story Telling Conference. UW-Superior has recently begun collaborating with the Duluth and Superior public middle and high schools to create ongoing relationships with integration specialists, school counselors, and school administrators. The goal of these collaborative relationships is to make the University more accessible to diverse populations in the region.

UW-Superior has dedicated calendar periods such as Black History Month, Women’s History Month, and American Indian History Month, during which multiple events are held and to which all of the Twin Ports Community is invited. The UW-Superior Music Department has hosted and co-hosted international touring musical groups including the Tami Tango Trio and the Costa Rican Bassoon Quartet.

**STUDENT SUCCESS AND RETENTION**

As found in the Equity Scorecard, first-year retention rates and six-year graduation rates by race for new freshman students at UW-Superior demonstrate that the University has not made significant progress in its retention efforts for its minority student populations. Table 1-1 provides both retention and graduation rates for the past 10 years.

![Table 1-1: Retention and Graduation Rates (URMs vs non-minority students)]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Racial group</th>
<th>1st to 2nd year retention</th>
<th>6 year graduation rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2002-2011 cohorts</td>
<td>2000-2005 cohorts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
<td>44.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Asian</td>
<td>76.9%</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Asian American</td>
<td>61.5%</td>
<td>35.97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino/a</td>
<td>66.67%</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total minority students</td>
<td>65.7%</td>
<td>23.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-minority students</td>
<td>67.3%</td>
<td>38.25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Cohort must have an N = >10 to be listed because of confidentiality.

Note: Multiple year cohorts are used because the numbers of individual groups are too small to track retention rates by individual year. Data for fall 2009 reveals an overall increase for students of color for new freshmen starting in the fall of 2008 to be 81.3% as compared to the university-wide 71.6% rate. It is too soon to tell if this increase is a one-year anomaly or a marked upward trend in retention rates for students of color.

The average six-year graduation rate for students of color for the 2001 to 2007 cohorts is 32.6 percent as compared to the University-wide 43.2 percent six-year graduation rate.
While first-year retention rates for minority students are comparable to those of the entire University, there remains much work to be done. The retention rates for minority student from the second year through graduation drop to significantly lower than those for the rest of the University. This disparity will be a major focus in the next ten-year cycle.

Additional information on success among students of color can be found in the Equity Scorecard recommendations.

In addition to the Equity Scorecard Project, UW-Superior embarked on a Climate Study Survey in Spring 2011. The purpose of this comprehensive survey, developed for UW-Superior specifically, was to uncover climate issues and begin plans to help make UW-Superior a better learning and working environment for students and staff alike. The survey was completed in the Spring 2011, and the final report submitted in the Fall. A series of discussion groups representing various constituencies was held throughout Fall 2011, organized by the Chancellors Task Force for Inclusive Excellence (CIETF). The CIETF provided their recommendations in 2011 and a final report to the Chancellor’s Cabinet in Spring 2012, and the Cabinet is now considering what the institution must focus on in its planning process.

**Racial/Ethnic Diversity within the Faculty and Staff at UW-Superior**

Appendix A of the Affirmative Action Plan (2010-11) provides a breakdown of the Faculty, Academic Staff, and Classified Staff by race/ethnicity. The proportion of racial/ethnic minority in the Faculty nearly doubled in the past ten years, from 7.9 percent in 2003 to 14.91 percent in 2012. This increase can be attributed to hiring practices, faculty mentoring, and new faculty orientation.

**Minority Retention**

UW-Superior has worked to increase the second-year retention rates of students of color. The high point of this effort was the Fall 2008 cohort of new underrepresented minority students, with a first- to second-year retention rate of 80%. Native Americans had a first to second year retention rate of 85.7%. The first- to second-year retention rates for all underrepresented minority students were over 10% higher than that of the University as a whole. The following two years saw a lowering of these rates. The overall average from 2002 to 2010 was 65.7%. Of serious note: While first- to second-year retention rates are fairly consistent with the University's as a whole, the six-year graduation rates reveal a very significant gap. A real area of need is to work diligently on years two to three, three to four, and the six-year graduation rates as a whole for all minority students.
Among the Academic Staff, the representation improved from 6.41 percent in 2003 to 10 percent in 2008; however, the percentage of minority academic staff sits at 5.92 percent in 2012. The representation of racial/ethnic minority among the Classified Staff increased slightly over the past ten years, from 3.45 percent of the classified population in 2003 to 5.19 percent in 2012. More work must be done to increase the diversity of faculty and staff.

The University has not successfully attracted and retained senior administrators from the underrepresented populations. There has been one senior administrator from an underrepresented minority in the past ten years, and no current senior administrator falls into this category.

In summary, numerous methods have been attempted and efforts made to increase diversity at the University of Wisconsin-Superior. Design for Diversity, Plan 2008, and Inclusive Excellence are but overarching frameworks that have been put in place throughout the past decade to bring diversity to the forefront. Projects such as the Equity Scorecard and the Climate Survey have been used to provide more concrete evidence of the existence of strengths and weaknesses in the areas of climate and diversity, but more can be done.

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.
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

UW-Superior demonstrates through its mission and organizational structure that it is committed to the public good and dedicated to meeting the needs of its regional constituents. As part of the University of Wisconsin System, the University values and supports the “Wisconsin Idea” that all citizens of the State will benefit from the services and resources of the University. As a public institution, educational responsibilities extend into the community. This commitment means that the University provides programs and services within the region and community through the work of its academic programs and departments, as well as through various centers and institutes.

Specific findings and recommendations follow:

- Faculty, staff and students contribute to the public aspect of the University’s mission through two Liberal Arts High Impact Practices: Academic Service-Learning and Undergraduate Research.
- UW-Superior’s Center for Adult Education and Outreach provides a focus for many of the University’s public services. Within this umbrella organization are the Center for Continuing Education, the Distance Learning Center, the Small Business Development Center, and the Northern Center for Community and Economic Development.
- Four research centers and institutes contribute to the University’s public mission. They are the Lake Superior Research Institute, Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve, Transportation and Logistics Research Center, and the Great Lakes Maritime Research Center.
- The Grants and Research Office works with these centers and institutes as well as with other faculty and staff, seeking funds to further enhance research to meet the needs of the region and its businesses and organizations. The Jim Dan Hill Library also supports the centers and institutes and the broader grant needs of the community, through membership in the Foundation Center.
- To further meet regional needs, over the past several years, UW-Superior has collaborated with other regional educational institutions to develop an organization focused on regional economic development. Membership in NorthWERD (Northwest Wisconsin Educators for Regional Development) demonstrates a commitment to the region through a partnership with other higher education providers, public schools, and workforce development agencies.
Some academic programs have developed advisory boards to help inform their programming and curriculum planning by taking employer and organizational needs into consideration.

The following recommendations will help improve UW-Superior’s efforts:

- Increased use of advisory committees or boards would help ensure that academic programs are meeting the needs of school districts, organizations and businesses.
- UW-Superior should develop strategies to more widely articulate the value that it brings to the region and the State through a variety of venues, including news reporting, web pages, and accountability reports. The University must review accountability measures to ensure that it is collecting data on those areas that its constituents value.

Discussion

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STRUCTURE TO SUPPORT THE PUBLIC ASPECT OF THE MISSION
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CENTER FOR ADULT EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

UW-Superior’s Center for Adult Education and Outreach was established in 1977 as a primary means of identifying needs and providing services for external constituencies across the University’s northern Wisconsin service area. The Center’s mission is to “serve the life-long learning needs of the people of Northern Wisconsin and beyond our region by providing educational programs, research, and resources with an emphasis on extending University expertise into the community.”

The Center for Adult Education and Outreach, formerly known as the Center for Continuing Education/Extension, has four divisions: Continuing Education, Distance Learning Center, Northern Center for Community and Economic Development, and Small Business Development Center, with the Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve affiliated for fiscal purposes. Programs include entrepreneurship development, business counseling, credit and noncredit certificate programs, and professional development workshops and conferences. The Center also supports online and distance learning degree completion programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels to serve non-traditional age students, and it manages the University’s Summer College. Many of the Center’s programs are operated in partnership with University of Wisconsin-Extension, which provides base budget funding for Continuing Education, Small Business Development, and Northern Center for Community and Economic
Development programs. This partnership with Extension carries out a specified element of the UW-Superior mission: “To foster, with University of Wisconsin-Extension, the development of cooperative and general outreach programming and the integration of the Extension function with that of this institution.”

As of 2003, the Distance Learning Center offered two undergraduate major programs and served about 200 students annually. Since then, the University has chosen to strategically grow its majors and enrollments offered through online study. In 2012, six baccalaureate majors provide degree completion opportunities to learners beyond the campus, in Communicating Arts, Elementary Education, Exercise Science, Interdisciplinary Studies, Health and Wellness Management, and Sustainable Management. About 500 students now enroll annually through the Distance Learning Center. More than 88 percent are non-traditional students aged 25 or older.

Since 2003, the Center for Continuing Education has developed and offered online coursework for graduate credit, leading to the Master of Science in Education-Instruction and Master of Science in Education-Reading degrees. The online course schedule permits completion of these master’s programs through two years of online study and two years of summer attendance on campus.

In 2011, the Center for Continuing Education began offering selected general-education courses to high school students in northwest Wisconsin through regional interactive television networks. These courses are designed to help advanced students transition more easily to the University environment. About 15 students annually are served through this system.

Beyond undergraduate and graduate offerings, the University has applied its extensive experience in distance learning to extending business and professional learning. Credit certificate programs in Sustainable Management Science and Sustainable Enterprise Management have been offered online since 2010. A noncredit Transportation and Logistics Certificate, leading to certification by a national organization, began in 2012.

Since 2003, the Center for Continuing Education has developed certificates in Nonprofit Administration, Fund Development, Human Resources, Conflict Resolution, and Paralegal Studies.

The Nonprofit Administration Certificate is a 100-hour program for directors, staff, board members, and volunteers. In conjunction with this certificate, the Center for Continuing
Education developed “Northwoods Nonprofits” in response to the needs expressed by nonprofit executive directors in the region. Northwoods Nonprofits provides an online directory as well as resources and workshops for nonprofit managers, volunteers, and staff.

The Fund Development Certificate was designed for directors, staff, and volunteers of nonprofit programs. The Paralegal Certificate consists of coursework in a variety of paralegal areas of theory and practice, and the Human Resource Certificate provides a general overview of the basic aspects of human resource management geared to individuals who are new to or who have never received formal training in human resource practice.

The University actively partners with organizations in the Superior/Douglas County area to build community leadership. For over 20 years, the Leadership Superior/Douglas County Program has served those who work in Douglas County. This program is provided in partnership with the Development Association of Superior/Douglas County, the Chamber of Commerce of Superior/Douglas County, the City of Superior, and Douglas County. Each year 25-30 emerging and existing leaders from a cross-section of the community are selected to participate in the ten-month program, meeting one day a month on topics of relevance to civic engagement.

Programming in Health and Human Interest is offered in response to strong community interests in health improvement, in partnership with county health departments and healthcare organizations. Community conferences on current health topics are offered annually in the Superior/Duluth, Hayward, and Minocqua/Rhinelander areas. The Health, Human Issues and Reminiscence unit also operates the International Institute for Reminiscence and Life Review. This institute brings together participants to further define reminiscence and life review as an interdisciplinary field of study in the areas of practice, research, education, volunteer and individual application.

The University has a long history of providing professional development for educators. Both credit and non-credit professional development programs are offered in partnership with area school districts through the regional Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESAs). In the past decade, new relationships have been formed with tribal education departments and Head Start programs in the Native American communities of Bad River, Lac Courte Oreilles, Lac du Flambeau, Red Cliff, and St. Croix, resulting in course offerings to meet professional education needs in these communities. Service to regional school districts is also supported by membership in the Northern Wisconsin Educational...
Communication System (NWECS) and Northern Lights ITV networks. UW-Superior uses these systems to deliver graduate courses in Special Education to teachers in schools across the region, as well as Youth Options courses.

In response to UW-Extension research which showed a lack of awareness of bachelor degree completion opportunities among residents of northern Wisconsin, the Distance Learning Center created a partnership with UW-Green Bay’s Center for Outreach and Adult Access to raise awareness of these opportunities. The two universities began a joint awareness campaign, “The UW Where You Need It,” www.uwwhereyouneedit.com, in 2009. This program has contributed to increased enrollments in the University’s online degree completion programs for adults.

An additional developing partnership is with UW-Barron County, a campus of the University of Wisconsin Colleges, to offer the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences at the UW-Barron County campus in Rice Lake, Wisconsin. This bachelor’s degree completion program has been authorized by the UW System Board of Regents with the requirement that upper-division coursework be developed in partnership with a four-year university. UW-Superior and UW-Barron County signed a Memorandum of Understanding for provision of coursework in 2010; the program is planned to begin in Fall 2013 following HLC approval.

Another program, the Northern Center for Community and Economic Development, provides UW-Superior faculty expertise in economics to county Extension educators across Wisconsin. Since 2005, the Northern Center has developed significant knowledge and skills in education for sustainable practices. The Center provides research, workshop presentations, teaching materials, and other customized resources to help Extension foster sustainable practices in Wisconsin communities.

The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) operates in partnership with UW-Extension’s Division of Entrepreneurship and Economic Development and the U.S. Small Business Administration. The Center provides counseling to potential entrepreneurs in eight Northwest Wisconsin counties. UW-Extension and the Small Business Administration provide base funding for the Center and specific program requirements; Extension coordinates statewide program development and a network of resources for entrepreneurs; and UW-Superior provides space, staffing, and supplemental programming. Beginning in 2008, the SBDC developed a network of videoconferencing sites located at UW-Extension offices in ten northern Wisconsin counties. The network is used for individual business counseling meetings with SBDC counselors, extending the
resources of the SBDC across the region while saving travel costs for both counselors and clients. The SBDC also offers non-credit outreach Entrepreneurial Training via ITV locations within its service area. Other programming includes coordination of the Inventors and Entrepreneurs Club in Superior/Duluth and a PeerSpectives Network of successful business CEOs who learn business skills from each other and support entrepreneurship.

The units of the Center for Adult Education and Outreach engage with external constituencies and communities of interest through direct, personal connections between outreach staff and community members in the Superior area and across northern Wisconsin. This engagement links the University with a long list of constituent organizations, from chambers of commerce and service clubs to workforce development boards, regional education service agencies, healthcare cooperatives, sustainable agriculture organizations, and other education providers.

In addition, the Center conducts research on community needs and interests in the region. This research may include employment trends; reports on changes in business, healthcare, government, and education; and UW-Extension data on educational attainment and other applicable trends.

PUBLIC RADIO PARTNERSHIP

UW-Superior’s Department of Communicating Arts maintains a partnership with University of Wisconsin-Extension’s Division of Broadcast and Media Innovations to operate a regional broadcast bureau of Wisconsin Public Radio. The bureau contributes to statewide news and public affairs programming on WPR’s two statewide networks, and provides programming for four radio stations serving Northwest Wisconsin: KUWS 91.3 FM Superior, WSSU 88.5 FM Superior, WHSA 89.9 FM Brule, and WUWS 90.9 FM Ashland. UW-Superior students and Communicating Arts faculty members work with the broadcast professionals of UW-Extension to provide this public service. The bureau has received many regional and national awards for excellence in news and public affairs broadcasting by the Associated Press, Wisconsin Broadcasters Association, Northwest Broadcast News Association, Public Radio News Directors Association, and the Radio-Television News Directors Association.

RESEARCH CENTERS AND INSTITUTES

UW-Superior houses four nationally recognized research centers: The Lake Superior Research Institute (LSRI); Transportation and Logistics Research Center (TLRC); Great
Lakes Maritime Research Institute (GLMRI); and Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve (LSNERR). Each research center focuses on solving problems critical to the region.

The Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve (LSNERR) is a federal/state partnership between the lead agencies of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and UW-Extension. After an extensive planning process (in which UW-Superior was heavily involved), the Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve was authorized in 2010. The Research Reserve is one of 28 throughout the country and only the second freshwater reserve with this designation. Partners with UW-Extension and UW-Superior, include: the City of Superior, Douglas County, the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, the Wisconsin Sea Grant Institute, the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program, and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The Reserve provides research, outreach, and public education related to the St. Louis River freshwater estuary at the western end of Lake Superior.

UW-Superior has worked with UW-Extension and the LSNERR to establish the research priorities for the Lake Superior NERR. The designation of the national reserve will help attract additional research dollars; provide opportunities for undergraduate and graduate teaching, learning, and research; and expand faculty research focused on estuaries and their importance from an environmental and economic perspective. Faculty, staff, and students from UW-Superior’s Cooperative Extension unit, the natural sciences department, LSRI, and other areas will have expanded opportunities for research and research funds through the LSNERR.

The mission of the Lake Superior Research Institute (LSRI) includes environmental research, environmental education, and public outreach for the Great Lakes region. Major research efforts have focused on chemical and biological assessment of sediment and water quality, monitoring of endangered and invasive aquatic species, and ecological restoration.

Examples of funded research include

- Ballast Water Treatment Technology Evaluations: LSRI has partnered with the Great Ships Initiative to evaluate the effectiveness of ballast water treatment technologies. With the only freshwater testing facility in the world, LSRI conducts research critical in evaluating these treatment systems in accordance
with criteria developed by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the U.S. Coast Guard.

- Ecological Monitoring and Restoration: With support from the Great Lakes Restoration Act, as well as continued funding from county, state, and federal agencies, LSRI scientists monitor chemical contaminants in fish and assess the aquatic invertebrates and plants in lakes, rivers, and coastal wetlands. Efforts are also dedicated to preventing the spread of terrestrial and aquatic invasive species and to assisting with the ecological restoration of coastal wetlands.

UW-Superior’s Transportation and Logistics Research Center serves as the area’s academic partner with local and national transportation and logistics industries and professional organizations. The mission of the Center is to provide applied transportation and logistics research, education, and advisory services that advance the economy of the region. The Center continually obtains new grants and research opportunities that promote the adoption of new ideas and techniques for improving transportation infrastructure and education.

Research and activities of the Transportation and Logistics Research Center include:

- Preparing and hosting organizational conferences in transportation and logistics
- Engaging business, government agencies, faculty, and students in research projects
- Encouraging active participation by faculty and students in professional organizations
- Providing education and training for professional certification and advanced degrees
- Providing transportation and supply chain solutions for regional industries and non-profits

Under the auspices of the Transportation and Logistics Research Center, UW-Superior is an equal partner in the Great Lakes Maritime Research Institute (GLMRI), a consortium with the University of Minnesota-Duluth. GLMRI has been designated by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation as a National Maritime Enhancement Institute. The mission of GLMRI is to develop and improve economically and environmentally sustainable maritime commerce on the Great Lakes through applied research. Funds for the research projects are awarded on a competitive basis to researchers at ten affiliate universities in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, Ohio, New York, and Indiana. An advisory board of government agencies, industry, and other stakeholders assists in defining research
Efforts focused on maritime research by the Great Lakes Maritime Research Center include creating greener Great Lakes Maritime Transportation by

- Expanding short sea shipping and improving ship building technologies
- Reducing the environmental footprint of shipping
- Expanding operations of the Great Lakes Marine Transportation System (GLMTS)
- Exploring market opportunities for the US-Flag vessels in trade with Canada

Additional efforts focus on improved marine planning to increase productivity through technology and management innovations for both port and vessel operations on the Great Lakes, and creation of a body of coordinated researchers on Great Lakes Maritime issues.

OTHER COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL SERVICES

UW-Superior offers the Upward Bound program for eligible students attending Superior High School who face challenges in pursuing higher education without much support. During the academic year, students receive tutoring, counseling, and study skills training to help them improve their grades and self-confidence. They also visit college campuses; attend plays, concerts and lectures; and build relationships through social, recreational, and cultural activities. During the summer, Upward Bound students participate in a six-week campus experience.

The University has also developed as a cultural center and regional destination. UW-Superior serves to engage University and regional community members in learning about cultures through mixed media events. Campus Life, Holden Fine and Applied Arts Center, and the Multicultural Center host numerous events throughout the year that showcase diversity in the local, regional, and international communities. As a regional destination, UW-Superior hosts numerous athletic and curricular events during the year and participates in festivals and events in the Duluth-Superior area, such as the Lake Superior Dragon Boat Festival.

In addition, in 2012, UW-Superior played an active role in the creation of Northwest Wisconsin Educators for Regional Development (NorthWERD). This association of the chief executives of UW-Superior, Cooperative-Education Service Agency 12, Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College, North-Central Technical College, Northland
College, Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College, and UW-Barron County was created to promote innovation and workforce development, and take action for more seamless opportunities for educational attainment and career preparation. By creating connections and eliminating barriers among the NorthWERD partners, educators will build educational bridges to the future for the students, citizens, communities, and regional economy of northwest Wisconsin.

In summary, UW-Superior contributes to regional economic development as reflected in the significant activities pursued by our centers and institutes. Each of these centers provides significant economic benefits to the region through programs, projects, and research. Each center is supported and advised by stakeholders from regional businesses and governmental entities as appropriate. The centers also meet the needs of students and faculty by providing teaching and learning opportunities to advance their skills in specific disciplines.

LIBERAL ARTS HIGH IMPACT PRACTICES: ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING AND UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

Curricular and co-curricular activities offer additional opportunities for students and staff to interact with external constituencies, as supported by the UW-Superior’s mission to “engage in appropriate inter-institutional relationships to enhance educational and service opportunities.” The Center for Academic Service-Learning offers support and resources to match academic learning outcomes with community needs. A student enrolled in an Academic Service-Learning course participates in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflects on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility. The Academic Service-Learning High-Impact Practice aims to make UW-Superior a regional leader in AS-L, thus providing a distinctively public quality to UW-Superior's liberal arts mission. In 2011-2012, the Center supported 37 professors from over 20 different disciplines, helping to integrate AS-L pedagogy into 61 courses. This resulted in 1,259 students donating 20,573 hours of community-based service and learning to over 50 local, regional, and national sites. Equated in terms of dollars, the result was over $370,000 worth of time donated by students to our local region.

In addition to the curricular aspect, student-run organizations provide co-curricular opportunities for students to connect with the community. An example of this phenomenon is the Campus Volunteer Group. This group involves students in activities such as Alternative Spring Break, Paint the Town, and the Giving Tree. The Student

University of Wisconsin | The institution’s mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution’s operations.
Organization website provides interested students with information related to volunteer opportunities throughout the community.

Additionally, UW-Superior engages its students and meets regional needs through undergraduate research. During Summer 2012, the University developed a Summer Research Fellows program to give students the opportunity to work beside faculty members to complete research projects. Examples of this type of work include a study focused on ecotourism; a study examining the mercury content in Great Lakes fish, while another study focused on mapping of a specific marsh grass; and yet another focused on Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping of the impact on vegetation of factors such as urban development, road building, logging activities, and hydrological alterations.
Criterion One Summary

After careful review of the mission of UW-Superior, it is apparent that the University has articulated its public liberal arts missions to both internal and external constituencies and demonstrates its commitment to that mission in its hiring practices, strategic planning and daily operations. Faculty and staff also demonstrate their commitment to the mission.

UW-Superior must ensure that its student population can better understand the value of a public liberal arts education and articulate it to prospective employers. Additionally, a review of program array at the graduate level will ensure that the University is meeting the needs within the state and region.

UW-Superior is very aware of the efforts already undertaken and planned for the future concerning diversity of our students, faculty and staff. Providing support mechanisms and fostering inclusive excellence in all that the University does are aspirations that require a commitment on the part of each individual.

The obligation of a public institution to its public is a critical aspect of its mission. This section has clearly demonstrated the manner in which UW-Superior carries out its public liberal arts mission by how it conducts planning and operations that are supported by the outreach and research activities of the University’s centers and institutes. This obligation to the public is further demonstrated through the work of students, faculty and staff engaged in Academic Service-Learning, volunteerism, and undergraduate research.

Overall, UW-Superior’s mission is clear, and it is articulated publicly. The mission guides UW-Superior’s operations. The University will continue to develop strategies that improve its public service role and build connections within the region to provide a strong educational institution that meets future regional needs.
Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

Introduction

The values statement of the University of Wisconsin-Superior indicates that “we value ourselves and our long-term commitment to student learning by emphasizing academic excellence, intellectual development, a student-centered university, integrity, continual improvement, and mutual respect for diversity. We earn trust through honest, sincere, and humble leadership.” As one of the comprehensive institutions of the University of Wisconsin System, UW-Superior is governed by the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System as established under Chapter 36 of the Wisconsin State Statutes and as appointed by the Governor. The Board of Regents sets admission standards and establishes the regulatory framework within which the University operates. The University, in turn, holds delegated authority for establishing and implementing university policies, including those governing academic freedom, honesty and integrity. These policies are developed in accordance with shared governance practices and input from the University's constituent groups. The University communicates these policies clearly and completely via its official publications, to both internal and external constituencies.

Core Component 2.A: The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows fair and ethical policies and processes for its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The University of Wisconsin-Superior operates with integrity and follows fair and ethical policies and processes. As part of the University of Wisconsin System (an agency of the state of Wisconsin), UW-Superior is governed by the Board of Regents, and abides by its policies. In turn, UW-Superior establishes and follows, implements, and communicates all policies and practices to its publics by:

- Providing all University budget information as public record through the UW System Office of Budget and Planning Redbook;
- Providing University personnel policies, including policies on conflict of interest and ethics, via the Unclassified and Classified Staff Handbooks;
- Requiring senior officers of the University administration file annual reports with the state government, UW System Administration (UWSA) and the UW Board of Regents detailing outside economic interests. All University faculty and academic staff also file general annual reports of outside activities; and
- Providing access to each individual staff person to manage their own personal information through the Human Resources System. The ease of communicating policies and practices via electronic means also requires the development of processes to ensure the timely updating of websites and other methods of communication. The University continues to develop such processes in order to provide appropriate information in a timely and consistent manner.

Recent action by the Wisconsin Legislature in Act 32 eliminated the collective bargaining relationship between the entire Wisconsin University System and the State. While this has created uncertainty among its employees, UW-Superior continues to examine how to effectively uphold the ideals of what it means to be a liberal arts institution and to communicate transparently with all constituents.

Discussion

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL POLICY

As part of the University of Wisconsin System, the University of Wisconsin-Superior is governed by the Board of Regents as established under Chapter 36 of the Wisconsin State Statutes. The Board sets admission standards, reviews and approves university budgets, and establishes the regulatory framework within which the individual units operate, including UW-Superior. Specific information and policies governing the Board and the
University of Wisconsin System Administration are available at the UW Board of Regents web site.

The UW System Administration Office of Operations Review and Audit conducts periodic program reviews to ensure that University of Wisconsin programs, policies, and practices are conducted in accordance with state law and Board of Regents policy. Recent UW System Administration-wide audits in which UW-Superior has participated include UW Mental Health Counseling Services (August 2008), Textbook Costs in Higher Education (April 2007), Student Evaluation of Instruction (November 2010), Credit for Prior Learning (November 2010), FERPA (Fall 2010), and Risk and Liability in Service Learning (July 2011). UW-Superior incorporates the policies and reporting structures of the UW System, while maintaining the individuality of the University through its own internal governing bodies.

Recent actions taken by the UW System are consistent with fair and ethical administrative and financial policy, and include measures related to data privacy, business practices, budget and risk management, fund-raising, procurement, student fees, and financial aid.

**DATA PRIVACY**

In conjunction with UW System Administration Office of General Counsel, the University reviewed and updated, in 2011-12, its implementation of Data Privacy (FERPA) policy to reflect recent changes in interpretation and application of this policy at the federal level. Students and families are made aware of FERPA implementation via educational presentations during orientation sessions. Annual reminders and updates regarding FERPA are published in the Student Digest early in fall and spring semesters. FERPA training is included in New Faculty Orientation, and administrative units offer similar training with new academic and classified staff. The University has instituted policies to safeguard other personal information as well. Federal law (20 U.S.C., Section 12-32g.) allows the UW System to request and use the social security number for routine record keeping and institutional statistics. Policy governing the use and disclosure of this information is contained in the catalog, and is made available on the university website at http://www.uwsuper.edu/catalog/2010-12/policies/academic-policies-procedures.cfm#_28_1116706. Policies regarding use and disclosure of racial/ethnic information and disability information are included as well. Policies regarding employee information are governed by Wis. ACT 47. The recently implemented Human Resource System (HRS) provides access to each individual staff person to manage their own personal information.
ETHICAL BUSINESS PRACTICES

The University – both the UW System and UW-Superior – follows established business practices with regards to all of its financial operations, including grant funded entities. The University employs an internal auditor to conduct fiscal and non-academic program reviews on a rotating basis as well as periodic reviews that may be requested by Cabinet officers. Information generated by these reviews is utilized by University programs and offices for planning as well as for continuous improvement efforts.

BUDGET AND RISK MANAGEMENT

All University budget information is available as public record by the UW System Office of Budget and Planning in the Budget Redbook. The University has instituted an integrated planning cycle that incorporates greater transparency into the budgeting process by including representation from across the University. The planning cycle will be described in detail in Criterion Five. Additionally, UW-Superior is one of two UW System institutions participating in a pilot Enterprise Risk Management program to improve planning for and response to material risks. The ERM program is a joint effort with the UWSA Office of Safety and Loss Prevention and under the guidance of Arthur J. Gallagher/Core Risk Consultants.

UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION AND FUND-RAISING

The UW-Superior Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation with appropriate policies, annual independent audits and reviews governing its relationship with the University. The Foundation and Alumni Association are committed to building positive, high-trust relationships with contributors, prospective contributors and/or members; providing performance excellence; and operating with the highest ethical standards. The UW-Superior Foundation adheres to the Donor Bill of Rights policy developed by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, the American Association of Fund-Raising Counsel, the Association for Healthcare Philanthropy, and the National Society of Fund Raising Executives.

PROCUREMENT

The State of Wisconsin, the UW System and UW-Superior procurement policies and practices are followed carefully in transactions with external vendors, contractors and providers of services. Internal audits are conducted systematically and specifically at the request of a Cabinet officer to determine compliance with policy and high-quality business practices. Auxiliary operations follow the same policies and practices and are also audited internally to ensure such compliance. Programmatic audits are also
conducted regularly and in accordance with the Review and Audit Plan, as approved by the Business, Finance, and Audit Committee of the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System.

STUDENT FEES
As required by Wisconsin Statute 36.09(5), students are responsible for setting and allocating allocable segregated fees (typically, these are the fees that fund student organizations). This is accomplished through the Student Government Association’s Segregated University Fee Allocations Committee (SUFAC), a sub-committee of Student Senate. In addition, students consult with administration on the setting of all non-allocable fees as well as rates for auxiliary operations, again through the Student Government Association.

FINANCIAL AID
Finally, the Financial Aid Office ensures that the university adheres to all federal, state, university policies and practices in dispersing aid. The staff exhibit UW-Superior’s sense of responsibility to our students through the supportive manner in which they approach student needs. Financial aid is discussed in greater detail under Component 2.B.

PERSONNEL POLICIES
The most valuable resources for any institution of higher education are its human resource. The University of Wisconsin System’s personnel classification system includes two categories: Unclassified and Classified. The Unclassified category includes faculty and academic staff. Faculty ranks include full, associate, and assistant professor. Academic staff may be instructional (instructors and adjunct appointments) or non-instructional and have renewable, annual, or limited appointments. Limited employees serve at the pleasure of the appointing body and include most University administrators. Classified appointments are associated with historical civil service or collective bargaining units and include short-term, limited appointments. The State made national headlines when Governor Scott Walker stripped collective bargaining rights from state employees in 2011. Faculty and Academic Staff had just been granted the right to organize as part of the 2009-11 biennial budget, while Classified staff had held this right for decades.

The University and the UW System are affirmative action, equal opportunity employers and are committed to maintaining a high-quality work force. The recruitment and
selection of highly qualified new employees is essential to this ongoing effort. The University’s recruitment and hiring policies for Unclassified staff reflect legal and ethical standards for all searches and include a strong commitment to the mission of the Institution. [http://www.uwsuper.edu/hr/policies/index.cfm](http://www.uwsuper.edu/hr/policies/index.cfm) These guidelines also suggest practical ways of achieving more diversity in hiring, while meeting the needs of departments and units to recruit and retain well-qualified candidates. Position descriptions are carefully reviewed in order to establish requirements for appropriate knowledge, skills, and abilities. Minimum qualifications are crafted to ensure a broad candidate pool, and advertisements are also widely placed. Generally speaking, all Unclassified vacancies (administrators, faculty and academic staff) are filled through open, competitive recruitments; exceptions to this can be made in some cases for temporary positions, interim appointments, re-employed annuitants, or exceptional sole source candidates.

Policies pertinent to hiring and employment issues are published in the [Unclassified](http://www.uwsuper.edu/hr/policies/index.cfm) and [Classified](http://www.uwsuper.edu/hr/policies/index.cfm) Staff Handbooks, which include the [UW System Code of Ethics](http://www.uwsuper.edu/hr/policies/index.cfm) as well as policies on conflict of interest, nepotism, and the rights and responsibilities within the institution. The handbooks are available online via the Human Resources website. Senior officers of the University administration file detailed annual reports with UW System Administration listing outside interests. The [Statement of Economic Interests Report](http://www.uwsuper.edu/hr/policies/index.cfm), a financial disclosure statement required of all public officials in Wisconsin, is filed annually with the [Government Accountability Board](http://www.uwsuper.edu/hr/policies/index.cfm) by the Chancellor, Provost, and Chief Financial Officer. They file a separate accountability statement with the Board of Regents. Additionally, all University faculty and academic staff file [general annual reports](http://www.uwsuper.edu/hr/policies/index.cfm) of outside activities.

A [Climate Survey](http://www.uwsuper.edu/hr/policies/index.cfm) conducted in February 2011 indicates that 70 percent of employees are highly satisfied or satisfied with their employment experience at UW-Superior. The study also reveals some areas that require additional attention to improve the climate for all staff. The Chancellor’s Inclusive Excellence Task Force has recommended areas that should be addressed for such improvements. One such area identified for remedy provides professional development opportunities for supervisors. In the spring of 2012, the University instituted the [Supervisor Leadership Program](http://www.uwsuper.edu/hr/policies/index.cfm), a series of training sessions for all supervisors that includes topics such as Coaching for Performance, Team Building, Performance Feedback, and Resolving Conflicts.

Each academic department maintains and follows published personnel rules for retention, promotion, and tenure. The Personnel Council of the Faculty Senate provides oversight.
in matters related to disagreement between parties in such decisions. Academic Staff Senate, in its turn, oversees policies and practices related to personnel matters for that particular constituency. Members of both senates are elected by their respective constituencies. In the spirit of continuous improvement, annual performance reviews are conducted by individual supervisors for administrative academic staff and by the Provost/Dean of Faculty for faculty and instructional academic staff. The University, however, has identified a number of concerns regarding the thoroughness of personnel policies and consistency in practices. The manner in which the University is responding to the identified concerns is detailed in Criterion Three. Additionally, the Institution has identified a need for more training on personnel rules so that processes are more easily understood and consistently applied, thereby providing equitable opportunities for advancement for all faculty and staff.

Historically, the recruitment and hiring policies for classified staff were under the jurisdiction of the Wisconsin Office of State Employment Relations (OSER). Classified staff designations were protected by long-standing collective bargaining units, and agreements were strictly followed by the University. In 2011 collective bargaining for all state public employees was eliminated by the Governor of Wisconsin. While the legality of the decision about collective bargaining is under consideration by the state Supreme Court, the UW System is in the process of developing new personnel structures, with input from a cross-section of UW System employees, and views this as an opportunity to address the on-going system-wide concerns about climate among its employees. At UW-Superior, annual performance reviews are conducted within individual departments for all classified staff. Additional information on personnel policies and practices is available at the Human Resources website.

**STUDENT POLICIES**

Students are encouraged to utilize the services of the Dean of Students Office for seeking resolution to issues of concern. The Dean serves as an advocate and resource for students. A letter from the Dean with information on opportunities for engagement, as well as policies and procedures for navigating the institution, are included in orientation materials for new students. This information is also contained on the Dean’s web page. Policies and procedures regarding student conduct are available to the public via the Dean of Students’ Office and website. These policies include Chapters 14, 17 and 18 of the University of Wisconsin Administrative Code governing academic and non-academic misconduct and conduct on university lands. In cases of academic misconduct by students, UW-Superior follows the process outlined in Chapter 14 of the Wisconsin
Administrative Code affording all parties due process and timely, careful resolution of the situation.
COMPLAINT PROCESS FOR STUDENTS AND OTHER CONSTITUENTS

Pursuant to the United States Department of Education's Program Integrity Rule, an individual may file a complaint alleging a violation of one or more of the following categories against any of University of Wisconsin System's public institutions with the University of Wisconsin System Administration (UWSA).

- Complaints that allege a violation of state consumer protection laws that include but are not limited to fraud and false advertising
- Complaints that allege a violation of state law or rule relating to the licensure of postsecondary institutions; and/or
- Complaints relating to the quality of education or other State or accreditation requirements

Under the UWSA policies and procedures, an individual should utilize the institution's internal complaint process or review of policies and procedures through the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Campus Life and Dean of Students, the Associate Dean for Distance Learning, or the Office of the Provost prior to contacting UWSA. If a resolution is not reached at the Institution level, or if it is believed that the nature of the complaint or its impact on the system as a whole warrants an immediate review by the University of Wisconsin System Administration, one may contact the University of Wisconsin System Administration - Office of Academic, Faculty and Global Programs (AFGP).

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.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As evidenced by the University website and other publications, UW-Superior communicates to the public clear and thorough information regarding the institution and its role within the University of Wisconsin System.

- Graduate and undergraduate catalogs contain complete information regarding programs, policies and procedures, requirements, and services for students.
- Tuition and fees are clearly detailed, and state constituencies participate at all levels of discussion.
- Information on financial aid is made available to all students as part of the recruitment and admissions process.
- Admission policies are clear and consistent and communicated to the public via the University and the UW System websites.
- Transfer credit is awarded upon review by faculty in the respective academic departments and programs, except for courses included within articulation agreements with other institutions. The University continues to investigate ways to facilitate the timely and consistent review and application of transfer credits, particularly at times of the year when faculty are not readily available.

Discussion

----------- UW-SUPERIOR IS ACCOUNTABLE TO ITS PUBLIC -----------

General academic policies and processes, general education requirements, degree program requirements, and graduation requirements are accessible to students and the public through the University undergraduate and graduate catalogs. The catalog is revised every two years with policy changes and updates in intervening years available on the website. Articulation agreements with other institutions used in evaluating and awarding transfer credits are available from the Transfer Specialist. The role of the Transfer Specialist is discussed further in Criterion Four. Departmental policies and program planning information for majors and minors are available in the catalogs as “program descriptions” and also from academic department offices.

Admission policies are clear, consistent, and communicated to the public via the catalog and on the University website (http://www.uwsuper.edu/admissions/). As part of the University of Wisconsin System, UW-Superior utilizes the UW System electronic application process. The Higher Education Location Program (HELP) provides educational advising on programs, policies, and services throughout the UW System. HELP's website offers a variety of materials to address frequently asked questions about transfer and related issues in Wisconsin.

UW-Superior participates in the Voluntary System of Accountability, employing the VSA College Portrait as a means to communicate who we are to our potential students. As noted in the Fall 2011 report, 98 percent of classes had fewer than 50 students per
instructor and 82 percent had fewer than 30. Additional statistics cite percentages of full-time faculty who hold the highest degree attainable in their field of study (80%), and the number of full-time faculty who are female (46%), and persons of color (13%). Tuition and fee costs for students are included there, as well as on the University website.

The University catalog is updated by the faculty to reflect new programs and initiatives and is written to emphasize in all programs the mission, values, affiliations and accreditations held by the Institution. The catalog includes information regarding academic programs, degree requirements (including outcomes for each major and most minors), academic policies and procedures, graduate studies, admission requirements, and services for students, as well as other general information. Academic policies approved since Fall 2010 are listed both in the catalog and on the Registrar’s website. Additionally, the UW-Superior mission, values and learning goals are displayed in numerous venues around the University.

Tuition and fees are set by the Board of Regents and approved by the state legislature and governor. All state constituencies are afforded the opportunity to have input into the development of this rate via their legislative representatives. At the University, students are guaranteed a voice in developing the budgets and setting their segregated fees for organized activities and other student services through the Segregated University Fee Allocation Committee (SUFAC), a sub-committee of the Student Government Association, which is comprised of members elected and appointed by the student body at large. A schedule of tuition and fees is available to the public from the Bursar’s web page.

Financial aid is a very important component of funding for UW-Superior students, as noted in the following passage from the VSA College Portrait:

- 48 percent of 2010-11 full-time undergraduates received need-based grants or scholarships; the average award for the year was $5,570. Scholarships and grants are financial aid that does not need to be repaid and is sometimes referred to as gift aid.
- 63 percent of 2010-11 full-time undergraduates received need-based work-study and/or loans (not including parent loans); the average loan for the year was $4,930. Loans need to be repaid.

Information on financial aid is made available to all students as part of the recruitment and admissions process. UW-Superior staff participate in financial aid counseling.
sessions and special events in local high schools. Because financial aid is often crucial to our students, it is particularly important that we counsel students and their families about the kinds of aid and the obligations associated with them.

UW-Superior controls costs by partnering with the UW System to provide an electronic application process. Comparative information across the UW System is available through HELP, while requirements for specific academic programs and/or majors are found online in the course catalog, or are available in departmental offices.

Transfer students constitute a significant portion of the student body at UW-Superior. The admissions process for transfer students is coordinated within the Admissions Office following clear and consistent policies. Transfer credit is awarded upon careful review by the transfer specialist who has prior approval to assign transfer credit from the faculty in the respective academic departments. Credit for prior learning is awarded based on evaluation of individual student learning as evidenced in portfolios, national exams, or challenge exams. The academic control of transfer credit is discussed in greater detail in Criterion Four.

The University offers students the opportunity to earn credit for non-collegiate-sponsored learning experiences such as on-the-job training, workshops or seminars attended, and independent study. The faculty oversee Prior Learning Assessment on a case-by-case basis. In addition, credit may be awarded for military experience or education. Military students seeking recognition for such experience must submit their official military transcript as part of the admissions process. Upon receipt, the military transcript is evaluated by the transfer specialist using the recommendations provided by the American Council on Education.
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 interest, 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.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As a member of the University of Wisconsin System, UW-Superior is governed by the Board of Regents, which provides overall guidance and vision to the System and its member institutions, while allowing autonomy for local control and decision making.

Discussion

BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SYSTEM

UW-Superior is a member institution of the University of Wisconsin System. Wisconsin State Statute Chapter 36, entitled “University of Wisconsin System,” establishes the role and responsibilities of the Board of Regents, the UW System President, UW campus chancellors, faculty, academic staff, and students. In Wisconsin, this idea of shared responsibility is called “shared governance,” and is described in the Unclassified Handbook of the University of Wisconsin-Superior.

Shared governance is predicated upon two major concepts: 1) primary responsibility and 2) consultative responsibility. Primary responsibility means the formal power to initiate action, carry out reviews and make recommendations which result in legislation and can
be overruled only in rare instances for compelling reasons, which must be stated in detail. Primary responsibility does not exclude the interests of the other party. Either party may initiate a request for action of the other whether it has primary responsibility or not. Consultative responsibility means a formal procedure or practice that provides a means to present a judgment in the form of a recommendation or vote in time to affect the decision being made. The consultative process has six elements:

1. Consultation should occur early in the decision-making process.
2. The procedures for consultation should be uniform and fair to all parties.
3. Adequate time must be allotted to formulate a response to a request for consultation.
4. Information relevant to the decision should be freely available.
5. The advice rendered must be adequately considered and feedback given.
6. The decision, when made, should be communicated to the consulting group.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SYSTEM MISSION

The mission of the University of Wisconsin System is to develop human resources, to discover and disseminate knowledge, to extend knowledge and its application beyond the boundaries of its universities, and to serve and stimulate society by developing in students heightened intellectual, cultural, and humane sensitivities, scientific, professional and technological expertise, and a sense of purpose. Inherent in this broad mission are methods of instruction, research, extended training, and public service designed to educate people and improve the human condition. Basic to every purpose of the UW System is the search for truth.

The select mission of UW-Superior is subordinate to, and inclusive of, the University of Wisconsin System mission.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION MISSION

With the Board of Regents, the UW System Administration leads and serves the UW System as a champion of higher education and a responsible steward of resources. Under the direction of the UW System President, the UW System Administration helps to develop, and then implements, monitors, and evaluates policies enacted by the Board of Regents, aligning university programs with the current and future needs of the state and the nation.
In fulfilling this mission, the UW System Administration:

- Develops strategic plans, analyzing advances in teaching and learning, new technologies, and demographic trends
- Acquires and manages the human, physical, and financial resources needed to advance public higher education in Wisconsin, advocating for UW System institutions, students, employees, and stakeholders
- Ensures the effective and efficient use of resources, building trust with students, taxpayers, donors, and other funders
- Measures, evaluates, and reports the UW System’s progress toward strategic goals and operational objectives, demonstrating accountability and leadership
- Cultivates the talent needed to fulfill the UW System mission, helping the institutions attract, reward, and retain faculty, academic staff, classified staff, and academic leaders
- Models and leads organizational learning and transformation through inclusive excellence, equity, and diversity, by engaging with students, faculty, staff, and a wide variety of external stakeholders, whose diverse viewpoints and experiences enrich the university’s impact
- Facilitates close coordination and cooperation among the UW System institutions, building on existing capabilities and sharing expertise
- Coordinates UW System activities and operations with appropriate local, state, and federal governmental agencies
- Facilitates effective partnerships with other public and private educational institutions and systems, university governance groups, businesses, students, and others, to create shared solutions to emerging challenges
- Interprets and applies laws, regulations, and business practices that govern the UW System, providing reliable guidance and oversight for the institutions

**BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SYSTEM**

The Board of Regents has primary responsibility for governance of the University of Wisconsin System (Wis. Stats. § 36.09(1)). The mission of the Board of Regents is “to enact policies and promulgate rules for governing the system, plan for the needs of the state for university education, ensure the diversity of quality undergraduate programs while preserving the strength of the state’s graduate training and research centers, and promote the widest degree of institutional autonomy within the controlling limits of system-wide policies and priorities established by the board.” (Chapter 36.09 (1) (a))
Some of their duties are oversight of economic development programs associated with the university system, overseeing all grants and loans received within the University System, deciding which degrees are to be offered in which institution under which mission, starting and discontinuing educational programs, and appointing and fixing the salaries of the System president, the chancellor for each campus, and other high ranking university officials.

The Board of Regents (BOR) consists of 18 members, 16 of whom are appointed by the Governor subject to approval by the state Senate. Fourteen of these members serve staggered seven-year terms, and two of the members are current students who are appointed for two-year terms. Two ex-officio members are the state Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the president or a designee of the Wisconsin Technical College System Board. Regents meet eight times per year and serve without pay.

The Statement of Expectations of Board Members requires that the Board of Regents preserve its independence from undue influence. Each member of the Board must be willing to make a strong and sustained personal commitment of time, talent and energy in order to meet the challenges of this demanding role. The purpose of this statement is two-fold: first, to inform potential nominees to the Board of the level of commitment they will be asked to make; and second, to inform the public of what the Board expects of its members. Board members are expected to adhere to high standards of ethical conduct and to comply fully with laws relating to conduct of public officials and boards. BOR members are elected from across the state in order to ensure balanced opportunities and fair representation for all communities, while providing for individual control in setting its academic offerings to each of its universities.

The Board of Regents sets admission standards, reviews and approves university budgets, and establishes the regulatory framework within which the individual units operate. Operational authority is delegated to each chancellor to administer institutions within the policies and guidelines established by the board, and establish salaries for University employees (previously, classified were exempt under union rules; now they are included). The rules of the Board of Regents state that the faculty shall have the primary responsibility for academic and educational activities.

The Board of Regents holds its meetings on a regular basis with schedules made public well in advance of any meetings. Meetings are open to the public, except as permitted by statute and for matters protected by statute. While the majority of the annual meetings are held in Madison, each year three of the meetings are hosted on System universities and
are therefore more accessible for statewide audiences. UW-Superior served as the host site for Board meetings in 2004 and 2012. University administrative officers attend all meetings and designated representatives of faculty, student and academic staff governance groups attend as well. As evidenced by minutes of Board meetings, the board solicits input from each and all of these constituent groups in making decisions. All of the Board meetings are now live-streamed on the web.

The President of the University of Wisconsin System has full executive responsibility for the operation and management of the System. As explained in the UW System Board of Regents bylaws, “...He or she shall carry out the duties prescribed in Wisconsin Statutes for this office, and such other duties as may be assigned by the Board or be implicit in policy actions of the Board. The President of the System shall see to the appropriate staffing of System administrative offices, and direct and coordinate the activities of these offices as needed to fulfill his or her responsibilities. All items to be brought before the Board of Regents for action, except matters which come to the Board pursuant to its administrative rules or existing policies and those initiating in the Board itself, should reach the Board through the President of the University of Wisconsin System and carry his or her recommendation. If an item arises at or is related to an institution, the President shall ensure that it has first been through the established institution governance process and carries the Chancellor's recommendation; if it has not been through the institution governance process, the President shall request that it be so considered by the institution.”

The President of the University System is the president of all the faculties across the System. The President has the responsibility of administering the state-wide system in accordance with board policies, and directs a centralized administration that serves as a “staff” for the Board. The administrative staff works with the board in establishing, monitoring and reviewing System-wide policies, coordinating program development and operations among the universities in the system, planning physical and financial developments within the system, maintaining fiscal controls, and compiling and recommending educational programs, operating budgets, and building programs across the System to the board (Chapter 36.09 (2) (a)).

UW System annual accountability reports reflect the System and Board priorities, collectively and individually, and highlight the contributions that each of the individual universities makes in achieving these priorities. As can be seen in the most recent reports, the Board of Regents and the System Administration are committed to the success of each of the universities that make up the System, as well as to the over-arching success
of the System as a whole. This commitment is further evidenced in the minutes of Board meetings.

As stated in Wisc. Statute 36, the Rules of the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System make plain the relationship between the Board and the faculty of each UW institution, including UW-Superior:

“The faculty of each institution, subject to the responsibilities and powers of the Board, the president and the chancellor of such institution, shall be vested with the responsibility for the immediate governance of such institution and shall actively participate in institutional policy development. As such, the faculty shall have the primary responsibility for academic and educational activities and personnel matters. The faculty of each institution shall have the right to determine their own faculty organizational structure and to select representatives to participate in institutional governance.” (UWS 36.09(4))

Faculty members participate in these academic, educational and personnel matters through individual initiative, service on departmental and University committees, and the Faculty Senate. Requirements for faculty participation are detailed in chapter 4 of the Unclassified Staff Handbook.

The Chancellor is the Chief Executive Officer of UW-Superior and is vested with the responsibility of administering the policies of the Board of Regents under the coordinating direction of the UW System President. She or he is accountable and reports to the President and the Board on the operation and administration of the University. Subject to Board policy, the Chancellor, in consultation with the faculty, is responsible for designing curricula and setting degree requirements; determining academic standards and establishing grading systems; defining and administering institutional standards for faculty peer evaluation and screening candidates for appointment, promotion and tenure; recommending individual salary adjustments; administering associated auxiliary services; administering all funds, from whatever source, allocated, generated or intended for use by the institution; and providing for the general welfare of the institution. These responsibilities are also delineated in chapter three of the Unclassified Staff Handbook.

In carrying out her or his administrative responsibilities, the Chancellor consults with and delegates assignments to members of the Chancellor's Cabinet. The Cabinet members are the Provost/Vice Chancellor, the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, the Vice Chancellor for Campus Life/Dean of Students, the Vice Chancellor for Advancement, the Athletic Director, and the Director of University Relations. The
rigorous reporting structure required within the UW System provides assurance to its constituents of transparent and ethical administration collectively and by individual institutions.

Core Component 2.D: The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Through its history within the University of Wisconsin System, and as a liberal arts institution, UW-Superior is dedicated to providing protections for faculty to teach and students to learn in an open and inclusive environment.

- The Board of Regents and UW-Superior affirm their support to academic freedom and professional ethics through multiple means.
- The faculty of UW-Superior encourage broad, open and creative thinking in its student scholars through careful review and delivery of its General Education offerings.
- UW-Superior’s General Education curriculum reflects our commitment to liberal education and integrates students into a community of creative learners and scholars.
- Through its student induction ceremony, UW-Superior students pledge their commitment to the university mission, values, and vision.

Discussion

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The UW-Superior Unclassified Handbook includes the professional code of ethics that are followed by the faculty and staff of both the UW System and of UW-Superior. The code of ethics and the System statement in support of academic freedom is found in Chapter 7 of the Unclassified Handbook, which is issued to all new unclassified staff at the time of their hiring.
6.2 ACADEMIC FREEDOM (from Unclassified Handbook)

The Board of Regents of the UW System will not tolerate any restrictions on freedom of speech and expression of political and religious questions of any employee of the Board. The Board concurs with the statement of principles by the American Association of University Professors on academic freedom.

Academic freedom also entails commitment to our students to provide complete access to knowledge in an environment that supports inquiry, as conveyed in the catalogs. (http://www.uwsuper.edu/registrar/policies/index.cfm) Beginning with our hiring practices, which require specific discussion of our mission, UW-Superior seeks faculty and staff who are committed to concepts of open inquiry.

UW-Superior further commits to the values included in the following values and vision statements.

**UW-Superior Values Statement**

At the University of Wisconsin-Superior, we value ourselves and our long-term commitment to student learning by emphasizing academic excellence, intellectual development, a student-centered university, integrity, continual improvement, and mutual respect for diversity.

- Intellectual Development – In the liberal arts tradition, we seek to cultivate life-long learners who can think critically, communicate in a variety of media, and apply knowledge in order to solve problems
- Student Focus – We emphasize personal attention to the student
- Integrity – We earn trust through honest, sincere, and humble leadership
- Continual Improvement – We seek to enhance the quality of all programs and services
- Collegiality – We stress mutual respect, appreciation for diversity, and respect for diverse perspectives
- Community – We foster civic engagement and community involvement

**UW-Superior Vision Statement**

The University of Wisconsin-Superior shall be firmly established as a nationally recognized public liberal arts institution where the learning community emphasizes individual attention and promotes intellectual growth, personal development, career
preparation, professional studies, and life-long learning in an atmosphere of individual
dignity with respect for the diversity of human cultures. To this end, UW-Superior
continually engages its students and the larger community in global research and
discourse, and exposes all to challenging ideas that forge new models of responsible
citizenship. UW-Superior will also celebrate its regional climate and multi-ethnic
heritage on a vibrant and beautiful university.

To fulfill this vision, UW-Superior has identified seven strategic themes as part of its
strategic priorities, which were developed in 2008. The expression of each theme
articulates dedication to its liberal arts mission, where students and faculty teach and
learn in a safe and supportive environment.

*Academic Excellence* – Develop a creative and dynamic learning environment
within a liberal arts tradition that enables students to meet their individual goals
while fostering life-long learning.

*Culture of Respect* – Create and foster an accepting community in which all staff
and students feel safe, and diverse perspectives are valued.

*Campus Life* – Create an intellectual and cultural experience outside of the
classroom that supports, complements, and enhances the in-class experience,
reflective of the public liberal arts mission.

*Continuous Improvement* – The University will improve its programs and services
on a continuous basis. All facets of operations will be regularly assessed and
modified when appropriate.

*Resource Management* – Exercise responsible stewardship of all resources.

*Enrollment Management* – Utilize enrollment management principles to ensure a
diverse student body while strengthening our academic standards.

*University Image* – Project a positive image of the University that promotes our
unique qualities and enhances public relations, recruitment, and retention.

UW-Superior continually examines its progress and explores new methods for fulfilling
its vision and values as well as its strategic priorities. The process is considered in greater
detail in Criterion Five.
Core Component 2.E: The institution ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

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.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

UW-Superior provides the structures and supports for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its students, staff, and faculty.

- The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) provides resources and professional development opportunities to all faculty and staff, especially focused on themes of teaching and learning.
- UW-Superior provides a locus for the area’s McNair Scholars program, providing guidance on research expectations and collaboration between students and their faculty mentors.
- Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources via educational sessions during orientation and in classes within each academic program.
- Disciplinary procedures for student academic misconduct are contained in state code. Careful review of serious individual infractions that rise above the department are directed to the Dean of Students and conducted by the Academic Misconduct Hearing Committee.
- The Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviews all research protocols for any UW-Superior project involving human subjects. The community member at-large position on the IRB has been vacant for the past few years. The University should determine if it is feasible to maintain the at-large position.
Discussion

OVERSIGHT AND SUPPORT FOR ETHICAL RESEARCH

UW-Superior offers a variety of structures by which faculty, staff and students are supported in the ethical acquisition and communication of knowledge in the classroom, research laboratory, work place, or beyond the walls of the institution.

In response to recommendations of the 2003 HLC accreditation site team, UW-Superior has created the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) to support scholarly endeavors by its faculty and staff. The CETL 2012 Report states its mission to provide “…all faculty and instructional academic staff with services, resources and support to foster meaningful student learning and quality teaching within a liberal arts tradition.” CETL becomes central to new members from their first weeks, as it facilitates orientation to both new adjuncts and full-time faculty to the University. CETL is especially dedicated to furnishing information about and access to research opportunities in the scholarship of teaching and learning. The development and role of CETL is reviewed extensively in Criterion Three, and its role in assessment efforts is covered in Criterion Four. Individuals in the categories of teaching academic staff, academic staff and classified staff also have access to professional development opportunities, discussed in Criterion Three.

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is composed of members of the faculty and is assigned by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. The IRB is responsible for reviewing all research protocols for any UW-Superior project involving human subjects. Such projects can be conducted only after they are approved by the IRB. The IRB works to assure that the rights and welfare of human subjects are protected and that appropriate methods of

Practice of Ethical Research

Dr. Eleni Pinnow

As an experimental psychologist conducting ethical research is crucial. I, along with most researchers, believe that data gained from unethical circumstances has no place within the scientific canon. As a teacher, I strive to instill this belief in my students. As a member of the IRB committee, I am proud of our institution’s commitment to doing research the “right way.”

I teach our capstone class and all Psychology majors conduct their own research projects. Prior to data collection, all students complete an IRB application and think about any and all ethical issues in their study and what risks come with their research. As they gather their data, students inform their participants about the research process and their rights in the experiment. Throughout the course of the semester I watch my students blossom from novices to concerned, sensitive researchers who recognize the value of scientific research and ethical guidelines.
obtaining informed consent are utilized in projects involving human subjects, consistent with the Code of Federal Regulations, 45 CRF 46 (July 14, 2009).

UW-Superior acts as the regional home for the McNair Program, administering the program for students and their faculty mentors from UW-Superior, the University of Minnesota-Duluth, the College of St. Scholastica, and Northland College in Ashland, Wisconsin. Students and faculty mentors in the McNair Scholars program adhere to high expectations regarding their work together. Under the careful administration of the program leadership, scholars are encouraged to work closely with their mentors, who provide guidance and instruction in the ethical application of research methods, from topic formulation, through literature review and research methodology. Mentors may encourage and guide students toward publishing their research in professional journals in their field of study if appropriate. The single greatest contribution of the faculty mentor may be in demonstrating sincere interest in the intellectual development of the scholar.

During Orientation, first year and transfer students participate in an induction ceremony during which they recite the University Pledge, which includes the following passage: “I will challenge myself to examine my beliefs, values, and goals, and to dedicate myself to [the] ongoing pursuit of knowledge and truth.” This pledge was developed through the student shared governance and endorsed in March 2007. When academic misconduct does occur, the University follows the process outlined in Chapter 14 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code affording all parties due process and timely, careful resolution of the situation.

Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources via educational sessions during orientation programs, through library instruction, in the Distance Learning Center’s exam policy, and via syllabi for classes within academic programs. In 2011, Faculty Senate approved a policy in support of responsible student research. Each academic program requires students to engage in scholarly research or creative activity in their senior capstone project and provides such training within the curriculum. Faculty members in turn may utilize “Turn It In” software to ensure that students’ work is their own. University Committees review breaches of conduct by students in both academic and non-academic settings, and are guided by the Wisconsin Administrative Code. Disciplinary procedures for student academic misconduct are outlined in Chapter 14 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code, and Chapter 17 for non-academic matters, including conduct on University lands. The Statement of Principles reads,
“The Board of Regents, administrators, faculty, academic staff and students of the University of Wisconsin System believe that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental to the mission of higher education and of the University of Wisconsin System. The University has a responsibility to promote academic honesty and integrity and to develop procedures to deal effectively with instances of academic dishonesty. Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect of others’ academic endeavors. Students who violate these standards must accept the consequences of their actions.”

The procedures for enforcing UWS Chapter 14 are applied by the Dean of Students’ Office, with collaboration of faculty, instructional staff, and academic affairs administrators. Over the past five years the office has adjudicated an average of three to four cases per year.
Criterion Two Summary

Through its interactions with the University of Wisconsin System and its Board of Regents, UW-Superior strives to perform its business responsibly and ethically, with integrity to its mission. UW-Superior continually examines how to effectively uphold the ideals of what it means to be a liberal arts institution, and to communicate with all constituents, both internal and external, its commitment to provide quality educational experiences to students. The University follows policies and procedures at all levels that are widely communicated and are created to ensure that all members may be confident in the service provided. UW-Superior seeks to protect the academic freedoms of staff and students in a safe and balanced environment, while holding everyone accountable to high standards of ethical practice.
Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning – Quality, Resources, and Support

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

Introduction

With its roots as a teacher college, UW-Superior has long emphasized broad-based liberal education within a student-centered environment. Since its designation as Wisconsin’s Public Liberal Arts college in 1998, the University has worked to more systematically foster liberal learning across the student experience through the adoption of a set of high-impact liberal arts practices that are emphasized across the curriculum and co-curriculum and through the adoption of institution-level undergraduate liberal education learning goals that define a set of learning expectations for all undergraduate students, regardless of major.

UW-Superior maintains its historical commitment to the central role of faculty in both instruction and university governance. The university has actively resisted the trend toward greater reliance on instructional academic staff and has recently completed a program of hiring that, despite a difficult budget environment, expanded the overall size of the faculty. UW-Superior has a practice of strong faculty governance, particularly in matters of curriculum, academic policy, and faculty personnel matters, that is enshrined in both the culture and more formally in Chapter 36 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code: Given the relatively small size of the faculty, this practice of strong faculty governance makes UW-Superior a service-heavy University in terms of faculty workload. Service, however, is strongly valued both in the University culture and in personnel decisions.

Over the past decade, the University has expanded professional development opportunities and resources. An example is the creation of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL). Professional development opportunities conducted by the Center are available to all categories of employees – faculty, instructional academic
staff, non-instructional academic staff, and classified staff. Since 2007, 95 to 97 percent of all ranking faculty, and 79 percent of campus life staff, at the University have attended at least one CETL event. The full breadth of CETL’s impact is included in the CETL 2012 Report.

Encompassing 16 percent of UW-Superior’s total student population, UW-Superior’s distance learning program plays a significant role in the academic life of the University. UW-Superior has been involved in distance education since the 1970s. With the rapid growth of distance learning enrollments over the past decade, the University has put in place policies and practices to more firmly root responsibility for Distance Learning curricular and personnel decisions in the academic departments and to ensure program consistency and quality regardless of mode of instruction.

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 its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.
3. The institution’s program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- UW-Superior is authorized to offer majors in 27 academic disciplines plus an interdisciplinary individually designed major. In addition, the University offers a number of stand-alone academic minors and both credit and non-credit certificate programs.
- The University has in place review processes to ensure programs are current and require appropriate levels of student performance, both for on-campus and distance learning offerings.
• All graduate, undergraduate, and credit-bearing certificate programs are required to have Learning Goals in place. Institution-level learning goals at the undergraduate level, as well. Currently, all but two undergraduate majors (each of which face special circumstances), and nearly all graduate programs and undergraduate minors, have Learning Goals in place.

• Teacher Education programs at all levels are currently under review of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Self-examination of these programs is informing current discussion of how to more clearly differentiate the Learning Goals of the graduate program in Instruction from those of the Elementary Education major.

Discussion

LEARNING GOALS

UW-Superior has in place Learning Goals at both the institutional and programmatic level. In 2010 UW-Superior adopted a set of institution-level undergraduate Liberal Education Learning Goals. These Learning Goals (revised and approved as Learning Outcomes in 2011) describe the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind that all UW-Superior undergraduate students, regardless of major, are expected to master or embrace by the time they graduate. The undergraduate Liberal Education Learning Goals are:

• The ability to think and make connections across disciplines
• The ability to express oneself in multiple forms
• The ability to analyze and reflect upon multiple perspectives to arrive at a perspective of one's own
• The ability to think and engage as a global citizen
• The ability to engage in evidence-based problem solving

In addition, as part of the University assessment initiative, all program areas (undergraduate majors and minors, graduate programs, and credit-bearing certificate programs) are required to have content-specific student learning outcomes. Academic programs that offer both undergraduate and graduate degrees differentiate their learning goals according to the level of the program. During 2011-12, nearly all programs adopted and/or updated programmatic learning outcomes. The exceptions are as follows:
• Broad Field Science – Due to faculty turnover, the Broad Field Science undergraduate major was exempted from the deadline for development of learning outcomes. The task of adopting learning goals will be completed once the vacant position in Science Education has been permanently filled.

• Individually Designed Major – Individually Designed Major (on campus; IDM) and Interdisciplinary Studies Major (online; IDS) both allow students to design an individualized curriculum that reflects their particular needs and interests. The IDS major plays a particularly important role in UW-Superior’s Distance Learning Program, with approximately one-third of distance learning students pursuing this major. During the 2011-12 academic year, Faculty Senate identified lack of faculty oversight over these programs as an area of concern. As a result, Faculty Senate established a standing faculty oversight committee and an assessment process. Under the newly developed process, assessment must be planned on the individual basis, with collaboration with the student and three faculty members from different disciplines who serve as an assessment team.

• Three stand-alone minor programs (i.e., minor programs not associated with a major) currently lack student learning goals. Of these three, two (Aerospace Studies and Water Resources Management) are collaborative minors conducted in conjunction with nearby universities. The third (Library Science) is monitored through the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and is taught collaboratively with other UW universities at the graduate level. A method for developing appropriate assessment methods for these collaborative programs remains to be determined.

REVIEW PROCESSES

Responsibility for course and program content, including levels of performance required of students, rests in the academic departments. In departments with multiple disciplines, ongoing curricular development and review largely takes place at the level of the individual disciplinary program area; formal authority over curriculum, however, rests with the full department.

The University has two institution-level processes to ensure regular review of major and minor curricula:

• Catalog review process – Every two years the academic catalog is updated. Departments and programs take this as an opportunity to review curricula. The Undergraduate Academic Affairs Council (in the case of undergraduate programs)
and the Graduate Council (in the case of graduate programs) approve any curricular changes in advance of catalog revision.

- **Academic program review process** — Academic programs are required to undergo a scheduled comprehensive program review conducted by the Academic Program Review Council, a faculty governance body made up faculty members elected by the faculty at-large (See Criterion Four for a detailed discussion of the academic program review process).

In addition, as discussed in Criterion Four, majors in Social Work, Chemistry, Music, Transportation and Logistics Management, and Education have external accreditation and/or certification.

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**DISTANCE LEARNING, DUAL CREDIT, DUAL DEGREE, AND COLLABORATIVE DEGREE PROGRAMS**

From its Superior campus, UW-Superior provides courses through multiple modes of delivery, including face-to-face instruction, online instruction, blended instruction, and Interactive Television (ITV) instruction. This includes instruction by UW-Superior faculty in Educational Administration who travel to offer their courses at other UW university campuses in Eau Claire and Stevens Point. In the past, the University had a number of dual-degree programs with other regional institutions. None of the previously existing dual-degree programs, however, are currently in operation. The University does participate in a number of collaborative programs leading to a degree or credential. Collaborative bachelor’s degrees are offered in Sustainable Management with UW-Parkside, UW-River Falls, and UW-Stout; and in Health and Wellness Management with UW-La Crosse, UW-River Falls, and UW-Stevens Point. A collaborative master’s degree in Sustainable Management is offered with UW-Green Bay, UW-Oshkosh, UW-Parkside, and UW-Stout. A graduate level licensure in Library Science is offered with UW-Eau Claire, UW-Madison, UW-Oshkosh, and UW-Whitewater. These programs are coordinated through UW-Extension, under the direct oversight of academic departments, and undergo regular curricular review by those departments. Courses are taught by UW-Superior faculty and teaching staff, as well as faculty and staff in corresponding academic departments of other UW institutions. Credentials of new instructors are shared within these collaborations and are reviewed at UW-Superior. Since all UW universities are HLC accredited, collaborating partners must meet the same instructor criteria that UW-Superior must meet.
The University has in place a number of policies and procedures designed to ensure program quality and consistency regardless of mode of instruction:

- Responsibility for all program and credit course offerings rests in academic departments, regardless of mode of delivery or location, and regardless of whether offered through the University academic programs or University Outreach services. The selection and approval of instructors for all credit courses, regardless of mode of delivery or location, for instance, rests with academic departments, using the same standards used to select and approve instructors for the university instructional program. Major programs offered online are subject to the same departmental-based assessment requirements as majors offered in a face-to-face format.

- With the exception of the Interdisciplinary Studies Major offered via the University’s Distance Learning Center, curricula and learning outcomes are consistent regardless of mode of delivery. The online majors in Communicating Arts and Elementary Education offered via the university’s Distance Learning Center, for instance, have the same curricula and identified learning outcomes as those offered via face-to-face instruction. Learning goals for all courses in the collaborative online majors in Sustainable Management and Health and Wellness Management, taught by faculty from multiple UW institutions, are approved by the sponsoring home departments at UW-Superior.

- The Faculty Senate established a standing faculty committee to oversee both the Individually Designed Major and its minor emphasis, and the Interdisciplinary Studies Major and Minor (offered via the Distance Learning Center). The committee will ensure regular review and accountability for the Interdisciplinary Studies Major, which plays a significant role in the University’s online program. Faculty Senate is currently developing a charge for this committee.

- UW-Superior uses the research-based Quality Matters standards to ensure quality instructional delivery in online courses. UW-Superior has been a member of the international Quality Matters consortium since 2008, using the Quality Matters rubric in the approval of all online courses.

UW-Superior offers no formal dual-credit programs for secondary (high school) students. Secondary students may enroll in UW-Superior courses either on-campus or through Distance Learning. The University has begun to market a select number of distance learning courses to secondary students. Such courses, however, are regular UW-Superior academic offerings taught by regular faculty and instructional staff.
Core Component 3.B: 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.

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FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Intellectual inquiry, along with broad and integrative learning, has long been central to the academic culture of UW-Superior. Since its designation as Wisconsin’s Public Liberal Arts college in 1998 and its admission to the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC) in 2001, the University has become much more intentional in promoting liberal learning, through the adoption of the undergraduate liberal education learning goals and a set of high-impact liberal arts practices that are emphasized across the curriculum and co-curriculum. In addition, the University has established a standing Committee on General Education to provide stronger leadership in this area and has revised its general
The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

- Over the past 30 years the University has dramatically increased the attention given to issues of human and cultural diversity. In 2010, however, a Chancellor’s Task Force on Inclusive Excellence found that, despite areas of great strength, attention to issues of human and cultural diversity was uneven across the curriculum and co-curriculum. The Task Force proposed a series of recommendations that have been endorsed by governance and administration. Steps to implement the recommendations are underway.

**Discussion**

GENERAL EDUCATION

With 140 faculty and instructional academic staff (well over half the instructional personnel in the University) teaching within the University General Education program, the emphasis on general education is central to the academic life of the University. Sixty-two percent of all general education enrollments in the 2011-12 academic year were in courses taught by regular faculty (fall and spring semesters calculated on a credit-hour basis). The Institution maintains a minimum requirement for general education for all of its undergraduate programs through a traditional practice of distributed curricula: 42 semester credits for associate and bachelor degrees from Core, Knowledge Categories, and Non-Western and Diversity. The structure of the program includes: 1) Core or Proficiency requirements (15 credits) in writing, oral communications, mathematics, and health and wellness; and 2) Knowledge categories (27 credits) that expose students to the different ways of disciplinary knowing in the humanities, social sciences, natural and physical science, and fine and applied arts. In addition, the program includes non-western and diversity requirements (6 credits) which may be satisfied by Knowledge category courses. Consistent with the University mission, the general education program encourages students to explore a variety of ways of constructing knowledge and emphasizes diverse cultures and multiple voices. The courses in the General Education Knowledge Categories are meant to expose students to a broad array of concepts, perspectives and methodologies from the range of academic disciplines. Criteria for inclusion of courses in the Non-Western and Diversity categories were last reviewed in 1996. This has been identified as an area that is in need of review.
In 2010, the Faculty Senate approved creation of a free-standing university-wide Committee on General Education with representation from a cross-section of University programs. (Previously, a subcommittee of the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Council served as the committee on general education.) The move to a free-standing committee was designed to provide stronger leadership to the General Education program. The committee reports to the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Council. Its charge is as follows:

The General Education Committee provides oversight for the University’s General Education Program. Its responsibilities include: 1) Review of proposed general education courses for inclusion and placement within the program; 2) Coordination of general education assessment and continuous improvement, including regular review of general education offerings; 3) Development and maintenance of criteria for general education courses and report criteria changes (or proposed changes) to the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Council (UAAC) and the Faculty Senate; 4) Review of other issues related to the General Education Program as referred to the GEC by the UAAC and/or the Faculty Senate.

The Committee began reviewing the Learning Goals for General Education in 2010. New goals were proposed and approved through governance in January 2012. The goals specify a set of skills and attitudes that students are expected to develop through the general education program. These skills and attitudes are consistent with the Institution’s five liberal education learning goals, which define a set of skills and attitudes that the university identifies as characteristic of a liberally educated person. The committee also received approval from the Faculty Senate in May 2012 to revise the criteria for inclusion of courses in general education to reflect the new learning goals. The committee is also in the process of designing and implementing an assessment program for general education.

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LIBERAL LEARNING
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Since UW-Superior’s designation as Wisconsin’s Public Liberal Arts College, the University has taken steps to more systematically foster liberal learning across the student experience. The adoption of institution-level undergraduate Liberal Education Learning Goals define a set of learning expectations for all undergraduate students, regardless of major. The University has also adopted the following High-Impact Liberal Arts Practices (HIPs) that are emphasized across the curriculum and co-curriculum:

- Academic Service-Learning
First-Year Experience  
Global Awareness  
Senior Experience  
Writing Across the Curriculum  
Undergraduate Research

In 2007, UW-Superior received a base budget increase of $849,800 to help fund the first five of these high-impact liberal arts practices. The practices occupy a central place in UW-Superior’s academic plan and strategic priorities, and they are in various stages of development and implementation.

In keeping with its mission, the University encourages students in all majors to engage in critical inquiry and/or creative endeavor. With the full implementation of the “Senior Experience” initiative in 2010, all students complete a senior capstone project that is set in the context of their major. The capstone involves a significant piece of original scholarly or creative work that is then publicly presented. Senior projects are shared with the University in a variety of settings, such as student seminars or posters, recitals, performances, or exhibitions. In recent years, the University has placed increased emphasis on undergraduate research and creative activity by establishing an Undergraduate Research Initiative and by facilitating student involvement in activities such as the McNair Scholars Program and the statewide Posters in the Rotunda celebration of undergraduate research.

During the 2010 HLC site visit, HLC reviewers asked that the next self-study provide details of the accomplishments of UW-Superior’s growing Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Program. WAC aims to foster a culture of writing at the University by seeing that meaningful student writing is made part of as many courses and experiences as possible. Implementing a two-pronged approach – emphasizing instructor development (helping instructors use a writing-inclusive pedagogy in their disciplinary courses) and student development (providing instructors a writing-inclusive...
pedagogy in their disciplinary courses and providing students with direct help via the Writing Center) – the WAC program has accomplished the following:

- Writing-Intensive/Writing-Inclusive Course Development and Enhancement Grant Program for individual instructors, which has awarded grants to instructors in the following fields: Physics, Communicating Arts, Political Science, Women’s and Gender Studies, Philosophy.
- The Writing-Infused Curriculum: Grants for Academic Departments and Programs, which in January 2012 awarded a two-year grant to the Early Childhood Education minor.
- The Writing Mentor Program: As part of the writing-infused curriculum grant, an academic program receives a writing mentor for two courses within the program. This undergraduate student works with the course instructor(s) to provide help tailored to students’ needs.
- Cross-disciplinary brown-bags and workshop for instructors: Three brown-bags are held each semester, and a WAC workshop facilitated by Dr. Brad Hughes (Director of Writing Across the Curriculum at UW-Madison) took place in Fall 2010.
- Assessment development: The program has developed WAC learning goals for instructor development and student development, assessment instruments, and a Writing Center client satisfaction survey featuring questions on learning-goal achievement.
- Writing Center expansion of services and reach to students from courses across the disciplines: Since 2008-09, the UW-Superior Writing Center has seen a 157 percent increase in the number of consultations (from 880 in 2008-09 to 2264 in 2011-12) and a 33 percent increase in the number of academic programs represented among course assignments for which students are seeking help. Since 2009-10, there has been an increase in students from non-writing (i.e., disciplinary) courses seeking Writing Center help (34 percent of all consultations concerned assignments from disciplinary classes in 2009-10; 55 percent in 2011-12). Further, online consultations started in Spring 2010 with only nine such consultations from March through May of that semester; in the same amount of time in Spring 2012, there were 112 online consultations (a thousand-fold increase).

WAC’s plans include a Writing Excellence Certificate Program, which will feature development of student writing workshops, and expansion of the grant programs and of the writing mentor program.
DIVERSITY

As Wisconsin’s Public Liberal Arts College, UW-Superior places a premium on preparing student for the diverse world in which they live and work. This commitment is reflected in the University mission statement that speaks of a tradition of liberal arts education that “embodies respect for diverse cultures and multiple voices.”

Over the past 30 years, emphasis on issues of human and cultural diversity within the curriculum and within academic departments and programs has grown significantly. Undergraduate coursework requires three credits with a non-western focus and three credits with a focus on issues of diversity. The General Education Committee and Undergraduate Academic Affairs Council review courses proposed as fulfilling the Non-Western and Diversity requirements. Currently there are 15 academic programs offering 35 classes that fulfill the diversity requirements. There are 10 academic programs offering 31 classes that fulfill the non-western requirements. These courses and their descriptions are found in the current University Undergraduate Catalog.

The University offers several minor programs (i.e., First Nations Studies, Global Studies, Special Education, and Women and Gender Studies) that focus explicitly on issues of human and cultural diversity. In addition, such issues occupy a central role in many of the traditional disciplinary-based programs, including Anthropology (Minor), Broad Field Social Studies, Business Administration, Communicating Arts, Foreign Languages (Chinese, French, German and Spanish), Geography (Minor), History, Legal Studies, Music Education, Philosophy (Minor), Political Science, Social Work, Sociology, Teacher Education, Visual Arts, and Writing (Minor).

Attention to issues of human and cultural diversity has also increased within the co-curriculum. The Multicultural Affairs Office – in addition to providing support and resources for our Native American, Latino American and African American students – provides a variety of cultural programs that promote understanding and are open to the broader university community. The Gender Equity Resource Center provides educational programs promoting understanding about gender and sexuality.

The UW-Superior Accountability Report show Superior has over 150 international students (highest ratio of international students within the comprehensive institutions of the UW System) from 30+ countries, who help to create a diverse and vibrant university body. Study-away opportunities and exchange programs help students gain a basic understanding of, respect for, and appreciation of, cultural differences. Of UW-Superior
graduates in 2010-11, 9.1 percent studied abroad, a decrease from 9.7 percent in 2009-10 and an increase from 7.1 percent five years previously. Through expanded offerings and increased staffing, the International Programs Office is working to increase the percentage of graduates who study abroad. Teacher Education majors are encouraged to perform at least a portion of their student teaching abroad through the Educators Abroad Program, which the university joined in 2010. Our membership in the National Student Exchange offers affordable options, enabling our students to take courses not available at our university, graduate on time, expand their academic program options, be exposed to diverse cultural settings, seek out graduate and professional schools, and explore career options.

In collaboration with the Global Awareness and Education Committee, the International Programs Office not only offers programs that aim to educate the University about ethnic and cultural diversity, but also supports opportunities for students and faculty to be incorporated into, and learn from, diverse settings through studying/teaching abroad. Faculty do the majority of site visits to existing program centers abroad and may apply to receive small travel grants to investigate the potential for faculty-led programs in other locations. Since 2010, new programs have been developed and offered in Bali, France, Ghana, India, Mexico, Scotland, and Spain. Programs to Bosnia and China, which were developed in the early 2000s, continue to be offered, and research is underway for programs to Argentina, Italy, and Turkey.

Residence Life has a Diversity Action Committee composed of both students and staff that focuses on programming and educational opportunities aimed at diversity and inclusion. The University’s First-Year Experience program includes a brief session with Multicultural Affairs during orientation programs, which exposes new students to the importance of understanding and appreciating diversity, as well as introducing them to the resources provided to support and encourage diversity and inclusion. Superior Allies is a certification program that is open to all UW-Superior community members that empowers students, faculty, and staff to create a peer education network that fosters a supportive, nurturing, and celebratory climate for diversity through education, awareness, and action.

While recognizing the strides made in the past several decades, in 2010 the Chancellor’s Task Force on Inclusive Excellence found that commitment to issues of human and cultural diversity was uneven across the curriculum and co-curriculum. The Task Force offered a number of recommendations to strengthen the attention given to issues of
diversity across all academic and co-curricular areas. These recommendations (along with the Task Force’s full report) were received by UW-Superior administration.

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FACULTY SCHOLARSHIP

As a student-centered university, UW-Superior subscribes to the ideal of the scholar-teacher whose relationships with students are informed by their own participation in scholarly pursuits. Scholarly/creative activity is a requirement for all faculty and is an important consideration in the hiring process and as part of the annual review, promotion, and tenure processes. Expectations for scholarly/creative production are set by individual departments in their personnel rules, subject to approval by governance. This expectation is reflected in a set of common guidelines for departmental personnel rules that is under development. (Guidelines for tenure rules have been approved by Faculty Senate as of May 2012. Guidelines for retention and promotion remain under development.)

Faculty have presented and published original scholarly or creative work and have received external funding to support these activities. In recent years, UW-Superior has been the third leading recipient of federal research grant funding in the UW System. Research centers such as the Lake Superior Research Institute and the Transportation and Logistics Research Center provide facilities and support faculty research, as well as opportunities for undergraduate research internships. In addition, the association of the University with the Great Lakes Maritime Research Institute and the newly established Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve provides additional opportunities for faculty and student collaboration in scholarly work. The University also plays a part in supporting faculty scholarship and creative activity through the professional development grant program, which provides funding for travel to conferences and professional development workshops.
In addition to more traditional forms of disciplinary scholarship, the University has made a particular effort to encourage the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, through the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. CETL encourages the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning through travel grants, workshops, and other resources. It also facilitates faculty participation in scholarly activities available through the UW System’s Office of Professional and Instructional Development (OPID). These include the UW System’s Faculty Fellows and Faculty Scholars programs, which provide both financial and professional development support for faculty to pursue the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

While instructional academic staff (i.e., non-faculty instructional staff) is not contractually required to engage in scholarly/creative pursuits, the institution encourages and values such activity. Instructional academic staff participates in the scholarly opportunities provided by CETL and OPID and have access to professional development grant funds to support scholarly activity.
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 (oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning; etc.).
2. All instructors are appropriately credentialed, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.
3. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures. 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.
4. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
5. 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.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Despite difficult financial times and the diseconomies of scale associated with a small university, UW-Superior maintains a faculty and staff of sufficient size and professional background to provide effective, high-quality programs and student services in a student-centered environment. With conscious intent and careful planning, the University has resisted the national trend toward greater reliance on adjunct instructors. In fact, between 2006 and 2011 the University embarked upon a significant program of faculty recruitment that significantly increased the number of faculty positions.
- In recent years, the University has also become far more systematic and intentional in providing professional development opportunities for faculty and staff (both instructional and non-instructional). In 2007 the University established a Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) to provide leadership on issues of student learning. The University has also expanded professional development opportunities for non-instructional staff.
The University, however, has identified a number of concerns regarding personnel policies and practices that should be addressed:

- While we have in place a policy regarding minimum qualifications for faculty, we lack such a policy for instructional academic staff.
- We need to confirm that the University is in full compliance with its policy on minimum qualifications for faculty.
- There is currently no University policy on frequency and methods of student evaluation of instruction. The team recommends that each academic department adopt such a policy.
- There is no formal review process for academic staff on semester-to-semester or year-to-year contracts.
- The team still needs to complete its analysis of the qualifications, training, and support for staff in the student service areas.

Discussion

FACULTY

With a 16 student/1 faculty ratio, UW-Superior maintains sufficient faculty to provide a student-centered learning environment while also meeting the non-classroom roles of faculty. With 66 percent of undergraduate enrollments in courses taught by regular faculty (the second highest percentage in the UW System), faculty occupy the central role in both graduate and undergraduate instruction. (2012-13 Introduction to the UW System) Despite difficult financial circumstances, the University engaged in a significant program of faculty hiring between 2006 and 2011. During that period, the university made a total of 56 tenure-track hires. These hires included replacements for retirements and resignations, consolidation positions to replace adjunct positions, and new growth in selected programs. Between 2006 and 2011 total faculty positions increased from 98 to 115. This is discussed in Criterion Five.

The University maintains a strong track record of faculty retention at all levels. Of new faculty hired between 2006 and 2011, 94.6 percent have been retained through the 2011-12 academic year. In addition, just 8.4 percent of associate and full professors on staff in 2006 have departed UW-Superior through resignation. The University, however, has seen a significant wave of faculty retirements, with 28 percent of associate and full professors
on staff in 2006 retiring by 2011. The large number of retirements poses a challenge for the University, as we are currently stretched thin for faculty to serve in governance/service positions that require tenure and/or extensive experience and institutional memory. This problem, though, will naturally resolve itself over time as the large number of newly hired faculty gain experience and tenure at the Institution.

Each faculty member (except for first-year hires) is required to engage in service to the Institution, thus staffing all University and Faculty Senate committees with faculty representation. Faculty Senate and the Provost’s office maintain ongoing assignments for committees and document the service contribution by faculty to governance and committees. Because of the small size of the institution and its faculty, service obligations of faculty are heavy relative to larger institutions. The Faculty Senate regularly reviews committee array and size in order combat proliferation of committee positions.

Each academic department has a Faculty Senator and a representative on the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Council (UAAC) to represent the faculty voice in all governance issues. Faculty, thus, fulfill their statutory responsibility to shared governance by shepherding curriculum through development and providing input/feedback to administration on critical curricular decision-making. UW-Superior has a tradition of strong faculty governance, with faculty taking leadership on such University-wide efforts as the development of a series of initiatives (now known as Liberal Arts High Impact Practices) to fully implement our public liberal arts mission.

Consistent with the University mission statement (which emphasizes individual attention to students), UW-Superior places a premium on instructor accessibility. The size of the University and the design of its new buildings facilitate instructor-student interactions in a variety of settings. With an average class size of 22 at the lower division and 15 at the upper division, UW-Superior’s classroom environment fosters ongoing interaction between students and instructors. The open gathering areas in new buildings such as Swenson Hall and the Yellowjacket Union encourage informal interactions between students and instructors. In buildings such as Barstow Hall, office suites provide an area where students can study together in close proximity to faculty/staff offices, allowing them to seek help from instructors when needed.

While instructors are frequently available on a “drop-in” basis, they also hold regularly scheduled office hours (a minimum of five scheduled hours a week for full-time instructors) so that students can plan accordingly. Instructors are also available for
student inquiry through electronic resources such as forums and discussion groups within the University learning management system, as well as through e-mail. In addition, faculty and staff realize that important student interactions and learning opportunities occur outside of the formal classroom setting and routinely participate as advisors and mentors for student capstone projects and a variety of other curricular and co-curricular activities. (All recognized student organizations are required to have a member of the faculty or professional staff serve in the role of advisor.)

QUALIFICATIONS AND EVALUATION OF FACULTY AND STAFF

According to the Unclassified Handbook 7.4.4.1 University policies specify that all tenured and tenure-track faculty have an earned Doctorate or Master of Fine Arts degree in an appropriate discipline, or its recognized equivalent. Qualifications policy for instructional academic staff was adopted in 2012. A complete analysis of current instructional academic staff qualifications must be completed. UW-Superior does not offer dual-credit coursework. We do participate in a number of collaborative degree programs. Our partner institutions are HLC accredited and are subject to standards for qualifications of instructional personnel as is UW-Superior.

Where they exist, national standards are employed to establish the qualifications for individuals working in student services areas. The various departments within the Campus Life area, for instance, utilize Council for Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) recommendations regarding hiring practices and qualifications. The Center for Academic Advisement follows standards established by the National Academic Advisement Association (NACADA).

UW System and UW-Superior Unclassified Handbook 7.4.2 require annual review of all faculty and instructional academic staff. These reviews generally occur within academic departments, are documented and then reported to the Provost’s office for review. Specific rules and procedures for annual

Students Report on Faculty Interaction

Elizabeth Jacobson (Senior, Political Science) and Julia Johnson (Senior, Individually Designed Major), wrote:

The faculty at UW-Superior has always been very approachable and willing to help students with both academic and non-academic concerns and problems. The faculty will take time out of their extremely busy schedules to assist students in navigating the complicated array of events that is university life. This means helping them talk through problems with other students, professors, assignments, and personal issues that can prevent students from accomplishing their goals. In addition, the faculty at UW-Superior is very accommodating and will work with students to meet their specific needs. No other faculty group can relate to students and assist them in reaching their full potential better than the amazing people here at UW-Superior.
faculty review are contained in departmental personnel rules that are approved by appropriate governance. The University is engaged currently in a process of revising departmental personnel rules to ensure clarity and consistency of the criteria for promotion and tenure across the University, and to maintain compliance with UW System rules.

The annual review process for faculty evaluates teaching, scholarship and service within a departmental context to ensure that faculty members are current within disciplines and performing in their teaching roles. Student evaluations provide specific data about teaching performance. Faculty regularly report scholarly and creative work to their academic departments. Faculty at UW-Superior present academic and creative work regionally, nationally, and internationally. Numerous opportunities are provided by the institution to share scholarly and creative achievements across disciplines, such as in the Brown Bag Series, Enhancement Day activities, and other CETL events. The university follows the Boyer model of scholarship, recognizing four different types of scholarship, including, for instance, the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). Faculty present and engage in peer reviewed conferences, venues and professional presentations on a regular basis. This ongoing work is documented in the annual review process.

UW-System policy requires that all faculty being considered for merit salary increases be evaluated by their peers as to instructional ability, using information from student evaluations of instruction, as well as other information of assessment, at least once every three years. UW-Superior policy requires evaluation of teaching effectiveness during each annual review, along with evaluation of scholarship and service. A policy requiring all academic departments to adopt a specific policy regarding methods and frequency of student evaluation of instruction and to establish equivalent methods for on-campus and distance learning instruction was approved by governance November 2012.

Currently, there is no formal review process for instructional staff on semester-to-semester or year-to-year contracts. While some departments provide professional feedback and review to such staff, this practice is not universal. The university has identified this as an area of concern.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Institution provides financial support for the professional development of faculty and staff in three primary forms:

- Faculty and staff professional development grant programs
The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) provides ongoing faculty and professional development for educators to enhance quality teaching and learning skills. It also oversees UW-Superior involvement in the UW System's Office of Professional and Instructional Development (OPID) professional development grants, including the Wisconsin Teaching and Fellow Program. CETL programming includes both short and intensive teaching and learning workshops, informal discussions, book groups, an intensive new faculty orientation program, support for travel to regional and national conferences, and a one-evening adjunct orientation program inaugurated in the fall of 2012. At the beginning of each semester, CETL sponsors a “Faculty and Staff Enhancement Day” that offers a full-day of professional development activities. CETL also is the institutional home for the university First-Year Seminar program. CETL has adopted the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning as a conceptual frame for much of its programming. Since its inception in 2007, CETL has documented 2404 points of contact with CETL events, with a pattern of steadily increasing participation. Ninety percent of the events are evaluated for quality assurance with 88% of sessions rated either “good” or “excellent” quality by attendees in immediate feedback forms.
All academic departments receive an annual supply and expenses budget allocation based on a formula that incorporates resources for professional development activities. While the most common use of these resources is faculty and staff travel to professional meetings and conferences, the funds can also be used for the purchase of departmental materials (computer software or books and films, for instance) that support professional development. Due to the difficult budgetary environment, departmental professional development funds have failed to keep pace with inflation in professional travel costs. Nonetheless, departmental funds provide a baseline of resources for professional development that is available to all faculty and many instructional staff. Professional development grants and awards are also available to non-instructional academic staff through the Academic Staff Senate, and to classified staff through application through the Office of Human Resources.

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.
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- UW-Superior serves a student population with a wide range of life experiences and academic backgrounds, including significant numbers of non-traditional, first-generation, and low-income students, along with a growing number of military veterans. The University has in place specific programs and offices to meet the needs of specific student sub-populations, including a recently-established resource center for non-traditional students and military veterans. In addition, our advisement system emphasizes one-to-one interaction between faculty advisors and individual advisees to help students engage in academic planning that meets their particular needs and interests.

- In the area of physical infrastructure, the past decade has seen a series of building projects and renovations that have largely remade the University. These projects include a new student union, a new student wellness center, totally renovated library, and a new state-of-the-art academic building (Swenson Hall) that now houses more that 40 percent of the instructional space. Taken together, these projects provide cutting edge student-centered curricular and co-curricular learning environments, as well as much improved public spaces that foster the informal interaction so vital to high-quality liberal arts education.

- Given significant changes that have recently been made in the areas of student health and child care services, we recommend that a comprehensive program review of these areas be conducted. Also, in light of the significant number of returning veterans attending UW-Superior, we also recommend that the newly-established Veterans and Non-Traditional Students Center conduct a review of services for military veterans.

Discussion

STUDENT SERVICES

UW-Superior’s mission statement reflects our commitment to providing a student-centered environment that embodies respect for diverse cultures and multiple voices. In line with our mission, UW-Superior works intentionally to provide quality services that meet student needs. For example, the January 2012 Faculty and Staff Enhancement Day, sponsored by the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, focused on the topic of student centeredness, both in the classroom and beyond. The day’s activities provided an opportunity to review policies, procedures, and services with an eye toward student-
centeredness. Below is an overview of the specific services and programs UW-Superior provides to meet student needs.

The UW-Superior Office of Multicultural Affairs is dedicated to serving African American, American Indian, Asian American, and Hispanic/Latino students. The office provides a variety of services such as peer mentoring, educational and social programming, academic/career/personal advising, and outreach. Although many of the services offered are designed for the above mentioned populations, generally all of the events and programs are open to all students from all backgrounds.

The Office of International Programs provides international orientation (for students coming in to the U.S. as well as those going abroad), support, advising, and mentorship to international students as well as domestic students taking part in study abroad.

Student Support Services is a federally-funded program designed to serve any student who is qualified according to federal income guidelines, who is a first-generation college student (neither parent has a baccalaureate degree), or who has a disability. In addition to the program’s work with the populations specified above, it also provides tutoring, study skills courses, and one-to-one support for any student regardless of background. In working with students with disabilities, the program collaborates with students, instructors, staff, and community members to create usable, equitable, inclusive, and sustainable learning environments.

The Gender Equity Resource Center program staff collaborates with many departments and student organizations to provide programs and resources that empower and support students of all genders and sexual identities to have a successful college experience.

Given the significant numbers of non-traditional students who attend UW-Superior and recent increases in enrollment of military veterans, the University has established a Veterans and Non-Traditional Students Center. The Center provides a single location where veterans and students over age 24 can learn about benefits and support and receive assistance in accessing services such as tutoring and financial aid. The Center expands UW-Superior's existing services to veterans and makes them more visible to qualified students. The Center also provides a location for group meetings for students’ families and workshops to develop skills such as stress management. A coordinator oversees the Center, assists students, creates programming, and supervises peer mentors. An existing part-time veterans’ benefit coordinator position also will become a full-time position for the Center as use grows.
Beginning in Fall of 2007, the University contracted with a local medical provider to move its physical health services to the local hospital. Basic medical services are covered under this contract; however, a full range of medical services is available to students at this site. Transportation to the clinic/hospital is provided by taxi at no cost to students. Mental health services remain on campus and have undergone a re-organization. Students are no longer seen by interns but now receive a full range of service from licensed professional counselors. Psychiatric care is provided by contract with a local provider. Both physical health and mental health services are funded completely by student segregated fees.

In 2009, the building that housed the University’s child care service closed permanently. With no appropriate facility available, the University instituted a subsidy model that grants funds to enrolled UW-Superior students with children for use at one of the four identified child care services in the city of Superior. Students now have a choice among five different locations instead of one. Eligibility is based on student status, and the number and ages of children in care.

Periodic review and needs/satisfaction surveys have been conducted on these programs; however, given the scope of these changes and the importance of these services to our students, it is time to undertake a comprehensive program evaluation of both Student Health Services and Child Care Services.

LEARNING SUPPORT AND PREPARATORY INSTRUCTION

UW-Superior uses Math, and Foreign Language placement testing to appropriately place students into courses. The ACT English score or SAT verbal score is used when available. The Wisconsin English Placement Test is used as a back-up test when other scores are not available. All students are required to take placement testing or have appropriate credits/coursework transferred in upon admission and matriculation. Some programs such as Business and Education require the completion of prerequisites, grade point average thresholds, or interviews prior to admittance into the major. Developmental coursework is offered in writing and mathematics and is required for students who place below the level necessary to enroll in the introductory level in these fields. The University also offers an ACCESS BRIDGE program in which students who do not meet the regular UW-Superior admissions requirements are admitted conditionally and receive learning support to assist with the transition to college.

Peer tutoring is available both through the Student Support Services office and Campus Life. The Student Support Services offers cross-curricular and math tutoring.
Life employs ARCs (Academic Resource Coordinators), individuals staffed in each hall who provide support, resources, and programming for student learning. Campus Life also offers a program called Study Bucks, which encourages studying. Athletics requires their students to participate in regular study groups and monitor athletes’ grades and course progress several times throughout the semester. (Athletes at UW-Superior on average have a higher GPA than non-athletes.) Student Support Services also administers the ASSIST program, a faculty-initiated early alert program for students struggling academically.

As part of its Writing Across the Curriculum Initiative, the University has significantly expanded the University Writing Center. The Writing Center's staff of trained peer consultants provides one-to-one consultations, both in-person and online, to any and all UW-Superior students concerning the writing they do for their classes across the curriculum. The Center has both daytime and evening, and both weekday and weekend hours, to better enable it to serve all students.

**ACADEMIC ADVISING**

In line with its institutional mission that emphasizes individual attention to students, UW-Superior has a faculty-based advisement program that encourages close interaction between students and faculty. In fact, this is one of the University’s planning priorities for 2011-13. A student who has declared a major is assigned a faculty advisor within his or her major area. In limited cases, academic staff in the students’ major area serve as advisors. A student who has not yet declared a major (undeclared) is advised either by faculty, instructional academic staff, or by a professional advisor housed in the Center for Academic Advisement. A Distance Learning student who has not yet declared a major or who is pursuing an inter-disciplinary major is advised by one of the professional advisors housed in the Distance Learning Center.

Advisors’ basic responsibilities include helping students set academic goals, understand degree requirements, select courses, and determine career expectations. To promote a more holistic and student-centered approach to advisement, the University has adopted the following seven goals for academic advisement at UW-Superior:

- To help students reflect on academic and professional goals
- To discuss with students how liberal arts and professional education at UW-Superior may fit in with these goals
To help students become aware of steps necessary to reach academic and professional goals including undergraduate education, graduate education, examinations, and licensing requirements

To direct students to needed support services

To help students understand the advisement process

The help students understand requirements for graduation at UW-Superior including advising reports, major, minor, upper division, and general education requirements

To assist students in registering for classes

The Center for Academic Advising serves undeclared students and students in transition between majors and also serves as an academic advising information clearinghouse, general referral source, academic advisor development center, and academic policies and procedures consultant for UW-Superior advisors and administrators.

Student-to-advisor ratios are as follows:

- For students advised by faculty or instructional academic staff in the major – 17.8 students / advisor
- For undeclared students advised by Center for Academic Advising staff – 75 students / advisor
- For students advised by Distance Learning Center staff – 46.4 students / advisor

In the case of faculty/instructional academic staff advisors, there is a significant deviation from the mean. One faculty member, for instance, has responsibility for the advising of 74 students while some faculty have fewer than five advisees per advisor.

All new advisors participate in a mandatory two-session sequence of academic advising training. The first session focuses on academic advising in general, as well as a discussion of developmental advising. Topics include the seven learning goals of academic advising, advising as it relates to our institutional mission, linkages between advising and retention, communication skills, and the development of a personal philosophy of academic advising. The second session is a discussion of practical advising-related information on a broad range of topics, including UW-Superior’s online advisement and registration information portal (“E-Hive”), degree progress reports, FERPA, and legal responsibilities of advisors, University policies related to registration and advising, and the mechanics of course registration.

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3 Some Center staff have partial appointments. Ratio calculated on an FTE basis.
The advantage of the faculty-based advisement model is that it encourages a broader advisor/advisee relationship that goes well beyond simply “picking classes.” The faculty members who are advising students are the same individuals who are teaching their classes, meeting with them during office hours, and supervising their undergraduate research and creative activities and service-learning. These connections enable advisors to build relationships and rapport with their students and transcend the “advisor” role to become mentors and colleagues.

The decentralized nature of the faculty-based model, however, does pose some inherent challenges. While advising across the University is of a generally high quality, UW-Superior’s decentralized model makes it difficult to set and enforce common expectations and performance standards for academic advisement. Although advising is written into faculty contracts, the degree to which individual faculty members and departments engage in the responsibility of advising is uneven. The limited number of faculty advisors under contract in the summer also poses challenges for advisement of incoming first-year and transfer students. The University is aware of these issues and has worked to address them in a variety of ways, including the development and approval of academic advisement program goals (referenced above), revisions in the advisor training program, and experimentation with a number of summer advisement models for incoming first-year and transfer students.

**PHYSICAL AND TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE**

In the self-study period, the University has significantly improved its physical infrastructure supporting teaching and learning by designing and constructing facilities that support its liberal learning initiatives. These facilities are the new Marcovich Wellness Center (2003), the fully renovated Jim Dan Hill Library (2009), the significantly renovated Barstow Hall (2011) for science programs, and the new Swenson Hall (2011), which houses all University programs in education, humanities, mathematics, and social sciences, as well as Student Support Services, discipline-related study centers, the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, the Academic Service-Learning Program, the Writing Center, graduate studies, and technology services. The new Yellowjacket Union (2009) provides new facilities for continuing education, co-curricular activities, and performance and presentation. Each of the newly constructed or remodeled buildings contains features designed to support the University’s liberal arts mission.

- The 100,000sf [Marcovich Wellness Center](#), with classrooms, academic department and athletics space, field house and other recreation spaces, supports learning for personal health.
The full renovation of the 51,000sf Jim Dan Hill Library significantly changed the focus of the building away from housing of physical information resources to group study, electronic access to digital resources, and information literacy instruction in both classroom/lab and informal settings.

The renovation of 31,000sf Barstow Hall improved and expanded science labs, converting this building from combined classroom and laboratory use to an exclusive laboratory space. Classroom space for the sciences is now provided in the adjacent Swenson Hall. UW-Superior is one of a limited number of universities in the UW System requiring all students to study environmental science as part of the general education program. The University also has a 40+ year history of faculty-student undergraduate research collaboration through the Lake Superior Research Institute, also housed in Barstow Hall.

The completion of 104,000sf Swenson Hall marks a turning point in UW-Superior’s academic building history. This building provides more than 40 percent of the instructional space at the University, with offices for nearly half of all faculty and teaching staff. Its design intentionally provides spaces near classrooms and faculty offices for informal interaction between instructors and students. The atrium and lounge spaces host presentations and co-curricular organization events. Both general and specialized University computer labs have been centralized in this building, with instructional and technical support nearby from Technology Services. The presence of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning provides ready access to professional development experiences for faculty and teaching staff.

Planning and oversight for each project was carried out by a building committee of key faculty, staff, and students. In initiating the Swenson Hall project, the University took the bold step of proposing significant private funding through contributions, something not previously done among comprehensive universities in the UW System. More than 10% of the building cost was paid through alumni support.

The University integrated its Technology Services into a single organization in 2007-08, directed by an assistant vice chancellor, to provide more effective delivery and support of information and instructional technologies. The resources of the University of Wisconsin System are also leveraged through participation in system-wide collaborative utilities that provide library services and systems, an online learning management system, and Internet services through the statewide WiscNet. The University of Wisconsin System also funds two programs, both based on student FTE, to support learning technology. The Laboratory/Classroom Modernization Program provides funds for comprehensive
modernization of instructional laboratories and for improvement of the instructional climate in the classroom. The Student Technology Fee is a tuition surcharge paid by students on all UW universities that provides students with additional technology services beyond those funded through other sources. A sub-committee of UW-Superior’s University Technology Committee allocates both funds on an annual basis through an open competitive process.

The University’s curriculum requires numerous specialized teaching and learning resources beyond those previously mentioned. Among these are the arts studios, practice and rehearsal spaces, and performance spaces of the Holden Fine Arts Center; the regional broadcast center of Wisconsin Public Radio KUWS, operated through a partnership with University of Wisconsin-Extension, engaging students in Communicating Arts programs; specialized studios for counseling practice for the Counseling graduate program; and the physical education facilities of Gates Field House, Wessman Arena, and their surrounding athletic fields.

External facilities are required for the University’s education and social work programs and are maintained through formal relationships. The Office of Field Experiences in the Department of Educational Leadership contracts for student access to K-12 schools across Wisconsin and eastern Minnesota for observation and student teaching. This office supports both campus students and those enrolled in the Elementary Education major through the Distance Learning Center. The Social Work Program has agreements with community and tribal social service agencies for field work by its majors.

The University creates a biennial University Physical Development Plan to communicate its infrastructure needs to key constituencies, particularly UW System Administration, state government, and the University community. The 2011-13 Plan identifies the following priorities in support of effective teaching and learning:

- Provision of improved rehearsal, storage, lab, and performance space for the Music programs
- Provision of adequate lab space for weaving, painting, and ceramics work in Visual Arts
- Spaces for program growth for digital photography, expressive eco-psychology, and raku ceramics in Visual Arts
- Expansion of space for the Wisconsin Public Radio Regional Center through relocation from Holden Fine Arts Center to Old Main
- Provision of improved laboratory spaces for digital media for Communicating Arts programs
- Provision of space for expansion of Business and Economics programs
- Expansion and improvement of outdoor athletic space in support of athletic, academic, and intramural programming

On June 19-20, 2012, the University sustained a major flood that virtually destroyed the University’s library holdings. The Jim Dan Hill Library’s lower level was flooded with over eight feet of water. The majority of the library collection was housed on that level. Approximately 149,000 books sustained water damage and are not salvageable. The university’s entire print periodical collection was also lost; some of these volumes went back decades. The library staff has worked closely with faculty to meet the immediate needs of 2012-13 academic year courses through a combination of electronic resources, interlibrary borrowing, and emergency book purchases. While the loss of the collection will create significant short-term disruption for the teaching and learning at UW-Superior, it also presents an unprecedented opportunity to create a “library of the future” that factors in new and emerging technology and changing user needs. The University plans to engage the services of a library consultant who will work with library staff and academic departments to rebuild a collection that combines digital and hard-copy resources to support academic offerings. Aside from the loss of the library collection, the flooding had minimal impact on student learning spaces and resources.

RESEARCH AND INFORMATION LITERACY

The University takes an integrated approach to student information literacy development, enabled by the status of its library professionals as faculty in the Department of Writing and Library Science. Library faculty interact as peers with instructors in core general education courses and other key points of instruction in the University’s curriculum.

Using the language of the Association of College and Research Libraries Information Literacy Higher Education Competency Standards, the faculty have established the following student learning goals for information literacy at UW-Superior:

Goal 1: determines the nature and extent of the information needed
Goal 2: accesses needed information effectively and efficiently
Goal 3: evaluates information and its sources critically and incorporates selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system
Goal 4: uses information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
Goal 5: understands many of the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and accesses and uses information ethically and legally

Each goal has an associated set of developmental outcomes for lower-division students and mastery-level outcomes for upper-division students.

In 2011-12, the information literacy program reached 1392 students enrolled in 89 courses. These students received direct instruction in effective uses of information and library research skills. Outcomes of this program have been assessed through:

- An online survey that measures student satisfaction and student perception of learning
- Informal formative assessment in class activities
- A pilot project measuring information literacy student learning outcomes through an annotated bibliography assignment evaluated through a rubric in Communicating Arts 103 in Fall 2011
- A pilot project in Spring 2012 in select Writing 102 courses measuring information literacy student learning outcomes through a pre and post test

All students receive instruction in research methods and information resources in Writing 102 (the second semester of UW-Superior’s two-semester first-year writing sequence), which centers on research-based argumentative writing. The student learning outcomes for Writing 102 state that by the end of the course students will:

- engage in the research process by seeking out various resources (scholarly articles, books, web pages, etc.) and critically analyze these sources’ credibility and applicability to their arguments
- synthesize sources into an original argument framed by the student’s own thesis by blending in quotations, paraphrases, and summaries from outside sources to support their own arguments, by introducing their sources adequately, and by understanding the difference between paraphrase and plagiarism

Instruction in research methods is integrated into academic programs. Examples include the social science methods course in the undergraduate Psychology major; the research and production course in the Communicating Arts major; and the research in biology course offered by the Natural Sciences Department, which places students in collaborative research projects at labs both within and outside the University. All graduate programs, with the exception of the master’s degree in Visual Arts, require coursework in research methods as well as application in a research thesis or project.
Students learning at a distance are supported by the designated Distance Learning Librarian, who facilitates access to resources and provides online resources to help these students carry out research.

To develop specific information technology software skills for students and faculty, the University provides online training through a contracted service, Atomic Learning. Tutorials are available for all commonly used software at UW-Superior, including the learning management system used for online and hybrid courses.

**Core Component 3.E: The institution fulfills its claims 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.

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**FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- With a large number of commuter, non-traditional, and low-income students, UW-Superior has long struggled to foster the type of student life associated with traditional private liberal arts colleges. Over the past decade, however, the University (with leadership from our Student Life offices) has made significant progress in this area. Several full-time professional staff have been hired in areas such as Student Leadership, Student Activities, Outdoor Recreation, Intramurals, First Year Experience, Career Services, and Health Education to facilitate programs and services for students. In addition, the availability of many of the programs and services has been extended to include day and evening access for students with varying time demands. Residence Life has made changes that allow students who continue to stay in the halls a discount, which has encouraged many more upperclassmen to stay on campus and thus be more fully engaged with university activities and programs. Residence Life will also be renovating two of its current halls, which will provide more spaces and different types of housing.
University of Wisconsin | The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.
Student organizations also provide a great deal of co-curricular programming. To ensure that their programs align with the University’s mission, each organization has to apply annually to be a recognized student organization, which then enables each organization to request and receive student activity funding. This recognition process is overseen by the Student Government Association. Each student organization as part of the process must define an organizational mission that suits the group and aligns with the University’s mission.

Career Services engages students in a variety of curricular and co-curricular activities. This unit works independently and in collaboration with instructors to provide activities that support the University’s mission to provide career preparation. Career Services partners heavily with the surrounding community to provide programs that support students as they prepare for their careers. One example is the Head of the Lakes Job Fair (done in collaboration with University of Minnesota-Duluth and the College of St. Scholastica). This event is put on two times per year and is open to students as well as the community.

Athletes at UW-Superior also tend to be heavily involved in co-curricular activities. They do a great deal to connect with the University and surrounding community. For example, the athletic teams do several community service projects per year ranging from reading to students in the schools, to conducting clothing drives, to holding fund raisers for charities. Many of these opportunities engage not only the student athletes but also their peers.

Many academic departments and programs also support co-curricular opportunities, including the following:

- Annual Science Night is hosted by current students and invites all students, faculty, staff, and the community to learn about science and view science experiments.
- Major student organizations, such as Psi Chi and Ink Blots (Psychology), Social Work Student Association and Social Work Student Association, Mock Trial, Pre-Law Society, Criminal Justice Student Association and Criminal Justice Honor Society, provide opportunities that connect what students are doing in class with their out of class activities.
- Track-o-Rama and Health Fair, facilitated by Health and Human Performance and Elementary Education majors, each year engage the local community and local schools in learning about healthy and active lifestyles.
• Music and theater clinics, workshops and camps for youth in the area during the school year as well as during the summer are assisted by students majoring in Music and Theater.

In addition, many students participate in local and national conferences related to their major areas of study.

Students enrolled at UW-Superior via our Distance Learning Center are exempt from student activity fees. The Campus Life unit thus does not provide programming for distance-learning students. Participation in departmental-based co-curricular life is also minimal for distance-learning students. As the number of major programs offered via distance learning grows (along with the number of students enrolled in such programs), however, departments have begun discussions of how to encourage distance-learning student participation in co-curricular life.

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ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING

Launched in 2006 as part of the initiative to better fulfill UW-Superior’s mission as Wisconsin’s Public Liberal Arts College, the Academic Service-Learning Program promotes credit-bearing educational experiences in which students participate in organized service activities that meet identified community needs and then reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility. The initiative aims to make UW-Superior a regional leader in academic service-learning, thus providing a distinctively public quality to UW-Superior's liberal arts mission.

The Center for Academic Service-Learning, which provides support and resources to match course learning

Using principles of operant and classical conditioning, students in Psychology 402 Applied Behavior Analysis class work with dogs at Animal Allies to increase their adoptability. On an end-of-semester reflection paper, one student describes how the AS-L project and learning impacted her.

“Another added benefit of spending time with the dogs is they actually improved my mood. There was a point during the semester when I was pretty stressed out and thought about giving up on all of my classes, but the dogs helped me through it. As much as I was attempting to provide behavior modification therapy to dogs, they were equally therapeutic for me. I found the entire experience as a whole to be completely positive, and would recommend this class as well as encourage non-students to volunteer some time to spend with the shelter dogs. There is no question that I will continue to work with the dogs long after this class is over. Hopefully, I will be able to incorporate it into a senior research project of some type.”
outcomes with community needs, was established during the 2008-2009 academic year. Between 2008-09 and 2011-12, the number of faculty using Academic Service-Learning (AS-L) pedagogy has increased from 4 to 37. In the 2011-12 academic year, a total of 1,259 UW-Superior students in 61 distinct courses participated in AS-L, collaborating with over 50 community partners.
Criterion Three Summary

UW-Superior has a long history of providing student-centered education in the liberal arts tradition. Since the UW-Superior’s designation as Wisconsin’s Public Liberal Arts College, the University has worked to provide liberal education in a more intentional and systematic fashion though the adoption of a set of high-impact liberal arts practices and set of undergraduate liberal education learning goals. In 2010, an HLC site team found that UW-Superior had made “excellent progress” in implementing its public liberal arts mission. UW-Superior’s commitment is also reflected in the new investments we have made in physical and technology infrastructure, in new faculty positions, in expanded professional development opportunities, and in University life.

The University, however, cannot rest upon its recent accomplishments. It must work to fully implement the high-impact liberal arts practices and integrate them as seamlessly as possible into the daily life of the University. It must continue to recruit, retain, and support high-quality faculty and staff. It must continue its efforts to ensure the quality of the student experience regardless of delivery method. And it must do these things in a difficult fiscal and political environment. This will require careful planning, priority setting, and an abiding commitment to UW-Superior’s students and to the traditions and values of liberal education.
Criterion Four. 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.

Introduction

As a public institution dedicated to the liberal education and professional preparation of its students, UW-Superior draws upon its own local resources, the UW-System, the State of Wisconsin, and external agencies to promote, maintain, and improve the quality of its educational programs. Guided by generally broad policies and requirements at the System and state levels that call for local interpretation, UW-Superior relies on its staff to develop and implement plans for the assessment of student learning, for improved retention and graduation rates of its students, and for the entire curricular array and academic quality assurance for the University. At the center of these efforts are the University’s faculty and instructional staff.

UW-Superior has developed a consistent set of policies and strategies for academic quality assurance and improvement that conform to the requirements of these higher authorities. In doing so, the University has made intentional efforts to hew to accepted best practices and to maintain a collegial environment of policy discussion within its strong shared governance tradition, wherein each constituency plays a role. Due to unfavorable local demographic and economic trends, the exacerbated effects of personnel turnover and diseconomies of scale associated with a small institution, as well as the difficulties of integrating major initiatives such as the assessment of student learning into the institutional culture, the University has struggled to keep pace with all these developments and to implement its policies. Nonetheless, it has been able to maintain
quality while building new frameworks for assessment and continuously working to improve student engagement and success.

**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 transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning.
3. The institution has polices 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).

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**FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- UW-Superior has appropriate administrative and governance structures in place for the oversight, maintenance, and improvement of quality in its educational programs; these include the Academic Program Review Council (APRC), the Transfer Specialist in the Registrar’s Office, the Undergraduate Academic Affairs
Council, the Graduate Council, the General Education Committee, the Faculty Senate, and the Office of Assessment.

- UW-Superior has policies that ensure the continued quality of its academic programs. These include an established order for departmental program evaluation; a policy mandating the periodic review of all General Education courses; a review policy for articulation agreements; a long-term plan for the assessment of student learning; an approval policy for undergraduate curricular matters; and established requirements for the qualifications of faculty.

- Above all, UW-Superior implements these policies with the central involvement of faculty and instructional staff in all aspects of academic policy development as well as curricular design, transfer equivalencies, delivery, goals, review, and assessment. Non-instructional staff contribute in the form of transfer analysis, clerical support, and data collection/analysis.

- UW-Superior maintains specialized accreditation (or certification) for select programs, including Chemistry, Music, Social Work, Transportation and Logistics, and Education. Additional specialized accreditations are currently under consideration.

- UW-Superior regularly attempts to evaluate the success of its graduates. The Career Services Office conducts annual surveys of recent graduates. Another prime example is the McNair Scholars Program, which tracks students and reports on their post-baccalaureate educational and career achievements. Certain programs track their graduates to comply with external accreditation requirements. In all of these cases, voluntary response instruments are used.

It is recommended that the University should make a greater effort to link evaluations of post-graduation student success directly to its stated mission and to the goals of its programs. Further, since the results of academic program reviews have been somewhat inconsistent, a better instrument for such reviews and a tighter connection between program reviews and resource allocation should be developed. Finally, the database of courses accepted for transfer credit should be reviewed periodically by faculty for currency and relevance.
Discussion

FACULTY AUTHORITY OVER THE ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

The UW-Superior faculty maintains and exercises authority over all curricular matters including the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, and expectations for student learning outcomes. Wisconsin is the only state in which the faculty role in university governance is granted by statute:

“The faculty of each institution, subject to the responsibilities and powers of the Board, the president and the chancellor of such institution, shall be vested with the responsibility for the immediate governance of such institution and shall actively participate in institutional policy development. As such, the faculty shall have the primary responsibility for academic and educational activities and personnel matters. The faculty of each institution shall have the right to determine their own faculty organizational structure and to select representatives to participate in institutional governance.” [UWS 36.09(4)]

The “primary responsibility” of faculty here means that all academic proposals must be initiated by the faculty. Other constituencies play a consultative role, and the administration has the power to veto actions proposed by the faculty. All curricular matters are first discussed and approved at the program level and then at the department level. Thereafter, certain curricular matters go through a further governance approval process as identified in Policy #AP1117.

No separate distinctions are made for transfer or dual-credit students. All students in a course are expected to meet the same prerequisites, level of rigor, and learning outcomes, regardless of whether they are transfer students, dual degree students, on-campus students, or those enrolled via distance learning. Similarly, all students have access to all learning resources to help them achieve the expected learning outcomes. All support services, such as the Writing Center, the Library, Technology Services, and Academic Support, can be accessed both in person and online.

Every faculty search involves departmental faculty and administration. All members of each search committee are required to attend training given by the Human Resources staff before undertaking the search. At this training, the importance of what is being
undertaken is stressed as well as the legal requirements of everyone involved. Faculty develop the requirements for the position based on their knowledge of the field and particular qualities/qualifications needed to support the curriculum. Administration assures that the requirements meet the letter of the law and reflect commitment to the vision and mission of UW-Superior. Please refer to Criterion Three for details on the role of the faculty in University personnel matters.

CURRICULUM AND PROGRAM REVIEW

In accordance with the policies of its Board of Regents, UW-Superior has an established order for academic program evaluation in which each department completes a review of its programs every seven years (with the initial review completed five years after a new program is established). The most recent review schedule as of this writing was received by the Faculty Senate in Spring 2012. In a two-year review process, a department spends one year reviewing programmatic data and operations as the study is compiled; a second year is spent with the Academic Program Review Council (APRC) reviewing the study and making recommendations to the department and to the administration. The entire program review process is a function of faculty governance, with final reviews and recommendations received by the Faculty Senate and the Office of the Provost. Examples of such recommendations may be found in the Communicating Arts review (Spring 2012); Health and Human Performance review (Spring 2012); and the Human Behavior, Justice, and Diversity review (Fall 2011).

In the spirit of continuous improvement, the program review process is itself subject to scrutiny for purposes of achieving greater ease of use and enhancing outcomes. In 2009, the faculty and administration formally adopted a new Self Study for Continuous Improvement (SSCI) process for academic departments. In 2011, after two years of use with limited success, a project team was assembled by the Provost to evaluate the SSCI process and format. This committee included members who had used the SSCI materials, members of the APRC (a council of the Faculty Senate), and members involved in assessment activities across the University. This committee made some modifications to the self-study guidelines and template that clarified and honed the instrument, tailoring the sections to the needs of this University, and making its results more usable for continuous planning and development. The revised document (see also APR Template) was re-named the Academic Program Review (APR) – reflecting the committee’s decision to focus on specific program details and outcomes in the regularly scheduled
review process. In May 2012, the Faculty Senate approved use of the new APR process on a pilot basis in the 2012-13 academic year.

The University’s General Education Program is also subject to regular review. As part of its recommendations, the NCA site team in its 2003 accreditation report called for a comprehensive review of the General Education Program in view of the recently adopted mission statement of the University. After the completion of this review and of the resulting progress report to the NCA in December 2006, the General Education Committee adopted an updated policy and timeline for periodic review (see the Senate minutes Feb 26, 2008 showing approval), which had been suspended in the interim. The new policy uses standardized forms with questions about how each course achieves its learning goals, a course syllabus, and additional supporting materials, as deemed appropriate by the department. Review of the general-education curriculum resumed in Fall of 2008. As of Spring 2012, only a few programs have undergone general-education review since this resumption; the process has experienced delays pending the revision of the general-education learning goals. With these learning goals adopted in January 2012, it is expected that general-education review will resume.

Somewhat less formally, curriculum review is set in motion every two years with the production of our biennial General Catalog. Academic departments and programs use this occasion, every other fall semester, to keep their offerings current in their respective fields. Typically, the results of a catalog revision include updated course descriptions, course re-numberings, the introduction and removal of related sets of courses, as well as revisions to policies and the graduation requirements of minors and majors.

During UW-Superior’s 2003 NCA accreditation visit, the site team recommended UW-Superior conduct “a serious curricular review and reform” that would lead to “a more focused curriculum built around key strengths, fewer majors and an increased consolidation of degree programs.” In response to that criticism, the December 2006 Progress Report to the NCA records that “during the 2004-05 academic years, the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Council and individual departments conducted a comprehensive review of sub-majors. The result of this review has been a reduction in the number of distinct major curricula (majors and sub-majors) from 79 in the 2002-04 catalog to 61 in the 2006-08 catalog.”
Ever since the 2003 site visit report, UW-Superior faculty and administration have been conscious of the need to maintain a reasonable number of programs and avoid proliferation of major and sub-major programs. With the 2012-14 undergraduate catalog, the number of distinct major and sub-major programs has been further reduced to 59. This total includes two new programs established since 2006-08, both of which are collaborative online degree programs (Sustainable Management and Health and Wellness Management) that will require relatively few resources from the University.

**EVALUATION OF TRANSCRIPTED CREDIT**

The faculty of UW-Superior maintains oversight of all credits transferred from other institutions to be included on a UW-Superior transcript, subject to the policies of the Board of Regents (ACIS 6.0). The Board of Regents policies stipulate certain minimum conditions for routine acceptance of transfer credit, such as the accreditation of the sending institution. Under the shared governance system, the faculty has the authority to create and annul transfer policy for the University within the scope of Board of Regents policies. The faculty has delegated much of the routine administration of transfer credit evaluation to a Transfer Specialist, according to the transfer policy:

“Admissions sends the transfer transcript to the Transfer Specialist in the Registrar’s Office, who evaluates the transfer courses based on past practice, approved articulation agreements, review of the transfer course description, or approval from the faculty.”

A database of courses accepted for transfer credit is maintained by the Registrar’s Office. Each of the credit-bearing courses in this database has been approved by the academic department accepting the credits for transfer; for example, a writing course from another institution is evaluated by our Writing Program faculty before it is included in this database. Courses requested for transfer credit that are not currently in the database are sent to the chair of the appropriate department for evaluation; if approved for transfer, this course will continue to be accepted into the future. However, the Transfer Specialist also has the authority to approve for transfer credit a course whose description is reasonably similar to a course offered at UW-Superior even if it is not currently in the database of approved courses.

For transfer of credits within the UW System, the Board of Regents policies ACIS 6.0 require that an associate degree from another UW System institution will fulfill all
general-education requirements at UW Superior, and that a course that fulfills a general-education requirement in one System institution will satisfy a similar requirement at UW Superior. Beyond this, a broad principle of accommodation provides that courses that are reasonably similar will be deemed equivalent for purposes of transfer credit. Nevertheless, to ensure the continued oversight of faculty in the evaluation of transfer credit, the Faculty Senate resolved (Senate minutes of March 27, 2007) that the transfer of credits from any technical school (including those within the Wisconsin system) be reviewed by individual programs for equivalency before being accepted for transfer credit.

Policies on Assessment for Prior Learning (APL) are also established by faculty, subject to the policies of the Board of Regents. The latest protocol and procedures for granting such credit were established by the Faculty Senate in October 2007 and provide that assessment of CPL portfolios must be performed by faculty within academic departments. (Preferably at least two faculty will evaluate each portfolio.) Current UW-Superior policy limits the number of credits awarded by examination, including CPL, to no more than 32 in total (2012-14 Catalog: Prior Learning and Technical Credit). Any credit awarded by examination must be conferred by academic departments and individual faculty or come from nationally recognized exams (CLEP-DANTE, Advanced Placement, or International Baccalaureate).

The Board of Regents policies ACIS 6.0 and ACIS 6.2 encourage the development of articulation agreements within the UW System and mandate the acceptance of Associate Degrees within the UW System as fulfilling all general-education requirements at a four-year institution. Beyond these requirements, any program-to-program articulation must be approved by the appropriate academic department, the UAAC, Faculty Senate, and the Chancellor (Approval Guide).

ASSESSMENT OF SUCCESS FOR OUR GRADUATES

The University asserts both in its mission statement and in the publications of its academic programs that its graduates will be prepared for both careers and further study. The mission statement of the University declares, in part, “The University of Wisconsin-Superior fosters intellectual growth and career preparation within a liberal arts tradition.” In the General Catalog, most of the academic programs at UW-Superior lay claim, directly or indirectly, to preparing students for success in careers or further study. In addition, several programs are represented as preparing students for certification or
licensure in a certain area. These include all our teacher education programs and various physical education programs.

The primary instrument used to assess the validity of these claims and the general success of our graduates is an annual survey administered by the Career Services Office. The survey goes out to alumni who have graduated in the previous year. This survey is of necessity a voluntary-response instrument and therefore subject to sampling bias. Nevertheless, the response rates have been above 64% in all but one year of the past decade. Certain externally accredited programs, notably those in teacher education, also perform separate studies in satisfaction of their accreditation requirements.

The results of the alumni survey show that the success rate of our students is indeed quite high. About 97% of responding graduates either find remunerative employment or placement in a program of further study within their first year after graduation. Estimates show that between 80% and 90% of these students are involved in an area related to their major at UW-Superior.

Graduates indicate a high degree of satisfaction with the preparation they received at UW-Superior. Departments, programs, and individual faculty also report formal or anecdotal evidence from their graduates of successful use of their preparation. One former Special Education Master’s student, who has since achieved her doctoral degree, was recently appointed to a state-level task force. Her former professors were among the first she contacted with the good news.

Advanced academic study is an idea that many students at UW-Superior have never considered to be part of their life.
plan. Almost half represent the first generation in their families to attend college (48.8 percent of 2006-08 first-year students attending classes on university were first-generation college students according to the 2010 Equity Scorecard report); many are non-traditional students with full time jobs and families. In 1999, UW-Superior introduced the McNair Scholars Program, a nationwide program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education designed to increase access to post-baccalaureate education across all academic disciplines for first-generation students and students from underrepresented groups. Between 1999 and 2012, of the 112 McNair scholars at UW-Superior, 96% have completed the Bachelor’s degree (or are still enrolled in a bachelor’s program), and 51% are either enrolled in or have completed a graduate degree program. These statistics compare favorably to the overall 6-year baccalaureate completion rate of 44.8 percent and to the approximately 20 percent of recent UW-Superior graduates overall who continue their education.

Nationally, more and more disciplines are offering specialized certifications. UW-Superior faculty and staff work to implement and make these special credentials available to UW-Superior students through curricular offerings as vehicles for both broadening knowledge and enhancing employment options. While Water Safety Instructor Certification preparation has been available for many years, Certified Child Life Specialist preparation has been added within the past year.

THE INSTITUTION MAINTAINS SPECIALIZED ACCREDITATION AS APPROPRIATE

The University of Wisconsin-Superior is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. In addition, a number of individual programs within the university hold accreditations or formal approval status with discipline-specific organizations.
Table 4-1: External Program Accreditations or Approvals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Accreditating/Approving Agency</th>
<th>Accreditation Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business and Economics</td>
<td>Transportation and Logistics</td>
<td>American Society of Transportation and Logistics</td>
<td>2005  2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Leadership</td>
<td>Teacher Education</td>
<td>Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction</td>
<td>2005-2007  2012-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
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<td>National Association of Schools of Music</td>
<td>1983  2015-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>American Chemical Society</td>
<td>1960  2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Core Component 4.B: 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.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- UW-Superior has invested heavily in the effort to assess student learning by creating an Office of Assessment; by enrolling in the Assessment Academy of the HLC; and by adopting an assessment plan through faculty governance that calls
for every academic department to designate an assessment liaison and for the
assessment of student learning at the institutional and curricular/co-curricular
program levels.

- Student learning goals have been established in the areas of liberal education,
general education, and discipline-specific academic programs. Programs related to
High Impact Practices as well as co-curricular programs in Campus Life have
identified student learning outcomes.

- Best practices are followed in UW-Superior’s assessment efforts, maintained
through ongoing faculty/staff development via CETL, the Office of Assessment,
and certain High Impact Programs; participation in regional and national
conferences (such as the annual HLC conference); and the involvement of faculty
governance groups such as the General Education Committee. Faculty and
instructional staff comprise the HLC Assessment Academy Team, Departmental
Assessment Liaisons, and the General Education Committee and have the primary
charge of developing and implementing assessment plans. Non-instructional staff
play key roles in the assessment of student learning in non-academic programs.

- Assessment plans are in place for liberal education and for most of the academic
programs with data collection and analysis slated to have begun by the close of
the 2011-12 academic year. These plans include the complete assessment cycle in
which previous assessment data will be used to improve educational programs.

- Certain academic programs already use the information gathered through
assessment to improve program quality. Examples include Social Work, History,
Teacher Education, and the First-Year Seminar program.

UW-Superior has begun implementing institution-wide assessment, with many academic
programs in only the beginning phase of regular assessment. The University needs to
ensure that the assessment plan continues to be supported by all units into the future.

Discussion

ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK AT UW-SUPERIOR

UW-Superior has a history of assessment of student learning; it is currently implementing
a third-generation assessment initiative. The first effort at university-wide assessment
(1987-1998) used standardized testing instruments. The second wave of assessment
(1998-2002) involved electronic portfolios and centered on general-education
assessment; the portfolio approach proved ineffective and was abandoned on the recommendations of both student and faculty governance. The present initiative (2010-) is broader in scope, involving faculty and staff in all disciplines.

With the establishment of the Office of Assessment in Spring 2010 and the adoption of a University-wide assessment plan by the Faculty Senate in December 2010, UW-Superior began a systematic effort at assessment of student learning. The Assessment Plan calls for assessing student learning in four areas:

- Liberal Education
- Institution-wide General Education
- Discipline-Specific Academic Programs
- Co-curricular Programs

Appropriate University entities have established and approved student learning goals and outcomes in each of these areas. They have also taken ownership of the assessment processes and activities, as described in detail below.

**ASSESSMENT PRACTICE AT UW-SUPERIOR**

UW-Superior considers the assessment of student learning outcomes essential for the continuous improvement of curricular and co-curricular programs. Although the efforts are still uneven across curricular and co-curricular programs, the following assessment activities are taking place.

**Assessment of the Liberal Education Learning Goals (LELGs)**

At the institutional level, students are expected to meet five Liberal Education Learning Goals (LELGs). The LELGs involve skills and competencies that the University expects students to develop by graduation. The learning goals were adopted by the Faculty Senate in December 2009 and revised in October 2011. These learning goals include the ability to: think and make connections across academic disciplines; express oneself in multiple forms; analyze and reflect upon multiple perspectives to arrive at a perspective of one’s own; think and engage as a global citizen; and engage in evidence-based problem solving.

The University is currently undertaking the assessment of the achieving of these learning goals under the leadership of the HLC Assessment Academy Team. The team is composed of faculty from multiple disciplines: The Assistant Dean of Campus Life; the
Director of Assessment; and the Provost. According to the plan developed by this team and approved by the Faculty Senate in May 2010, the achieving of each of these five goals is to be assessed over three years in rotation, beginning in 2011-12. All involved in the assessment will choose various measures but apply common rubrics to determine the level of student achievement.

In 2011-12, following the HLC Assessment Academy Team’s three-year rotation assessment plan, each major program implemented the assessment of LELG 2, “the ability to express oneself in multiple forms,” applying common rubrics for written expression and either oral or creative expression to capstone projects or other course assignments that would represent each student’s culminated learning in his or her major.

In addition to this in-house assessment process, UW-Superior administers the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) and assesses writing and critical thinking competencies in a sample of first-year and senior students every three years.

**ASSESSMENT OF THE GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING GOALS AND OUTCOMES**

The Assessment of General Education Learning Goals and Outcomes is an area under rapid development, with associated changes in the faculty governance structure. As mentioned in Criterion Three, for many years general education curriculum and review were overseen by a four-member subcommittee of the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Committee (UAAC). In recognition of the greater workload necessitated by the assessment of student learning and following the recommendations of the HLC focused visit in 2010, the Faculty Senate in May 2010 created a separate, expanded General Education Committee (GEC) to address these needs.

Assessment of the General Education Program has long relied upon the periodic review of courses included in the Program. However, no procedure has been instituted to assess outcomes that students should attain through the General Education Program. Furthermore, the existing learning outcomes were stated without addressing how they could be assessed. Recognizing these issues, the General Education Committee started developing a plan to assess General Education student learning outcomes. The newly organized General Education Committee thus started reviewing the General Education Program’s learning goals and outcomes and examined how achievement of these goals and outcomes were being assessed. Then the committee submitted a revised set of learning goals to the UAAC. The UAAC and the Faculty Senate approved the revised
Learning goals in January 2012. The General Education Learning Goals are stated in the 2012-14 Catalog as follows:

*Through the General Education Program at the University of Wisconsin-Superior, students strengthen the following skills and habits of mind:*

1. **Communication.** Students demonstrate effective communication skills in writing, speaking, reading, and listening
2. **Critical Thinking.** Students engage in critical thinking based on multiple forms of evidence
3. **Creative Expression.** Students develop skills in creative expression, including abstract thinking
4. **Diversity and Global Citizenship.** Students demonstrate empathetic and ethical thinking based on knowledge of the diversity of human experience
5. **Interdisciplinary Connections.** Students connect knowledge and methods from a variety of disciplines through courses across the general education curriculum

On June 5, 2012, fifty-four faculty and instructional academic staff gathered to provide input to the process and structure of assessing the accomplishing of these goals. Their input will be used by the General Education Committee as it plans and implements this assessment in Fall 2012.

**ASSESSMENT OF DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC ACADEMIC PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The assessment of student learning has been an inherent component of the academic program review process and thus included as a section in the Academic Program Review Self Study Template approved for use in 2012-13.

However, the intentional assessment of student learning outcomes at the programmatic level has been uneven across academic programs. Programs such as Social Work and Teacher Education have been engaged with a rigorous assessment of student learning, in part to meet their respective professional accreditation requirements. Social Work assesses students’ learning outcomes based on the Education Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPA) so as to meet the Council of Social Work Education accreditation requirements. Multiple measures are used in this assessment process. Examples include faculty evaluation of student performance; individual evaluation by the agency field supervisor of each student; an annual outcome survey sponsored by the Social Work
Student Advisory Committee; a graduate alumni survey; and Association of Social Work Boards pass rates. Similarly, Teacher Education (TED) assesses student learning outcomes developed to meet the “Ten Standards for Teacher Development and Licensure” defined by its accrediting body, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Students are to demonstrate their competency in these standards via coursework in General Education, TED, major and minor programs, PRAXIS I and II tests, and Student Teaching Portfolios.

Another example, this time from a non-accredited program, is found in the History Program, which assesses student learning outcomes through rating written theses and oral presentations and conducting exit interviews at the senior undergraduate level.

Through 2010, the majority of programs assessed student learning based only upon course grades, completion of capstone projects, or course evaluations, even though these measures may provide inadequate information on specific student learning outcomes for the programs.

The University-wide prioritization of student learning assessment adopted in 2010-12 mandates that all academic programs develop and implement a rigorous assessment plan. Each Department has also appointed an Assessment Liaison to facilitate assessment activities in the Department in coordination with the Office of Assessment. As of Spring 2012, some 26 out of 27 major programs, 21 out of 24 stand-alone minor programs, 6 out of 7 graduate programs, and all certificate programs have developed student learning outcomes appropriate to their respective disciplinary areas. These learning outcomes are made available to the public on the Office of Assessment website as well as in the 2012-14 Catalog. In addition, in Fall 2011 and Spring 2012, many of these programs completed curricular mapping to check the alignment of their respective curriculum with program-level student learning outcomes. They also developed both short- and longer-term assessment plans as a step to establish ongoing and systematic assessment practices.

Using these plans, each program started the first round of assessment activities in 2011-12. In Spring 2012, evidence of student learning was collected for the assessment of at least one program-level learning outcome. Measures used for the discipline-specific program assessment are summarized in the table below. In Fall 2012, the faculty and staff in each program will reflect upon the results and determine actions for the improvement of student learning, and submit a summary report to the Office of Assessment.
Table 4-2: Assessment measures in discipline-specific program assessment, 2011-12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Measure</th>
<th>Number of Major/Minor Programs (n=36)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior Capstone</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Assignments and Exams</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardized Tests</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Certification</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The University’s processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals are based on best practices. In the case of major/minor program assessment, the faculty of each academic program themselves determine the instruments to be used for assessment, as well as the particular sections of curriculum in which assessment will be performed. In most cases, assessment of student learning is integrated into existing curricular requirements in the form of examinations and course assignments. Therefore, assessment is performed by the instructors responsible for delivering curriculum within the academic program. Achievement of learning goals is typically measured using instruments (such as rubrics and standardized test scores) selected by faculty within the program, where each learning outcome is broken out into several measurable performance criteria, and each criterion is evaluated according to a scale established in advance by each program.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING IN CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS

As mentioned in Criterion Three, UW-Superior defines co-curricular activities as those that “include any out-of-the-classroom activity sponsored by the University.” A number of programs facilitate such activities, including programs focusing on the promotion of Liberal Arts High Impact Practices (HIPs) and those emphasizing students’ holistic development.

UW-Superior has adopted several High Impact Practices to enhance its Liberal Education mission. Specifically, the following programs are in place to promote certain pedagogies to improve students’ academic engagement and retention.
### Table 4-3: Sample Activities of High Impact Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Impact Practices</th>
<th>Currently Existing Curricular/Co-curricular Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First-Year Experience</td>
<td>SOAR (Summer Orientation Advisement and Registration), WoW (Weekend of Welcome), Transfer Welcome Orientation, Parent &amp; Family Program, Labor Day Weekend Events, Fall-a-Palooza (Family Weekend), First-Year Seminar Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Year Experience</td>
<td>Senior Capstone Program (in every major), Capstone Presentation Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Service-Learning</td>
<td>Academic Service-Learning course, AS-L Engaged Department Grant Program, Biennial Regional Service-Learning Conference, Ongoing training and workshops for faculty members and community partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Awareness</td>
<td>General Education Non-Western Requirement, Foreign Language Programs (minor), Global Studies Program (minor), Study Abroad Programs and Sojourners Club for study away returnees, Global Perspectives Series (by the Global Studies Advisory Committee), International Week (by the Global Awareness and Education Committee), Cultural Night Event, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC)</td>
<td>Writing Center, WAC brown bags (for faculty and teaching staff), WAC grants (for academic programs and instructors), Writing Mentor Program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For example, Writing Across the Curriculum has a number of assessment strategies. WAC has adopted a set of learning goals for instructor development and for student development. Additionally, WAC has instituted pre- and post-course surveys for courses involved in its grant projects. The Writing Center surveys the satisfaction of its clients. These are reported in the [WAC Annual Report](#).

Students’ learning in some of these programs at UW-Superior is assessed mainly by indirect measures. For example, the First-Year Seminars and Academic Service-Learning developed home-grown student surveys that focus on students’ self-assessment of their intellectual, social, and personal growth. Global Awareness faculty who lead programs...
abroad are invited to meet each semester to discuss relevant issues and review recent research in education abroad such as a discussion of a NAFSA Association of International Educators webinar, “Student Learning Abroad: What our Students Are Learning, What They’re Not, and What We Can Do About It.” Retention data are also drawn to understand the impact of the HIPs on students’ persistence at UW-Superior. To gain additional data that can address students’ variable participation and achievement rates in these programs, the Office of Assessment plans to implement an annual student engagement survey that includes questions selected from NSSE among others, starting in 2012-13. The data will be analyzed and shared with the university, so as to address students’ perception of the effectiveness of HIP practices at UW-Superior as well as achievement gaps for underserved student groups in these HIP-facilitating programs.

In addition to HIP-facilitating programs, UW-Superior offers a number of co-curricular programs, including orientation sessions (Summer Orientation Advisement and Registration, or SOAR) for all incoming freshman and transfer students of freshman status; Weekend of Welcome (WoW) for newly arriving students just before the start of classes each semester; academic advisement; “Superior Stews” and other programs for inclusivity and diversity; workshops on information literacy; and various sessions within the Athletic and Music Programs. These co-curricular activities are opportunities for students to improve skills and competencies.

Some of these co-curricular programs under Campus Life use student learning outcomes developed by the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). For example, the Student Health and Counseling Service, Campus Recreation, Student Conduct, Student Leadership, Residence Life, Campus Activities, and Yellowjacket Union have established missions and student learning outcomes that are grounded in the CAS standards. They are using them to guide their work and programming. Each of these co-curricular areas has also identified and begun working on an assessment. The “Campus Life Assessment Handbook Spring 2012” has been developed to support this effort.

**COMPLETING THE FEEDBACK LOOP: IMPROVEMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING**

Evidence-based decision-making for better teaching and learning requires a process to collect, analyze, and reflect upon meaningful data on the achievement of student learning.
At the institutional level, the information collected on the Liberal Education Learning Goal, “Ability to express oneself in multiple forms (LELG #2), is to be shared with the University community at public forums, mainly to promote engaged conversations about the LELG#2 assessment process and rubrics as well as the interpretations of the results. Given that this was the first time that this learning goal was assessed, the assessment results may or may not provide useful information about senior-level students’ levels of achievements in written, oral, and creative expression. The input and feedback collected from the University community will be used to improve the next round of LELG#2 assessment.

Some academic programs currently use the information from student learning assessment as the basis for professional degree accreditation, curricular changes, and/or pedagogical improvement. For example, Social Work has used student learning assessment data to identify specific areas for continuous improvement, including content concerning social welfare policy and the research curriculum. Based on the results of exit interviews and assessment of oral and written expressions, History has systematically incorporated into its classroom teaching more opportunities for students to improve their abilities to identify an author’s argument and to deliver formal oral presentations. Teacher Education has used assessment results to restructure its methods courses and to remap critical content across the TED core and methods courses.

The First-Year Seminar (FYS) Program has used information on student learning to improve its programmatic efforts. Since 2009, a home-grown student survey has been administrated to all FYS students at the end of each semester, providing information on students’ self-assessment of the FYS learning outcomes. The survey results have been shared with FYS instructors to generate dialogue on pedagogical improvement. Furthermore, the survey results are used to plan professional development activities for FYS instructors. For example, based on the 2011-12 FYS student survey, more discussion at the FYS instructors’ meetings will focus on how to improve students’ critical thinking ability.

Other curricular and co-curricular programs have developed plans to apply assessment data for continuous improvement through analysis and reflection among teaching faculty/staff. Each curricular program analyzed and reflected upon the 2011-12 assessment results and submitted a report to the Office of Assessment on the outcomes of student learning assessment in Fall 2012 and the implications (e.g., programmatic
changes to be undertaken to improve student learning). This document will also be included in the annual report (to the Dean of Faculties) of their respective academic departments. High Impact Programs and co-curricular programs will also implement an assessment project during the 2012-13 academic year and submit a report that includes analysis and reflection for improvement.

To facilitate a University culture that uses assessment results for the improvement of teaching and learning, the Office of Assessment is planning the first Assessment Fair for January 2013. Curricular and co-curricular programs will be invited to showcase through poster presentations how their assessment results informed faculty/staff conversations on classroom pedagogies as well as curricular planning. The impact of this opportunity for peer exchange of best practices will be monitored by faculty and staff surveys.

**ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGIES AND PROCESSES REFLECT GOOD PRACTICE AND ARE LED BY FACULTY AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF**

Faculty and instructional staff have been at the center of assessment activities. The efforts to assess institutional learning goals and outcomes (such as the LELGs and General Education learning outcomes) have been led primarily by the HLC Assessment Academy Team and the General Education Committee, both of whose membership is composed entirely of faculty. Assessment planning and implementation in each curricular program is also done by the faculty and instructional staff within that program, with the Assessment Liaison in each department serving as a peer facilitator of the process.

The current assessment methodologies and processes employed at UW-Superior are heavily influenced by the learning materials and experiences at the HLC Assessment Academy Workshop: At on-campus workshops facilitated by HLC Assessment Academy mentors; and in the literature on student learning assessment by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and by nationally-known assessment specialists such as Barbara Walvoord, Trudy Banta, Peggi Maki, Linda Sukie, and Amy Driscoll. Drawing upon these resources, the Office of Assessment drafted an overall University Assessment Plan for 2011-15, and revised this plan based on feedback from Academic Affairs officers, the Chair of the Faculty Senate, and selected chairs of academic departments. The revised draft was then presented to the Faculty Senate for approval in December 2010.
To further promote the culture of assessment, the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) and the Office of Assessment collaboratively organized several assessment workshops with HLC-endorsed experts, as well as two assessment-related book clubs. As shown in Table 4-4, these events were well attended by faculty and academic staff.

Table 4-4: CETL Professional Development Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>On-Campus Professional Development Events by CETL/Assessment Office</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 18-19, 2011</td>
<td>Professional Enhancement Day dedicated to Student Learning Assessment (with Bob Mundhenk and Jennifer Fager as external speakers/facilitators)</td>
<td>90 (keynotes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2011</td>
<td>CETL Book Club. <em>Developing Outcomes-Based Assessment for Learner-Centered Education: A Faculty Introduction</em> (facilitated by Office of Assessment)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 27-28, 2011</td>
<td>Summer Forum, “Doing Student Learning Assessment” (with Cia Verschelden as an external speaker/facilitator)</td>
<td>40+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 15-16, 2011</td>
<td>Summer Teaching and Learning Intensive Workshop, “Classroom Assessment Techniques (CAT's) and Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)” (Carlene Vande Zande and Nancy Chicks as external speakers/facilitators)</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2011</td>
<td>CETL Book Club. <em>Academically Adrift</em> (facilitated by Office of Assessment)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 5, 2012</td>
<td>Summer Forum, “Improving Student Learning in General Education through Assessment” (facilitated by the General Education Committee and Office of Assessment)</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.)

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- UW-Superior established goals for student retention and completion as part of the Growth Agenda effort promulgated by UW-System. The Growth Agenda Goals chosen by the CIPT in 2010 include a plan to increase enrollment by one percent annually, with an increase in the graduation rate to 56 percent by 2025. The University articulates goals for enrollment and persistence in its Strategic Plan, which is updated biennially.
- The goals for retention and program completion are informed by best practices: UW-Superior maintains appropriate institutional structures to address these issues, including the Student Retention and Enrollment Committee (SREC), the Continuous Improvement Planning Team (CIPT), and the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management (AVC-EM). The SREC is charged with advising the AVC-EM in the use of best practices for enrollment management and carries out its charge by studying the literature, attending professional development events, and commissioning the collection of relevant data and
reports from the Office of Institutional Research (IR), as well as reviewing data supplied from the UW System.

- UW-Superior collects and analyzes data on student retention and program completion through its participation in the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) and through reports commissioned by the SREC. In addition, special efforts such as the Equity Scorecard Project have accomplished the goal of understanding gaps in educational attainment, including retention and completion, as a function of demographic factors.

- The findings of the Equity Scorecard report are being channeled through the Chancellor’s Inclusive Excellence Task Force (CIETF) for action; the SREC submits an annual report to the AVC-EM with actionable recommendations, as well as reporting findings to the Faculty Senate; the University has applied for a federal Title III grant to support student retention and completion.

Although UW-Superior has a strong framework in place dedicated to improvement of student retention and program completion, the following concerns remain. (1) The lack of an effective, dedicated AVC-EM (the position is currently vacant) has hindered our ability to put into practice many recommendations to improve retention. (2) Whether our goals for retention and completion are attainable depends heavily on conditions of the economy, of state support, and of local and regional population trends. As one of the UW Chancellors remarked at the April 2012 Board of Regents meeting, he has yet to see a long-term plan whose goals did not change during its term.

Discussion

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INSTITUTIONAL GOALS FOR STUDENT RETENTION AND COMPLETION

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As the northernmost baccalaureate-granting institution in Wisconsin, a liberal arts university striving to meet the workforce demands of the region as it fosters intellectual growth, UW-Superior recognizes that it must increase student enrollment, retention, and graduation rates to fulfill its mission and meet Wisconsin’s needs. The University is poised at a time of opportunity for change and growth in student retention, persistence, and completion. As stated in A Growth Agenda for Wisconsin: Growing People, Jobs and Communities (August 2010), “If current trends continue, the state will have an older,
less educated, and smaller workforce. Younger workers will continue to leave for states that offer better job prospects.”

Among UW System comprehensive institutions, UW-Superior is distinguished by its high rate of first-generation and transfer students as well as the prevalence of low-income and self-supporting students. As a result, UW-Superior has historically ranked last or near-last in student retention and graduation rates among UW System comprehensive universities. Awareness of these factors has played a key role in the determination of UW-Superior’s goals for retention and program completion and in the strategies adopted to attain these goals: namely, to prioritize increased retention and completion over increased enrollment while paying special attention to the transfer student demographic.

In 2010, UW-Superior joined the UW System’s Growth Agenda for Wisconsin program. The Growth Agenda goals chosen by the CIPT in 2010 entail increasing enrollment by one percent annually, with an increase in the graduation rate to 56 percent by 2025. In Fall 2011, the Chancellor of UW-Superior affirmed that “[UW System] President Reilly is committed to the Growth Agenda. Our focus remains on an increase in enrollment of 1% annually and to increase graduation rates from 44% to 54% [sic] by 2025” (Report of the Chancellor, Faculty Senate minutes, September 20, 2011). The current (Spring 2012) institutional goals for student retention and degree completion are summarized in the table below.

Table 4-5: Institutional Goals for Retention and Degree Completion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UW-Superior Performance Measures</th>
<th>Milestones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Headcount Enrollment</td>
<td>2,825 (2011-2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention 1st to 2nd Year</td>
<td>68% (2010-2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Year Graduation</td>
<td>44% (2010-2011)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In April 2012, the University submitted an application for a Title III grant that stated more ambitious goals for student retention and completion. Of course, the ability to achieve these new goals is contingent on receiving Title III funding.
The university articulates its broadest objectives for enrollment and persistence in its Strategic Plan. As stated in the UW-Superior Strategic Priorities (Fall 2011) for Enrollment Management, University must “utilize enrollment management principles to ensure a diverse student body while strengthening our academic standards.” The strategic goals are as follows:

1. Develop and implement a recruitment and admissions plan that addresses our changing demographics
2. Review existing articulation agreements and develop new agreements to make the transfer process more easily navigable
3. Develop and implement a comprehensive student retention plan.
4. Increase diversity of the student body
5. Develop and implement a seamless recruitment, admission, advisement, and registration process

In 2010, the CIPT, reflecting university conversations on retention and enrollment over the previous two years, developed educational attainment strategies to increase enrollment and improve retention. These strategies are as follows:

**Increase enrollment**
To achieve a steady one-percent increase in admissions, the University will seek to:

- Strategy 1: Increase Enrollments of Underserved Populations
- Strategy 2: Increase Financial Aid for Students from Families with Lower Incomes
- Strategy 3: Continue Outreach through Distance Learning

**Improve results**
UW-Superior will seek to increase retention and graduation through the following strategies:

- Strategy 1: Focus on Advising
- Strategy 2: More Fully Research Particular Retention Issues
- Strategy 3: Enhance Campus Life and Co-Curricular Programs
- Strategy 4: Fully Implement the Liberal Arts Initiatives (HIPS)
- Strategy 5: Develop a Mentoring Culture/Campus Experience
STUDENT RETENTION EFFORTS REFLECT GOOD PRACTICE

Processes for collecting and analyzing information on students follow the University’s established Institutional Review Board policies “to safeguard the welfare and protect the rights of individuals who participate as subjects in research sponsored by this institution.” The University uses standard IPEDS definitions to measure retention and completion rates. As an example, the following description is excerpted from the 2011 FactBook: “Report for the cohort of all full-time, first-time bachelor’s (or equivalent) degree-seeking undergraduate students who entered in fall 2010 (or the preceding summer term). The initial cohort may be adjusted for students who departed for the following reasons: death, permanent disability, service in the armed forces, foreign aid service of the federal government, or official church missions. No other adjustments to the initial cohort should be made.”

The charge of the SREC includes needs assessment, identification of retention strategies, and the dissemination of best practices in retention to the university community; its membership includes both faculty and several administrators in key positions. The SREC, a standing committee within the University’s governance structure, has based its recommendations on data gathered by the Institutional Research and Planning Office and information gleaned from leading resources on student retention. For example, in 2012, the SREC completed an analysis of retention efforts to further develop strategies which would help coordinate programs and services across the university. The committee used ideas from A Practical Guide to Strategic Enrollment Management Planning, and the book Hardwiring Student Success served as a significant guiding document as the committee determined these strategies.

In accordance with the findings of the higher education literature, the High-Impact Practices adopted by the University function in part to improve student retention and completion. These include the First-Year Experience Program, the Senior-Year Experience Program, Writing Across the Curriculum, Academic Service-Learning, Global Awareness, and an undergraduate research initiative, as well as a significantly changed academic advisement process for incoming students in summer.

In September 2011, the Provost reported that the Title III Grant proposal to be developed by UW-Superior would focus on retention through the use of advisement and High Impact Practices. This proposal was submitted in Spring 2012. A summary of the grant proposal follows.
“The UW-Superior Title III proposal to the U.S. Department of Education Strengthening Institutions Program requests funds to help us complete our transformation as a public liberal arts college and move towards retention and graduation rates similar to our peers. UW-Superior asserts in the Title III proposal that it will make this transformation by changing: 1) its academic advising system from the current transactional model to one that uses transformative, intrusive advising; and 2) by embedding six high impact practices (HIPs) into each students’ experience and into each academic program. A core piece of our argument is the proven success of our existing high impact practices for improving students’ engagement and success, and thereby increasing retention and graduation rates.” [Source: Title III Brief Summary for Accreditation.pdf]

**WIDE ARRAY OF DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS**

Reflecting the multifarious, wide-ranging array of initiatives necessary for any effective effort at increased student retention, UW-Superior collects and analyzes retention and completion data on multiple fronts. These include Fact Books, the Voluntary System of Accountability, various High Impact Practice implementations, and regular activities of the SREC, as well as the one-time Equity Scorecard Project. Most of these data are compiled by the Office of Institutional Research.

The **Office of Institutional Research and Planning** at UW-Superior “provides data and analysis that support evidence-based university planning and provide the tools for accountability and transparency to the college community and the public.” Its work includes extensive reporting on student retention and program completion. These reports are both commissioned by and provided to administrative officers, department chairs, unit directors, and the appropriate committees to determine progress toward goals.

UW-Superior and the UW System maintain statistics on cohort head count and student retention and graduation rates. The UW-System uses a PeopleSoft (PS) system to host data; beginning in 2011, the IR Office has transitioned from PS to use the [Central Data Request system](http://www.wisc.edu) hosted at System Headquarters in Madison, Wisconsin for consistency with the UW System.

Relevant statistics are available from 2000 – 2011 through the Office of Institutional Research and Planning [Fact Book](http://www.wisc.edu). The “Retention and Graduation Rates of New
Freshmen” are maintained for several categories: All Freshmen, Transfer Students, Pell Recipients, and Under-Represented Minority Students. In these categories, the University can track students from year of entrance, looking at retention rates after years one, two, and three. The percentage of students who persist following year of entrance is listed and can be compared across years. The Cumulative Graduation/Retention Rates of students are tracked after four, five, and six years. The Office of Institutional Research and Planning also maintains statistics for Full-Time Equivalent students over a period of years.

The SREC advises the Assistant Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Management (a position that is vacant as of this writing) and submits annual reports to this official. The Enrollment Management office and the SREC have produced other retention-related resources as well, which are available online and have also been distributed to members of the University’s governance groups.

The Liberal Arts High Impact Practices have been embraced by UW-Superior not only for their contribution to the liberal arts mission of the institution but also because of the relationship between student engagement and retention. Retention data for the First-Year Seminar from its inception in 2005 through 2010 are shown in the table below. Evidently, there is a positive correlation between student participation in first-year seminars and students returning the following fall.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4-6: FY Seminar Enrollments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Year Seminar Enrollment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of First-Time, Full-Time Freshmen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by Return Following Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2008, the University joined the UW System Equity Scorecard Initiative. Equity Scorecard is an evidence-based assessment of inequities that exist in educational
outcomes, particularly for students of color. The premise is that "an academic institution is a community whose characteristics can systematically generate gaps in educational outcomes among student groups." Retention (persistence, course-taking patterns, and graduation) is one of the four perspectives reviewed by the Equity Scorecard Project. For retention, the Equity Scorecard looks at baseline, improvement target, and equity. The Final Report of Equity Scorecard and the Executive Summary include findings on retention of students of color at UW-Superior and recommendations to improve retention equity.

The Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) communicates information on the undergraduate student experience through a common web reporting template, the College Portrait. Data from VSA includes persistence and graduation rates, as well as other information (such as student involvement in University activities). The VSA allows for quick comparison of UW-Superior students with students at other universities of similar size and programs.

The UW System Office of Policy Analysis and Research publishes data for each four-year university and each two-year college in the UW System, including information on the Growth Agenda for the System. In October 2011, the Student Retention and Enrollment Committee adopted the goal of writing a strategic enrollment plan focusing on the Growth Agenda goal of producing more graduates and an assessment of how UW-Superior is reaching these goals.

The Strategic Plan for Student Retention addresses issues outside of the formal learning activities of UW-Superior students. Starting points for the plan include providing an “enriching educational experience” (EEE) and “supportive campus environment” (SCE) (SREC minutes, October 2011). A final strategy document was completed on February 17, 2012, and presented to the Provost on March 1, 2012.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

UW-Superior is committed to reviewing its student retention and enrollment data and using the results to improve programs and services. The Student Retention and Enrollment Committee (SREC) is the standing governance body responsible for overseeing this work, but contributions are made by many other units and offices as well,
and it is understood that increased student retention is a goal requiring the participation of a broad coalition across the University.

Academic units and departments prepare strategic plans that address goals and priorities at both the institutional and departmental levels. For several years, one of these institutional priorities has been student retention/persistence, with a designated overall strategy to “Develop an integrated approach that recognizes our mission and incorporates both academic and non-academic factors into the design and development of programs to create a supportive academic and socially inclusive environment that addresses the academic, social, and emotional needs of students to facilitate achieving their educational aspirations.”

The Student Retention and Enrollment Committee Annual Report in June 2011 recommended that “All campus departments and units will develop a plan for multiple points of contact for groups of students (by college class, background, and major) as well as individual students in their majors and/or co-curricular programs. These plans will comprise the campus integrated plan for student retention.”

The University has used information from the Office of Institutional Research and Planning and from the literature on accepted best practices in student retention and engagement to prepare the Title III application submitted in April 2012. If funded, this grant will build on the University’s established practice of reinforcing those programs that demonstrably contribute to increased student retention and completion, such as those that further implement the six High Impact Practices.

After the evidence team of the Equity Scorecard project was disbanded in 2010 having completed its final report, the Chancellor’s Inclusive Excellence Task Force (CIETF) was charged with following up on the Equity Scorecard findings and implementing the evidence team’s recommendations. The August 2010 CIETF report “Making Excellence Inclusive at UW-Superior: Planning/Implementation Report” had identified as one of its five-year goals the development of a University-wide response to achievement gaps found in the Equity Scorecard. During Summer 2011, the CIETF developed a more detailed set of recommendations for the University to implement in order to realize this goal. The two recommendations pertaining to student retention are as follows: (1) As part of the regular annual reporting process, academic departments should examine achievement gaps in students’ access, retention, and graduation/excellence in each major
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.

Program, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, and produce a report with reflection and action plans to improve achievement of inclusive excellence; and (2) To improve the retention of students of color, all sub-units under the Enrollment Management unit should implement a self-study and produce a report that includes reflection and action plans.

The University is searching for a new Assistant Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Management. (This position was vacated in September 2011.) In the meantime, the Provost is serving in this role. Upon hire, the AVC-EM will take responsibility for implementation of University retention strategies, using current data and information for guidance.
Criterion Four Summary

The quality controls for academic programs at UW-Superior are effective at the stages of curricular design and initial implementation, but regular review needs to be a priority. Policies mandating regular review (e.g., of the general-education curriculum and of major programs) have not been followed consistently for various reasons. More safeguards and incentives, such as incorporating academic program reviews into an annual planning and budgeting cycle, would improve the situation.

Assessment of student learning is well under way, but, institution-wide, it is at an early stage. Continued or increased support from administration will be necessary to assure the success of the University’s assessment plan as it becomes integrated into the practices and culture of the University.

Attention to the retention and completion rates of our students has been steady, with a standing committee dedicated to its oversight. Indeed, these issues have taken a prominent place in the awareness of the University community, with a clearly articulated program of growth goals and recommended strategies for achieving them. There is evidence of success in student retention and completion within a limited scope, such as for students participating in certain High Impact Practices and in the McNair Scholars program. However, overall, these rates have remained flat over the past decade and have not increased in accordance with the stated goals of the University. As the HIPS become fully integrated into the University (e.g., with the First-Year Seminar becoming a requirement for all freshmen in Fall 2012), we expect the situation is expected to improve.
Criterion Five. 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.

Introduction

Like many universities, UW-Superior has been faced with ongoing resource challenges. The University has not only had to repeatedly work through the diseconomies of scale that go with being a university of this size, but has also faced difficulties that have arisen as a result of the problematic national economic climate and a changing regional demographic. In fact, the University’s ability to rise to the occasion and respond well to a variety of resource circumstances is representative of how it defines itself: A small interdisciplinary, community-based, student-centered university with a strong shared governance model. Historically, the University’s response to such challenges has been proactive, nimble, scrappy and determined, consistent, inventive, and sometimes even heroic. University leadership has addressed resource issues with as much transparency as possible, with solid communication to and inclusion of its constituencies in solution-building, all grounded in a shared commitment to its liberal arts mission. These are very challenging times as the University analyzes its operations for reductions while recognizing that strategic investments are necessary to sustain the quality of the student experience.
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 educational purposes do not suffer as a result of elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to any 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.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Educational programs are currently supported at adequate (appropriate) levels.
- The University operates in a fiscally responsible manner, following University of Wisconsin System expectations, Wisconsin and Federal statutes, and sound accounting practices.
- An integrated planning process is in place whereby all planning and budget activities, throughout every level of the organization, are effectively linked and coordinated and are driven by the University’s vision, mission, and academic priorities.
- The University updates its physical development plan every two years. This biennial update has facilitated the University’s physical transformation over the past ten years, including several major renovation and construction projects that have significantly improved learning and co-curricular spaces for use into the future.
- The University remains dependent upon state revenue allocations, more so than comparable COPLAC institutions.
The University brings in an impressive amount of extramural funding from federal, state, and local sources, which supports many University endeavors, including four research centers/institutes.

The University has a relationship with an active, engaged UW-Superior Foundation, which invests strongly in the University and its students.

In the past ten years, the University has found funding to increase functionality in multiple needed areas: Providing staffing for the High Impact Practices, creating the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, creating an Institutional Research office, hiring a Grants Officer, and supporting assessment across the University with the creation of the Office of Assessment.

While UW-Superior has sufficient human resources to sustain and deliver its academic programs, these resources include high levels of unbudgeted adjunct instructors and staff overloads, an issue that has been addressed historically with excess tuition revenue.

The University has instituted a self-examination process, sponsored by its Faculty Senate through the Planning and Budget Review Council, to examine staffing and budgetary issues and offer recommendations about better matching curriculum to fiscal realities.

Faculty and teaching staff are carrying instructional loads comparable to those of other like-sized Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (COPLAC) institutions, although compensation levels lag significantly behind that of comparable institutions both in the UW System and in COPLAC. This lag is especially the case with faculty at the associate and full professor levels.

The Information Technology (IT) structure services the University adequately; however, it is currently reviewing recommendations from a recent external review.

The University will need to identify funding to address some high-cost deferred maintenance issues – for example, the telephone system upgrade and a computer replacement fund.

Economic factors such as the price of gas have hit those units in which transportation is a major expenditure especially hard. Funding for athletics and facilities maintenance has not kept pace with the inflation measures, and opportunities to scale back operations are few.

While the University did endure a major flood in June 2012 that affected a majority of university buildings, all buildings were restored in time for Fall
semester classes. Long-term effects on library holdings and the heating plant
distribution system are being addressed.

In an era of budgetary uncertainty, the University has been energetic and pro-active in its
problem-solving and its responses to resource demands made upon it. Through the self-
study, the University has identified the following priorities.

- The University needs to take a hard look and realign operations within budget
  realities to address a number of “structural” deficits.
- The State’s pay plan funding has not been adequate to establish competitive salary
  bases resulting in the need for the University to establish its own pool of funding
  from which salary adjustments can be funded.
- Academic units need to align the curriculum within fiscal resources, including
  appropriate budget levels for adjuncts and overloads.
- The University needs to become more entrepreneurial in diversifying its funding
  sources and identifying new opportunities for revenue generation.
- Strategic and operational plans should address the variety of deferred maintenance
  issues.
- The University needs to work harder to ensure that a college education remains
  affordable for our students. The tasks include fully using tuition remission
  authority and increasing the number of scholarships available to students.

**Discussion**

As an agency of the State of Wisconsin, the University of Wisconsin System is provided
a funding allocation supported by taxpayer dollars. Universities in the UW System also
generate tuition revenue to support operations. In the recent past, taxpayer support has
been reduced, resulting in budget reductions and fiscal year lapses. Historically, the
University has been able to offset these reductions using a combination of 1) UW-System
funding offsets; 2) tuition increases; 3) a shifting of expenditures to other funding sources
such as indirect cost revenues; and 4) contingency funding. Units have held open
positions vacant, and all position requests must be reviewed and approved by the
Chancellor’s Cabinet before recruitment may begin. Units have been asked to realign
duties, evaluate positions for efficiencies, and critically examine business practices to
eliminate any “waste.” Until the most recent budget reductions the University has been
able to deal with these budget reductions with minimal impact upon the student academic experience or student services.

Table 5-1: Budget Reduction History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Biennium</th>
<th>UW-System Budget Reduction</th>
<th>UW-Superior Budget Reduction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011-13</td>
<td>125,125,000</td>
<td>1,900,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-11</td>
<td>60,724,800</td>
<td>882,306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-09</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-07</td>
<td>35,634,400</td>
<td>511,393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-05</td>
<td>40,000,000</td>
<td>386,401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offsets to Reductions</td>
<td>(185,849,800)</td>
<td>(2,782,506)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Impact of Budget Reductions</td>
<td>75,634,400</td>
<td>897,794</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the university prepares this self-study document, it is coordinating almost a $1 million budget lapse for FY2011-12 and FY2012-13 imposed by the State in October 2011. This latest reduction has come on top of significant reductions in UW funding in recent biennial budgets.

Table 5-2: Budget Lapse History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Biennium</th>
<th>UW-System Budget Lapse</th>
<th>UW-Superior Budget Lapse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009-11</td>
<td>44,336,000</td>
<td>420,462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-09</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-07</td>
<td>20,000,000</td>
<td>149,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Impact of Budget Lapses</td>
<td>130,024,591</td>
<td>1,566,694</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The UW System learned in August 2012 that this most recent lapse would not be made permanent. The University System was one of a handful of state agencies that Wisconsin Governor Walker declared exempt from permanent cuts going into the next two-year budget cycle. These entities have been advised, however, to stay close to their current budgets, as a general rule of thumb.

The 2011-13 biennial budget granted the UW System tools to help overcome the financial challenges affecting students and employees. The tools were packaged as the Wisconsin Idea Partnership (WIP), which was designed to create a better, stronger, more unified system to tackle the challenges of the 21st century and to help all of Wisconsin thrive – especially through difficult financial times. The Wisconsin Idea Partnership is an ongoing plan to help all UW universities advance the Wisconsin Idea – the longstanding premise that the boundaries of the University are the boundaries of the State – by providing the maximum flexibility to all University of Wisconsin Chancellors to lead their institutions in the most effective and efficient manner possible, for the benefit of their students, faculty, staff, and local communities. The WIP provides all UW System universities, including Superior, with flexibilities designed to help them produce more graduates, create well-paying jobs, and build stronger communities throughout the state, as pledged in the UW System's Growth Agenda for Wisconsin. These flexibilities affect how the universities manage their budgets, set tuition rates, manage compensation and human resources, maximize efficiencies in managing capital projects, exercise financial management and pursue procurement opportunities.

COPLAC Comparison:

UW-Superior had a total operating and non-operating revenue level of $55,947,236 in 2010-2011. UW-Superior had higher revenues in 2010-11 than both of its peer COPLAC institutions.

UW-Superior’s operating expenses per student were higher than both of its peer COPLAC institutions.

UW-Superior spent more per student than both of its peer COPLAC institutions in 2010-11 ($6,287 more per student on average).

Tuition represented 19.71% of UW-Superior’s total revenue, while at its peer COPLAC institutions tuition was 30% of total revenue.

State funding (excluding grants) supporting UW-Superior was 39% of the total revenue of the institution. The other COPLAC peer institutions reported state funding levels of 31% and 22% of total revenue.

UW-Superior is far more dependent upon state allocations than the comparison schools, while bringing in less tuition revenue as well.
THE IMPACT OF THE FLOOD OF 2012 ON RESOURCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

On June 19-20, 2012, the University sustained a major flood that affected all buildings to some degree, compromised the University’s heat distribution system, and virtually destroyed the University’s library holdings. This is the fourth such storm since 2005 that has affected the University to some degree. However, the magnitude of this summer’s damage is catastrophic and the projected loss is over $20 million. The University was fortunate to enlist the services of a national catastrophic recovery firm to assist with recovery efforts; this firm was on site on June 20 and immediately began coordinating these efforts. All of the buildings affected are back on line and were ready for the start of the Fall 2012 semester.

The two buildings sustaining most of the loss were the Jim Dan Hill Library and the Halbert Heating Plant. The Jim Dan Hill Library’s lower level, in which the majority of the library collection was housed, was flooded with over eight feet of water. Approximately 149,000 books sustained water damage and are not salvageable. The University’s entire print periodical collection was also lost; some of these volumes went back decades. As this self-study is being prepared, a library consultant has been engaged to assist library staff in determining how the collection will be rebuilt to support academic offerings. The University is in a very enviable position of being able to create the “library of the future,” leveraging technology, user needs, and pedagogical changes. Academic departments will play a major role in determining how to rebuild the University’s library collection.

The Halbert Heating Plant houses the University’s boilers and provides steam for heat and hot water distributed to buildings. This heating plant includes a system of approximately two miles of concrete-enclosed steam distribution tunnels that house the insulated piping and condensate return lines serving the buildings. The building had over 30 feet of water on three levels, causing the steam distribution system to flood and deposit flood water into many of the buildings. The flood water in the steam distribution system compromised the insulation around the steam pipes and has necessitated opening the full length of this steam distribution system and evaluating and replacing the steam pipe insulation as needed. Phase One of this repair project was completed in late August and dealt with the critical paths to supply steam to the major arteries of the University; a second phase will be completed in Summer 2013 addressing the steam lines that enter the
buildings. The University is working with an engineering firm skilled in this area to ensure that the University has heat for the upcoming winter.

Other buildings had water damage on their lower levels and to materials stored there. An inventory of all damaged items was conducted and departments have been given authority to replace them. In certain instances records were affected that needed to be preserved; those items have been freeze dried by the catastrophic recovery firm and were returned at the end of August.

Damaged drywall, carpeting, flooring, and the like were removed and replaced in those buildings that had sustained water damage. All areas were thoroughly cleaned, sanitized, repainted, and had air quality testing done before occupants were allowed to re-occupy the spaces. An individual walking on the University grounds as the Fall 2012 semester began would not have known by looking of the devastation caused by the Summer 2012 flood.

The State Self-Funded Property Program (SSPP) [Statute 20.865(1)(f)] provides coverage for loss of University-owned real and personal property, motor vehicle physical damage, business interruption (revenue loss that occurs as a result of property loss), extra expense (incurred after a property loss to maintain operations), and some bailments.

The SSPP is administered through the Bureau of State Risk Management (BSRM) in the State Department of Administration (DOA), through which all final coverage decisions and loss payments are made. The SSPP establishes a $3.2 million self-insured retention, above which a $300 million excess policy is purchased. The conditions set forth in the excess policy form a guideline for describing what exposures and perils will be covered in the event of a loss. The University is aware that it has sustained uninsured losses due to this flood.

The City of Superior and Douglas County have qualified for FEMA assistance as a result of this flood. The University has submitted a FEMA Request for Public Assistance and has had an initial meeting with FEMA officials. This process will continue for the next several months as the University identifies uninsured losses and potential mitigation initiatives for possible FEMA funding, including a library addition to house the collection above ground. The BSRM has also indicated that state funding is available for any uninsured losses that FEMA does not cover.
The University is working diligently with BSRM, UW System, the excess insurance carrier, and FEMA to coordinate the settlement for this flood loss. It is expected that this process will take several years to finalize.

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**FISCAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES**

Table 5-3 notes the University’s 2010-2011, 2011-2012, and 2012-2013 total fiscal resources, summarized by program, prior to any budget lapse reductions mentioned earlier. A history of approved University budgets may be found online.

**Table 5-3: Fiscal Resources FY 2010-11, 2011-12, and 2012-13**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY 2010-11</th>
<th>FY 2011-12</th>
<th>FY 2012-13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>$15,830,211</td>
<td>$16,084,577</td>
<td>$16,540,968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>$1,503,208</td>
<td>$2,402,692</td>
<td>$2,415,087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Service</td>
<td>$233,500</td>
<td>$152,222</td>
<td>$187,287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Support</td>
<td>$3,834,542</td>
<td>$3,899,379</td>
<td>$3,922,021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Services</td>
<td>$7,788,198</td>
<td>$8,764,410</td>
<td>$8,115,751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid</td>
<td>$16,578,996</td>
<td>$20,463,587</td>
<td>$20,086,843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auxiliary Enterprises</td>
<td>$5,801,561</td>
<td>$6,612,288</td>
<td>$7,369,035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Plant</td>
<td>$8,193,851</td>
<td>$7,700,508</td>
<td>$11,106,652</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Support</td>
<td>$4,395,711</td>
<td>$3,938,300</td>
<td>$4,148,382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$64,159,778</td>
<td>$70,017,963</td>
<td>$73,892,026</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 Throughout the Criterion 5 discussion in this chapter, there will be ongoing comparisons made on various resource topics with comparable COPLAC member institutions. The most recent COPLAC data report available for such purposes was for the academic year 2010-2011. An institution was deemed comparable if it had an undergraduate student population headcount of within 500 of the number of students at UW-Superior and if undergraduates represented 80% or greater of the total student population. There are two comparison institutions that, along with UW-Superior, are among the smallest of the COPLAC institutions. The two institutions were the University of Maine at Farmington, and the University of Montevallo.

University of Wisconsin | 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.
The majority of the University’s operating budget is comprised of a combination of state tax revenue and tuition revenue, collectively referred to as General Purpose Revenue (GPR). The GPR budget is allocated by Cabinet unit.

Table 5-4: GPR Budget for FY 2010-11, 2011-12, and 2012-13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FY 2010-11 Final</th>
<th>FY 2011-12 Final</th>
<th>FY 2012-13 Budgeted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chancellor</td>
<td>$924,292</td>
<td>$917,100</td>
<td>$1,306,923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Affairs</td>
<td>$13,489,001</td>
<td>$13,225,957</td>
<td>$11,582,356&lt;sup&gt;5&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration and Finance</td>
<td>$2,792,797</td>
<td>$2,985,523</td>
<td>$5,106,175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Life</td>
<td>$446,792</td>
<td>$526,792</td>
<td>$558,096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advancement</td>
<td>$221,810</td>
<td>$221,810</td>
<td>$231,238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fringe Benefit Pool&lt;sup&gt;6&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>$7,642,815</td>
<td>$7,405,522</td>
<td>$8,211,363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Wide</td>
<td>$84,070</td>
<td>$113,713</td>
<td>$593,108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$25,601,577</td>
<td>$25,396,417</td>
<td>$27,589,259</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The University has a long history of responsible stewardship of allocated resources. Budget managers operate within the constraints of allocated resources. Budget developers are also very conservative when projecting revenues. Over the past several years, the University has enjoyed substantial amounts of excess tuition fee revenue that has been used to provide one-time funding for prioritized needs for unanticipated contingency needs. As state support dwindles, this fee revenue has become more critical to University operations. The University’s strategic planning efforts, along with implementation of an integrated planning process, are designed to ensure that available resources are being allocated to the most strategically aligned needs.

<sup>5</sup> This drop in funding reflects the shift of Information Technology Services to the Administration & Finance unit beginning in 2012-13.

<sup>6</sup> Fringe Benefits have historically not been a part of the campus’ ongoing base-budget funding. However, fringe benefit amounts are shown in the campus’ published Redbook Budget.
In response to its 2003 accreditation review, the University developed a detailed set of initiatives to provide UW-Superior students with a distinctive set of experiences rooted in the liberal arts tradition and consistent with our status as a public university. These have been described in other chapters of the self-study and are now known as the High Impact Practices (HIPs).

This set of initiatives received “jump-start” funding in the amount of $200,000 for FY 2006-07 and again for FY 2007-08. In FY 2008-09 it became a permanent base budget allocation in the amount of $849,800 (net of fringe benefits). As of FY 2011-12, additional base budget allocation was provided by UW System to support 13.25 FTE in the areas of Academic Service-Learning (1.0 FTE), language professors and a global economic development position (3.0 FTE), International Programs (2.0 FTE), Institutional Research (2.0 FTE), instruction of First Year Seminars (1.4 FTE) and the First-Year Experience Coordinator (1.0 FTE), and Admissions (2.0 FTE), as well as some support staff. The dollars also support numerous student workers and provide support for supplies and equipment within all the HIP areas. (See “FY 12 Liberal Arts DIN Analysis”)

Differential tuition is another means by which the University has generated revenue to support various projects and academic needs. The differential proposals require annual reports to the student government, and review and approval by the Board of Regents for continued operation.

- In June 2003, the Board of Regents approved a differential tuition of $150 per year to support Jim Dan Hill Library operations. This differential tuition was adjusted to $137 per year in 2008 and remains in effect at that rate. The revenue generated by this differential tuition, estimated at approximately $279,000 per year, is used for purchasing student research materials, general collection acquisitions, and database and full-text journals subscriptions.
- In 2008, the Board of Regents approved a differential tuition of $70 per year to support a comprehensive array of services and programs with emphasis on career development early in the student’s enrollment. The $156,000 in annual revenue supports two staff members in Career Services and pays a variety of program...
expenses. These staff members have met with over 700 individual students and alumni, facilitated over 200 on-campus student employment interviews; and delivered over 100 workshops, serving almost 4,000 student attendees, on topics such as interviewing, dining etiquette, résumé development, and portfolios. The staff has also implemented several online resources to connect to students and to help students find careers.

- In February 2011, the Board of Regents approved the “Superior Experience” differential tuition, which adds a technology enhancement component to the differential tuitions described above. The technology differential tuition is $30 per year, generating about $65,000 annually, and is used to fund classroom and academic lab equipment and student assistant positions.

- In February 2011, the Board of Regents also approved a natural sciences differential tuition of $12 per credit. The projected $70,000 in annual revenue is used for laboratory equipment acquisitions and maintenance, field trip support, student assistants, and capstone research projects. This differential tuition replaces special course fees associated with natural science lab work and can be more flexibly allocated to address priorities.

UW SYSTEM INVESTMENT IN UNIVERSITY PRIORITIES

Over the past ten years, UW System has recognized that because of UW-Superior’s size and the diseconomies of scale often associated with a small institution, the University warrants special consideration for one-time, or jump-start, funding to assist with strategic initiatives. This past year, as a means of ensuring adequate resources to achieve the University’s Growth Agenda goals, the University requested investment funding (called “WATR”) to 1) redesign the university website; 2) provide support for a new regional admissions recruiter in the Twin Cities of Minnesota metro area; 3) develop a branding campaign to increase awareness and name recognition in the Twin Cities; and 4) hire a search firm to assist the University in conducting a national search for an Assistant Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management. In September, the University received notice that this funding was approved and will be dispersed over a four-year period, and that $250,000 of this funding will become a permanent base adjustment. The funding will provide UW-Superior with much needed resources to help focus on improving enrollment and retention.
EXTRAMURAL FUNDING

Table 5-5: Gifts, Grants and Contracts Awarded to UW-Superior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY</th>
<th>Public Service</th>
<th>Misc.</th>
<th>Physical Plant</th>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Student Aid</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>$149,307</td>
<td>$720,295</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$1,691,191</td>
<td>$1,747,165</td>
<td>$4,307,958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>$30,186</td>
<td>$720,295</td>
<td>$160,496</td>
<td>$5,084,711</td>
<td>$1,875,412</td>
<td>$7,871,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>$55,341</td>
<td>$720,295</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$4,081,708</td>
<td>$2,512,913</td>
<td>$7,370,257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>$1,075,417</td>
<td>$831,692</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$3,026,864</td>
<td>$2,888,904</td>
<td>$7,822,877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>$1,280,115</td>
<td>$875,053</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$1,913,823</td>
<td>$2,558,647</td>
<td>$6,627,638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-Yr Total</td>
<td>$2,590,366</td>
<td>$3,867,630</td>
<td>$160,496</td>
<td>$15,798,297</td>
<td>$11,583,041</td>
<td>$33,999,830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-Yr Average</td>
<td>$518,074</td>
<td>$773,526</td>
<td>$32,099</td>
<td>$3,159,659</td>
<td>$2,316,608</td>
<td>$6,799,966</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Currently, UW-Superior ranks third highest in the level of federally funded research of all UW comprehensive universities, an accomplishment of some note for an institution of its size.

In Fiscal Year 2011-2012, sixteen UW-Superior entities received some sort of gift/grant funding or were successful in obtaining extramural contract work. In addition, the Lake Superior Research Institute (LSRI), the Transportation and Logistics Research Center (TLRC), the Great Lakes Maritime Research Institute (GLMRI), and the Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve (LSNERR) receive federal funding.

In August 2010, the University hired a full-time grants administrator to work with faculty and staff to explore opportunities for extramural funding. This investment has resulted in an increased number of extramural submissions and awards to the University in FY11-12. This grant and contract activity has also enabled the University to generate over $2.1 million in indirect cost revenue since FY2008-09. This money has been used to offset overhead costs to reinvest in research endeavors.

UW-SUPERIOR FOUNDATION SUPPORT

The University of Wisconsin-Superior's success in providing quality education has been enhanced greatly by the support of friends and alumni. For over 60 years, the University of Wisconsin-Superior Foundation has invested in the University. The mission of the
University of Wisconsin-Superior Foundation Inc. is “to secure, invest and manage financial resources that support exceptional opportunities for the University of Wisconsin-Superior and its students, faculty and facilities.” The Foundation has grown as the needs of the University have changed. Scholarships continue to be a major thrust of support, but students and the University have other emerging needs for external support. The Foundation has become a valued partner in supporting student research, faculty recruitment, visiting speakers, and much more. Its individual contributors have made a significant impact by giving for student scholarships, faculty development, academic programs, and facility improvements. It also has made student academic work and travel possible and contributed for numerous other University activities to enrich and benefit students. Donor support assisted the University in building the Yellowjacket Union and Swenson Hall and in renovating Jim Dan Hill Library. Over the past six years the Foundation has provided almost $8,500,000 in total support for University and student needs: Over $4,000,000 for scholarships; almost $1,000,000 for various programmatic and university needs; and over $3,000,000 for capital funds. For a university of our size, this is an incredibly strong record.

COPLAC Comparison:

- The total funding brought into UW-Superior in 2010-2011 from state, federal and local sources – both for operating and non-operating purposes – was $32,834,423.
- Of the two comparison schools, UW-Superior recognized the most revenue in federal grant awards at $4,679,862 (approximately $2.8 million more than the institution with the closest enrollment and $2.76 million more than the other institution).
- UW-Superior awarded 432 institutionally funded scholarships in 2010-2011 for a total of $733,874. One of the comparison schools did not provide this data to COPLAC; the other provided 1,105 institutionally funded scholarships for a total of $5,431,312.
The University’s personnel are sufficient to enable the University to realize its mission, purposes, and goals. UW System personnel structures are described in Criterion Two. The following chart shows the overall change in budgeted FTE staffing levels at UW-Superior for all classes of employees since 2001/02:

**Table 5-6:**  **Ten Year Differential Staffing Levels for, Unclassified and Classified Employees: 2001-2002 to 2011-2012 (Head Count and FTE Data)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>Professor</th>
<th>Associate Professor</th>
<th>Assistant Professor</th>
<th>Academic Staff</th>
<th>Instructional Academic Staff</th>
<th>Classified</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HC FTE</td>
<td>HC FTE</td>
<td>HC FTE</td>
<td>HC FTE</td>
<td>HC FTE</td>
<td>HC FTE</td>
<td>HC FTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-2002</td>
<td>47 43.18</td>
<td>32 29.85</td>
<td>43 40.44</td>
<td>114 87.68</td>
<td>26 21.69</td>
<td>155 147.62</td>
<td>417 370.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>38 37.00</td>
<td>27 24.00</td>
<td>70 66.10</td>
<td>140 104.21</td>
<td>25 19.46</td>
<td>171 154.15</td>
<td>471 404.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Change</td>
<td>-9 -6.18</td>
<td>-5 -5.85</td>
<td>+27 +25.66</td>
<td>+26 +16.53</td>
<td>-10 -2.23</td>
<td>+16 +6.53</td>
<td>+54 +34.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Over the past several years, a large turnover in staff has occurred due to an aging workforce and the impact of budget provisions relating to benefits and collective bargaining. No new hires to full time permanent academic instructional staff were made in this three year window. Rather, instructional academic staff positions have been converted to faculty ranks as discussed in previous chapters. The following two tables describe the hiring and retirement/resignation picture from the past three fiscal years:

**Table 5-7:**  **New Hires** for FY 2010-11, FY 2011-12, and to date for FY 2012-13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hire Category</th>
<th>FY 11</th>
<th>FY 12</th>
<th>FY13 to Date (August 2012)</th>
<th>Total Hires by Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Staff</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total by FY</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5-8: Retirements by Fiscal Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>Total Retired or Resigned by Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Staff</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total by FY</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the past three years, over 12.59 percent of the full time faculty and 6 percent of the academic staff have turned over at UW-Superior. The loss of so many senior faculty and staff and the hiring of numerous junior faculty and staff new to the University represent both opportunity and threat. New employees bring a fresh set of ideas to the University, which can invigorate it and be pivotal in addressing new challenges. However, there is also an institutional memory loss. These institutional memories could have assisted new employees to navigate the territory. This has meant that many processes and procedures have had to be clarified, re-examined, and taught.

Since the 2003 report to HLC, additional functions have been identified and filled to meet evolving University needs; these include hires in the areas of institutional research, the Liberal Arts High Impact Practices, public relations, enrollment management, the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, grants administration, learning outcome assessment, Career Services, and oversight of graduate programs. Several of these positions have been filled by faculty working as part faculty, part administrator.
Hiring Practices

As discussed in Criterion Two, UW-Superior is an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer. From a financial and planning perspective, the University routinely uses the search committee mechanism to carefully screen candidates to ensure a good-fit placement. The University has also adopted the practice of reviewing each position vacancy with a critical eye by the department and by administrative decision-makers, with ultimate approval to recruit provided by the Chancellor’s Cabinet. This process has been necessary to ensure that the university is utilizing our personnel in the most efficient manner possible while considering strategic needs. However, the University hiring practices are slow and often result in interim appointments without the benefit of working with an incumbent. One of the flexibilities afforded the UW System with the 2011-13 budget is that of creating a personnel system independent of the State’s more onerous system. University officials are currently working with other Universities in the System and with System staff to develop the new personnel system and to create efficiencies and synergies not previously possible. The new personnel system is scheduled to be rolled out early in 2013.

Each tenure track and tenured faculty and contractual full-time instructional academic staff must hold a degree that is one level higher than the degree being sought by the students. Each must also hold a minimum of a baccalaureate degree in a discipline relevant to any area in which they teach. While this has been general University practice, it is just now being institutionalized as written policy through the Academic Staff Senate. A process is in

Professional Development Grants for Classified Staff

Debbie Seguin, Dean’s Assistant and Classified Staff Advisory Committee Chair, has seen over the years the value of development grants. In these times of tight department and unit budgets, it’s great for classified staff to grow and enhance their career paths at UW-Superior. Over the past three years, there have been over $19,300 given out to classified staff in development grants. The availability of these funds has helped classified staff receive training on new programs and software—such as PeopleSoft—adopted at UW-Superior. These grants have also been used to enhance skills in using Microsoft Office programs, used widely across campus. Workshops have given classified staff more knowledge in their fields of expertise. Finally, funds are available to attend conferences with colleagues from other UW System schools and elsewhere, where brainstorming and collaboration brings new ideas and perspectives on issues we all are facing. These new ideas and skills enrich the people and service of UW-Superior.
place for waiving this policy requirement for “equivalent experience.” The Chair of the Department makes the argument for waiver to the Dean and then the Provost on a case-by-case basis for a person who brings an equivalent level of experience, expertise, or credential that cannot be acquired another way. An example might be an experienced expert Native-speaking Ojibwa instructor who is hired as an adjunct to teach Ojibwa language.

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**STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

While the University provides its employees with numerous opportunities for ongoing training and professional renewal, acquiring individual funding for staff development involving travel is very competitive due to the level of available resources. To support employees, the University has been creative in leveraging funding from a variety of sources.

**RENEWAL AND DEVELOPMENT GRANTS**

The University has budgeted just over $35,000 annually for professional development grants for faculty, academic staff, and classified staff. These grants are awarded on a competitive basis based on criteria established by each governance group.

**Table 5-9: Faculty, Academic Staff, and Classified Staff: Numbers Receiving Development Grants FY 10 to FY 12**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Development Grant</th>
<th>FY 10</th>
<th>FY11</th>
<th>FY12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Grants Awarded</td>
<td></td>
<td>35</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of Awards:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Range of Awards:</td>
<td>Range of Awards:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500- $1640</td>
<td></td>
<td>$50- $1,500</td>
<td>$400-$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Amount Awarded:</td>
<td>$29,255</td>
<td>Total Amount Awarded:</td>
<td>Total Amount Awarded:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$23,313</td>
<td>$14,755</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Grants Awarded</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of Awards:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Range of Awards:</td>
<td>Range of Awards:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$400- $1,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total Amount Awarded:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$14,755</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### FACULTY SABBATICAL PROGRAM

The Faculty Sabbatical Program enables recipients to be engaged in intensive study in order to help them become more effective teachers and scholars and to enhance their service to the University. There are two sabbatical options: One for a full academic year (compensation up to 65%) and one for a semester (compensation up to 100%).

There is no set annual budget for this program. A call for applications goes out each fall. Applications are reviewed by the applicant’s department chair and then by the Sabbatical Selection Committee, comprised of faculty appointed by the Faculty Senate. The Provost then reviews the recommendations of the committee and makes final award and funding decisions. In total, nine sabbaticals, each of them a single semester, have been awarded in the past three years.

### OTHER UNIVERSITY TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Most recently, the University has offered a training series in-house to better support supervisors across the University in their supervisory roles. The funding for this series, which is open to all faculty and staff either currently supervising or interested in supervising, is covered through the University’s GPR budget. The series is beginning with two events during Fall 2012, each run twice, and then will expand to additional topics the next year.

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University of Wisconsin | 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.
The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning provides numerous development opportunities to instructional staff, referenced more specifically under Criterion Three. Other targeted training opportunities are offered through various HIP Programs.

**PHYSICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

The University has undergone a physical transformation over the past ten years with capital investments that have addressed physical development needs and priorities.

The impact of these facility improvements has been far-reaching and exciting. Individually, each offers unique additions that enhance the University. Collectively, they present an impressive and progressive vision of the University to all its constituencies. The impact on instruction has been addressed in Criterion Three.

**Physical Improvements**

- Marcovich Wellness Center (addition to Clough Gates Physical Education Building)
- Parking Lot Expansion and Reconfiguration (five areas)
- Wessman Arena locker room addition
- Jim Dan Hill Library – total renovation
- Yellowjacket Union – new construction
- Swenson Hall – new construction
- Demolition of Sundquist and McCaskill Halls – end-of-life facilities
- Barstow Science Hall – partial renovation
- Ross & Hawkes residence halls renovation (in progress)
- Old Main renovation (planned for 2013-15)
- Property Acquisitions:
  - Clough Street properties (for parking expansion)
  - Public Safety Building
  - Barker’s Island properties for NERR operations

**TECHNOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE**

Information Technology (IT) is an essential core support system central to a modern university’s operation and the success with its students. These kinds of systems are
always changing, and the life cycles of their various phases of usefulness have to be carefully planned, budgeted for, monitored, and implemented. Hiring and retention of IT staff members are difficult in light of the University’s salary structure and external market demand for their skills. The University’s Chief Information Officer (CIO) resigned in August 2012. Senior administration is considering a variety of staffing models in which the CIO position is replaced in a manner that can strengthen the University’s IT structure in support of the mission and planning processes while building on its successes and talented staff.

An external review of Information Technology Services and its functions was conducted in Spring 2012. Eleven recommendations for the University were laid out in the report:

- Develop a unit strategic plan that supports the University mission. The proposed 2012-2015 UW-Superior Information Technology Plan is currently under review.
- Clarify the charges and responsibilities of the various IT governance groups.
- Improve technology options for academic programs. Several of these have also been identified as action issues in the proposed strategic plan.
- Shift the role of Chief Information Officer from an operational to a strategic focus (also recommended by the Planning and Budgetary Review Council of the Faculty Senate in Spring 2012).
- Develop a replacement plan for classroom technology.
- Improve the service request process.
- Identify backup for web technical work.
- Communicate how priorities of the unit strategic plan are inclusive of the viewpoints of the broader University.
- Complete the migration to new data center (completed in Summer 2012).
- Set standards for basic technology support, and establish a funding mechanism for sustaining it.

BUDGETING AT UW-SUPERIOR

The University endorsed an Integrated Planning and Budgeting Process in December 2010 (implemented during 2011-12) to build the FY2012-2013 operating budget. The integrated planning process ensures that all planning and budget activities are effectively linked and coordinated and are driven by the University’s vision, mission, and academic
priorities. As part of the planning and budgeting function, the Executive Budget Council was created. The Council consists of the three governance chairs (Faculty Senate, Academic Staff Senate, and Student Senate), the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the Vice Chancellor for Campus Life, the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, the Vice Chancellor for Advancement, and a representative from the classified staff. The Executive Budget Council makes recommendations for both planning and investment priorities and for budget reductions or reallocations when necessary.

OPERATIONAL BUDGETING

At the beginning of each annual budget cycle, UW System identifies university funding allocations by funding source. Each University must build its budget to these target figures. UW-Superior’s budget office coordinates the annual budget development by identifying allocation amounts by Cabinet level unit. Each Cabinet officer then coordinates with its departments how those allocations are to be distributed within units. Over the past several years, there have been very few additional resources to allocate. The University has spent the majority of recent budget development exercises identifying ways to streamline operations and do more with less.

Each Cabinet officer works independently with his or her unit in developing a budget. As part of the 2012-13 budget development, the Provost sought active input and feedback from the faculty regarding academic program budget issues. In response, the Faculty Senate Planning and Budgetary Council was asked to review issues of budgeting for the size of the University’s curricular offerings and salary expenditures to support that curriculum. This group compiled a thorough analysis, which is discussed in more detail in Section 5.C.

AUXILIARY BUDGETING

Auxiliary operations are self-supporting programs whose primary purpose is to provide services to students (e.g., residence halls, student centers/unions, student health clinics, bookstores) and whose secondary purpose is to provide services to staff (e.g., parking, clinics, conferences, printing and duplicating services) and, occasionally, the general public. User fees, segregated fees, merchandise sales, and interest earnings generate revenue for auxiliary operations, and the operations are allowed to maintain reserves – with funds used for new facilities, remodeling/additions, deferred maintenance, high-cost equipment, debt service obligations – and to ensure adequate funding for current
operations. Students participate in the programming and budgeting process through the Segregated University Fee Allocations Committee (SUFAC).

UW System Policy Paper #43 identifies expectations and responsibilities associated with the management of auxiliary operations. UW-Superior is responsible for complying with the requirements of this policy. In addition, UW System establishes auxiliary budget guidelines each year that are used by the auxiliary directors in formulating their budgets. UW-Superior’s Budget Office coordinates the auxiliary budget operations of the university. University auxiliary directors create an operating budget forecasting revenues using historical sales performance, anticipated enrollments, and the State’s projected interest income rates. Expenditure budgets are built using anticipated fringe benefit rates; enrollment projections; health insurance rate adjustments; inflation projections; and any property, liability and workers’ compensation program cost adjustments. Student affordability is a key issue, and auxiliary directors must respond to tough student questions at open forums held to discuss proposed auxiliary rates. It is not uncommon for auxiliary directors to adjust programs and proposed rates in response to student concerns. Auxiliary rates are approved by the Chancellor and then forwarded to UW System for incorporation into the System’s annual operating budget, which is, in turn, approved by the Board of Regents.

UW-Superior’s housing and board rates are the lowest of the UW schools; its housing facilities are also among the oldest in the System. However, UW-Superior’s segregated fee rates that support the student union and a variety of other student activities are one of the highest in the UW System, as can be seen in System reports. The height of these rates is another example of the diseconomies of scale associated with a small university. To illustrate, UW-Superior students are paying $514 in debt service obligations on the new student union while students at UW-Eau Claire, a university four times the size of UW-Superior, pay $326 per student for their new student union.

CAPITAL PLANNING & BUDGET

Every two years as part of the State’s biennial budget development, the State’s public universities are required to update their six-year physical development plans in collaboration with UW System university planners and the Division of State Facilities staff. This is a rigorous process in which program directions, staffing needs, and facilities use are considered. University priorities are evaluated in the context of a University of Wisconsin
Wisconsin System capital budget proposal that is approved by the Board of Regents and submitted for consideration in the State’s biennial budget process.

**MONITORING EXPENSES**

University departments have online access to unit budget, revenue, and expenditure data as part of the PeopleSoft Shared Financial System (SFS) via the Wisconsin Data Mart (WISDM). The WISDM data warehouse is a web-based financial reporting system used by all UW System universities. Detail and summary financial reports by department, sub-department, division, and projects are available. Users may view reports online, in PDF, or by download to Excel. Users may conduct transaction searches of payments, transfers, internal billings, purchase orders, and other journals. This financial data includes encumbrance data for both staffing obligations and outstanding purchase orders.

**BUDGET REDUCTIONS**

In 2008-09, in response to the statewide budget climate, the Continuous Improvement and Planning Team (CIPT) developed a set of budget reduction principles. These principles were reviewed in 2010-11, and were deemed appropriate for any further budget reductions. These budget reduction principles are as follows:

A. In keeping with our institutional mission, minimize the direct impact on our ability to instruct and serve students

B. Minimize reliance on additional student revenue (for example, reliance on differential tuition and fees)

C. Make evidence-based decisions within the context of the University’s strategic plans and priorities

D. Emphasize that budget units share and collaborate on the use of resources to maximize efficiencies and reduce expenses

E. Promote open dialogue, engaging civility, dignity for community members, and respect for diverse perspectives, leading to transparent and understandable decisions

F. Support the processes of shared governance and work with key internal constituencies

G. Recognizing that personnel costs comprise the majority of the University’s budget, [stress that] UW-Superior values its employees and will abide by contracts, policies, and established procedures. The University has no intent to
enter fiscal emergency status and will to the extent possible, recognize personnel savings through attrition

If budget reductions are necessary, the Executive Budget Council will be responsible for making recommendations to the Chancellor regarding individual line-item budget decisions.

Core Component 5.B: The institution’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes.

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

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- UW-Superior is active and engaged in shared governance.
- Shared governance occurs across University groups (faculty, academic staff, students, and classified) and administrative structures; arrangements and reporting lines are clear.
- UW-Superior has appropriate structures in place to serve the University in its governance activities and to connect it to the UW System and Board of Regents.
- Policies, procedures, and processes for accountability, reporting, and correction are clear and readily accessible online.
- The Board of Regents of the University Of Wisconsin System is involved in and knowledgeable about every facet of its responsibility to administer the University of Wisconsin System.

University of Wisconsin | 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.
Discussion

As discussed in Criterion Two, UW-Superior is governed by the UW System Board of Regents through shared governance. The role of the Chancellor is outlined in State statute Chapter 36.09 (3)(a). The Chancellor serves as the executive head of the institution and faculty. She is responsible for administration of board policies under the coordinating direction of the System President and reports to both the System President and the Board of Regents for the operation of the University. In consultation with faculty, the Chancellor is responsible for designing curricula and degree requirements, determining academic standards, and establishing grading systems; defining and administering institutional standards for faculty peer evaluation and screening candidates for appointment, promotion, and tenure; recommending merit pay increases; and administering auxiliary services and overseeing all funds, from whatever source, allocated to, generated by, or intended for use in the University.

Faculty, academic staff, and students, subject to responsibilities and powers of the Board of Regents, System President, and Chancellor, are responsible for the immediate governance of UW-Superior and actively participate in the development of institutional policy, each through their own governance group. Faculty are vested with responsibility for the immediate governance of the University, with primary responsibility for academic and educational activities and faculty personnel matters (Chapter 36.09 (4)). The primary area of responsibility of academic staff is the formulation and review of all policies and procedures concerning academic staff matters, including academic staff personnel matters (Chapter 36.09 (4m)). Policy statements devised by and concerning these two groups are laid out in the Unclassified Staff Handbook. The vehicle for faculty governance activities is the Faculty Senate; the activities of academic staff are borne by Academic Staff Senate. Minutes and other documents outlining actions taken by these two Senates or their respective committees are found online.

Students have primary responsibility for formulation and review of policies concerning student life, services, and interests. They have responsibility to oversee student fees that substantially support the University’s student activities (chapter 36.09 (5)). Policy statements devised by and concerning this group are also laid out in the Student Government Association Constitution and the SGA Handbook. Minutes and other documents outlining actions taken by the Student Government Association Senate and its committees can be found online.
Two other groups that do not have governance authority but have an impact on policy formulation and implementation are the administrators who work under the direction of the Chancellor, and the classified staff who provide extensive support across the University and at all levels.

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**UW SYSTEM-WIDE POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND LEGAL RESOURCES**

The primary governance policies and procedures for the entire UW System are listed below. Details to which each set of policies refers are available online.

- **Regent Policy Documents** have been adopted pursuant to the policy-making authority vested in the Board by Chapter 36 of the Wisconsin Statutes. The Regent Policies address, but are not limited to:
  - academic policies and programs
  - equal opportunity
  - tuition and fees
  - housing
  - activities of faculty members
  - student activities
  - trust and investment policies

Other policies that are used to govern the University of Wisconsin System and its institutions are the following:

- **Academic Information Series (ACIS)** - A set of 16 policy papers covering areas such as academic program planning and review, program audits, inter-institutional articulation, international education, and distance education.
- **Academic Planning Statements (ACPS)** - A set of ten documents that contain guidelines to address specific procedural issues in a number of areas, including program audits, academic program planning and review, inter-institutional articulation, international education, and distance education.
- **Budget Preparation Technical Instructions** - Instructions, prepared by the Office of Budget and Planning, that provide technical guidance to UW institutions in developing their annual operating budgets.
University of Wisconsin | 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.

The responsibilities of the Board of Regents are addressed in Criterion Two. Standing BOR committees study issues and bring back recommendations to the entire Board for its consideration or action. The standing committees of the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents are the Executive Committee; Business, Finance, and Audit Committee; Capital Planning and Budget Committee; Education Committee; Research, Economic Development, and Innovation Committee; Personnel Matters Review Committee; Committee on Student Discipline and Other Student Appeals; and (until 2012) the
Committee on Faculty and Academic Staff Collective Bargaining, which is no longer applicable as collective bargaining is prohibited to Wisconsin’s public workers. Committee minutes and the full BOR minutes are archived online.

Other committees serve the governing needs of the Board and are created on an ad hoc basis; they are not permanent committees. BOR committees, their charges, and their current issues can be found on the Board of Regents website.

ANNUAL AUDIT
The State of Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau conducts an annual audit of the UW System and its universities. The annual reports are available to the public online.

ACCOUNTABILITY REPORTS
The University of Wisconsin System has annually published detailed accountability reports since 1993. The current report, Investing in Wisconsin’s Future, builds upon two earlier publications: Achieving Excellence, issued annually from 2001 to 2008; and its predecessor, Accountability for Achievement, published from 1993 to 1998. Accountability for Achievement was one of the first accountability reports for a university system. Investing in Wisconsin’s Future reflects the strategic framework for advancing the UW System’s Growth Agenda for Wisconsin. The Accountability Report is an annual agenda item considered at one of the Board’s Fall meetings.

ACADEMIC PLAN
In October 2009, the initial UW-Superior Academic Plan was presented to the Board of Regents. It was updated by the Faculty Senate in 2010-11. Beginning in Spring 2013 it will be updated biennially.

REVIEW OF NEW AND EXISTING ACADEMIC PROGRAMS
In the winter of 2011-2012, the Board of Regents convened a working group to revise the System’s academic program planning, review, and approval process. As a result, a significant revision of the process was established and enacted by the BOR in August 2012. The new process takes effect September 4, 2012, and establishes an electronic means by which the BOR can meet its statutory requirements for assuring academic quality in all new programs it approves. Each Wisconsin System institution is to establish a website containing information on the local planning and review processes, including...
how program evaluation and assessment of student learning are conducted. These websites will provide the BOR with valuable information on the ways in which each institution defines and determines quality academic programming. University websites are to be operational by October 4, 2012. Full details of the revised process can be found online.

Likewise, the BOR examines academic program reviews prepared internally by each university. The BOR may make recommendations for corrective actions through UW System’s Office of Academic and Student Affairs Office.

BOARD OF REGENTS – UNIVERSITY CONNECTIONS

Every year, the Board of Regents President assigns an individual board member to each institution as a university liaison. This practice ensures that each regent becomes acquainted with the staff of a particular institution and learn more about its operations. Each year, UW-Superior hosts its “regent buddy” several times and includes him or her in invitations to special events. Each year, two of the BOR monthly meetings are held at individual institutions. UW-Superior hosted a very successful BOR meeting in April 2012 in conjunction with the inauguration of UW-Superior’s new Chancellor.

SHARED GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

As previously discussed, shared governance at UW-Superior is undertaken by three governance groups, which share responsibility for decision-making for the University. They are the Faculty, the Academic Staff, and the Students. While not a formally recognized governance group, the classified staff has recently created a Classified Staff Advisory Committee to participate and advise in a similar capacity as that of the recognized governance groups. Reciprocal lines of communication run between these groups and the Chancellor and Provost.

FACULTY GOVERNANCE

The Faculty of the University of Wisconsin-Superior are responsible to the Chancellor of the University through the Department Chairs and the Dean of Faculties/Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, as described in Chapter 4 of the Unclassified Staff Handbook. The faculty governance role of each University of Wisconsin System institution was described in 5B(1).
While Faculty participate in multiple ways in addressing academic, educational, and personnel matters through individual initiative and through service on departmental and University committees, the formal faculty body for meeting and implementing these responsibilities is Faculty Senate. The 15-member Faculty Senate is comprised of a representative from each of the 12 academic departments and three members elected at-large.

There is an Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate and five councils that carry out specific charges related to Senate business: Academic Program Review Council (APRC), Graduate Council, Personnel Council, Planning and Budgetary Council (PBC), and the Undergraduate Academic Affairs Council (UAAC). The chairs of these five councils are ex-officio members of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. Each council has a role or charge from the Faculty Senate:

- The Undergraduate Academic Affairs Council has the authority to recommend to the Senate the approval of new undergraduate courses, graduation requirements, majors and changes to majors, minors and changes to minors, and academic policies.
- The Graduate Council has authority over all graduate-level academic matters. The Graduate Council approves graduate-level curriculum, reviews graduate policies and procedures, approves new graduate program proposals, approves candidates for graduate faculty status (only these faculty may teach graduate-level courses), and recommends resource allocations for graduate programs.
- The Personnel Council reviews proposed changes to Departmental Personnel Rules and makes recommendations for administration of those rules; this Council also handles faculty grievances.
- Planning and Budgetary Council serves as the faculty voice in budget planning and strategic planning for the University; one member of this Council is appointed by the PBC to serve on the Continuous Improvement Planning Team (CIPT).
- Academic Program Review Council conducts reviews of each academic program on a seven-year rotation; these reviews are shared with PBC for feedback on potential budgetary implications, and the reports and their recommendations go to the Faculty Senate, and eventually on to the Provost and the System’s Board of Regents. The template for local program review is posted on the Provost’s website.
In addition to the Councils, the Faculty Senate appoints faculty as members of numerous standing committees of the faculty, academic staff, student body, and University.

**ACADEMIC STAFF GOVERNANCE**

The academic staff members of each institution, subject to the responsibilities and powers of the board, the president, the chancellor, and the faculty of the institution, are active participants in the shared governance process at UW-Superior. They participate, along with the other three entities, in the immediate governance of and policy development for the University. The academic staff members have primary responsibility for the formulation and review of all policies and procedures concerning academic staff members, including academic staff personnel matters. At UW-Superior, academic staff members participate in institutional governance through individual initiative, service on University committees, and service on the Academic Staff Senate.

At UW-Superior, the Academic Staff Senate is the primary formal vehicle through which governance is implemented. The Academic Staff Senate has nine members elected from among academic staff across the University on a rotating basis. Senate members elect the Executive Committee consisting of a chair, a secretary, and a representative to the UW-System. The Academic Staff Senate as a body may consult with the Chancellor and appoints members to ad hoc committees to review personnel matters and hear grievances related to Academic Staff personnel rules found in Appendix E of the Unclassified Staff Handbook.

There are four committees and one individual that conduct Academic Staff Senate business: Academic Staff Appeals, Academic Staff Investigation, Academic Staff Legislative, Academic Staff Personnel/Compensation, and the Academic Staff Representative to UW System. Each committee or individual has the following charge:

- **Academic Staff Appeals:** Investigates complaints against any academic staff member and reports finding to the Chancellor.
- **Academic Staff Investigation:** Investigates any complaint against an academic staff member and report findings and recommendations to the Chancellor.
- **Academic Staff Personnel/Compensation:** Reviews all requests and policies for promotion, title changes, and/or career progression using UW-Superior University Personnel Guideline #1.
• **Academic Staff Legislative**: Keeps abreast of legislative issues and trends that may affect academic staff. Inform the Senate of bills or legislative trends that may need action.

• **Academic Staff Representative to UW System**: Serves as the official representative of the University’s academic staff. Receives all UW System communications directed at academic staff, and regularly attends BOR meetings.

**STUDENT GOVERNANCE: THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (SGA)**

The Student Government Association (SGA) is the official, fully representative student governing body charged with representing student interests and promoting the general welfare of UW-Superior students. In accordance with Wisconsin Statute §36.09(5), students have primary responsibility for formulating and reviewing policies concerning student life, services, and interests, as well as allocating student fees for student organizations and making fee recommendations to the Chancellor for University activities. The SGA Senate is elected from the student body. There are fifteen elected SGA senator positions: three at-large senators, two graduate senators, eight senators from across the 12 university departments, and two senators elected each fall from the incoming class. The SGA Senate Executive Committee is comprised of an elected president and vice president, five appointed directors, and three appointed vice-directors.

Student Senate identifies students to serve on and have voting privileges on SGA Senate committees as well as on University-wide committees related to the Faculty, Academic Staff, and University. The SGA Senate-specific committees are as follows:

• **Academic Affairs Council**: The purpose of this Council is to review, develop, and recommend policy and guidelines in relation to student life, services, and concerns as directed by the SGA or its president.

• **Internal/External Affairs Committee**: This committee monitors the functions of the SGA, operates elections, hears impeachments, maintains communication with the University community, and recognizes student organizations.

• **Segregated University Fee Allocation (SUFAC) Committee**: This committee establishes Segregated Student Fees covering student organization operations and advises the Chancellor on student fees used to support operations and debt service obligations, within UW-System guidelines. It also manages student fee reserves and sets policies and procedures for the Council’s operations.
• **Legislative Affairs Committee**: This committee organizes all educational and legislative campaigns as directed by the Senate. It also keeps the Senate informed of pertinent local, state, and/or federal legislation.

**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’s processes for assessment, evaluation, planning, and budgeting are linked effectively.
3. The planning processes take into consideration the entirety of the institution and appropriate input from 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.

**FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

• UW-Superior engages in systematic and integrated planning.
• The University uses a Continuous Improvement and Planning Team to ensure that strategic priorities are established and that resources are aligned with the mission and the strategic priorities.
• The University’s integrated planning process is one whereby all planning and budget activities, throughout every level of the organization, are effectively linked and coordinated, and are driven by the University’s vision, mission, and academic priorities, and in which appropriate input from internal and external stakeholders is factored into resource allocation decisions.
• The University has made great strides over the past several years in establishing the necessary planning framework, including developing a strategic planning tool.
used by departments and developing an institutional research function to support data driven decisions.

- The university has well developed plans in place for academic offerings and physical plant developments.
- The University has developed an enrollment growth plan in support of UW System’s Growth Agenda but has yet to fully develop an enrollment management plan to support that growth.
- Assessment activities occur annually as part of a department’s annual reporting process to ensure that necessary corrections can improve service to students and others.

The following recommendations have been identified:

- The University will need to continue to focus on planning and further institutionalize the integrated planning process in order to become a stronger institution.
- The University must develop an enrollment management plan that supports the institution’s strategic plan and the University’s Growth Agenda goals.
- The University must fully develop a marketing and communications plan that supports the enrollment management plan and program growth areas.
- The University must finalize a technology plan that addresses technology needs of the academic programs, ensures sustainable state-of-the-art teaching facilities, considers emerging technology trends and appropriate implementation for the University, and establishes a technology replacement plan so that appropriate funding can be established and budgeted.

**Discussion**

Throughout the Self-Study, multiple references have been made to the Continuous Improvement Planning Team (CIPT) and its role in a variety of planning contexts. The CIPT is charged with oversight of the planning and budget processes.

The CIPT has responsibility for updating the University’s strategic planning priorities. The Institutional Strategic Priorities document serves as the foundation for all strategic planning and related budgeting. The process to develop the initial set of strategic themes in 2008 included an in-depth discussion by a broad participant base of University and
non-university stakeholders to validate strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats leading to the strategic themes and planning priorities articulated in Criterion One. These priorities were updated in Fall 2011.

The University also has well-developed strategic plans for academic programs and physical development that factor in emerging trends in technology, demographic shifts, and globalization. Greater level of detail in support of the strategic priorities can be seen in the most recent versions of the Academic Plan 2010-11 and the Physical Development Plan.

The University has not yet fully developed a strategic technology plan to ensure that technology investments are strategic and tactical to empower students, faculty, and staff to achieve their educational goals. A draft of a comprehensive technology plan was compiled in early 2012, but with the resignation of the Chief Information Officer this plan is on hold until a new CIO is hired. Details are found in the draft Technology Services 2011-12 Plan and UW System IT Plan Report.

The University has also not yet fully developed a strategic enrollment management plan to support the Growth Agenda model. This plan must consider the demographic shifts affecting the University’s historical recruitment areas and retention statistics to ensure that it is able to meet the Growth Agenda goals. One strategy is to expand recruiting efforts to increase the international student population. This supports efforts toward global awareness by providing opportunities for students in multiple cultures to learn together.

These strategic plans and priorities form the foundation upon which the CIPT’s integrated planning model is built. This process is very different from any previous process, with transparency as its hallmark.

The goals of the integrated planning process include the following:

1. Establish a mechanism in which the University can
   a. Establish and implement planning priorities
   b. Allocate resources
   c. Commit dollars
   d. Control spending
2. Provide a basis for better understanding and cooperation within the University
3. Foster stewardship and control

Each University department or unit is expected to develop a strategic plan aligned with the institutional themes and goals, complete with assessment and accountability measures, and to annually report on the progress toward achieving the departmental strategic plan.

The model was first fully implemented by units in 2011-2012 in establishing their FY12-13 budgets; and by administrators in prioritizing investments for the next several years. This model also ensures that many eyes are engaged in reviewing, planning, and budgeting. University constituencies and governance units have multiple opportunities for input. The criteria used for decision-making about both investment in new opportunities and initiatives as well as reductions to units will shared on multiple occasions with the University and developed with broad input. In this process, the Executive Budget Council of the CIPT has ultimate responsibility for reviewing budget allocation proposals and making budget recommendations to the Chancellor. Final internal budget allocation authority rests with the Chancellor.

Plans are underway for Superior Vision 20/20, a comprehensive strategic plan update to assess past performance, which is to take place in 2013. The CIPT will coordinate this process beginning with looking at a variety of institutional data: surveying the external landscape for opportunities and threats; looking internally at strengths and weaknesses; and reviewing priorities within the academic, technology, enrollment management, physical development, and marketing and communications plans. Discussions will include internal and external stakeholders, including faculty, staff, students, alumni, community members, educational leaders from other community institutions, and community leaders. The University envisions that this plan will be a six- to seven-year plan with clearly articulated and measurable goals and objectives.

From the updated strategic plan, the CIPT will identify three-year funding priorities. The priorities will be discussed with department chairs, directors, and governance groups. University forums will be held to discuss the funding priorities. CIPT, in collaboration with the Executive Budget Council, will finalize and announce the three-year funding priorities so that units can update their three-year departmental strategic plans accordingly.
The three-year departmental strategic plans will form the basis of annual budget requests. Units will be able to develop timely budget proposals that can be considered as part of the annual budgeting cycle. In developing annual budget requests, Chancellor’s Cabinet members will discuss budget proposal requests and any internal reallocations necessary for strategic reinvestment purposes between units and Cabinet areas. Annual budget requests will be presented to the Executive Budget Council for consideration and recommendation to the Chancellor, who makes the final decision on annual budget allocations. The annual budget amounts will be reported to the University and the budget finalized within the context of the UW System budget.

DATA DRIVEN DECISION-MAKING

With the restoration of the Institutional Research function in 2007-08, units and leaders are able to obtain data to inform decision-making and planning in areas such as enrollment management, financial aid and scholarships, curriculum, staffing, student life, finance, facilities, athletics, and alumni relations. The University is in the process of completing an initial set of key performance indicators to assess performance against previous years’ and in comparison to that of other institutions. Units are being asked to identify benchmarks against which performance can be assessed using best business practices. The University has published a “Fact Book” containing a variety of data sets.

In an earlier section, the Academic Program Review (previously known as the Self Study for Continuous Improvement, or SSCI) process was described. The revised template for this Self-Study provides a wide variety of data for departments to use in analyzing the effect of student enrollments, credit hour production, facility uses, and staffing need fluctuations. The information has been invaluable as the University has validated its need to focus on recruitment and retention efforts.

UW-Superior’s Institutional Research function is currently undergoing a staffing turnover. The director resigned in June 2012, and the Institutional Research Specialist has announced a January 2013 retirement. Recruitment plans are underway to fill this position. University leaders are evaluating the organizational reporting lines for the IR director before that position is authorized for recruitment. Perhaps a number of units may be reorganized to operate in a more effective manner.

The University has not had a budget tool with which to model changes in enrollments or funding levels. Acquiring such a tool has not been a pressing need due to a plan by the
UW System to implement a new budget system within the next two years, which will afford campuses the ability to model changes in a variety of criteria. Also, the UW System uses a tuition support model that helps to “smooth” variances that individual campuses may experience due to enrollment fluctuations. However, as the University enjoys the budgeting flexibilities afforded in the 2011-13 biennial budget, and with declining state support, this modeling capability will become critical.

Core Component 5.D: The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

1. The institution evaluates its operations.
2. Documented evidence of performance routinely informs the institution’s processes for evaluation, planning, and improvement in its operations.
3. 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.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- The University of Wisconsin-Superior is committed to continual improvement as evidenced by Strategic Theme Four, which states that “the University will improve its programs and services on a continual basis. All facets of operations will be regularly assessed and modified when appropriate.”
- The University was accepted into the Higher Learning Commission’s Assessment Academy in 2010 and is currently completing an institutional assessment project.
- The University participates in UW System’s annual accountability reporting structure.
- The University participates in the Voluntary System of Accountability.
- The University has created an Office of Assessment.
- The University regularly participates in the National Survey of Student Engagement.
• Academic departments draw upon program-specific accreditation self-studies to improve program content and delivery.
• Academic departments are required to conduct regular program reviews for continuous improvement.
• Non-academic departments are asked to identify industry benchmarks against which to evaluate their departmental performance as part of their annual reports.
• The University uses outside consultants to provide unbiased evaluations of operations when desired and uses that information to improve service.
• The University subscribes to the services of the Educational Advisory Board, a firm specializing in providing best practice research and practical advice to academic, business, and student affairs leaders at the nation's leading universities.
• The University has engaged in a number of administrative “lean” process evaluations to eliminate waste and improve efficiencies.
• University personnel guidelines require that employees have regular performance evaluations conducted using performance measures and documenting achievements towards reaching those goals.

Discussion

The guiding work of the Continuous Improvement Planning Team placed an emphasis on operational evaluations and continuous improvement efforts through the design of the annual planning process and the periodic review and update of the Strategic Priorities document. Strategic Theme Four emphasizes “continuous improvement,” calling for all units to conduct regular assessments and make process modifications when necessary. To that end, the University has engaged in a number of activities in which operations are routinely evaluated.

Assessment activities as they relate to the academic and co-curricular programs were described in Criterion Four. They include the following:
• Participation in the Higher Learning Commission Assessment Academy focusing on the Liberal Education Learning Goals
• Regular academic program review assessments
• Assessment of the general-education learning goals and outcomes
• Biennial review and appropriate revision of the Academic Plan
• Use of Council of Advancement of Standards in Higher Education
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.

- Student course evaluations
- Individual program-specific accreditations

The Accountability Reports discussed in Section 5A provide common performance measures across institutions but also highlight the unique accomplishments of UW-Superior.

The Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA), discussed in Criteria Two and Four, is designed to help institutions demonstrate accountability to the public; to measure the effectiveness of educational outcomes; and to assemble information that is accessible, understandable, and comparable for prospective students and parents.

Other tools used to evaluate our operations include the following:

- The learning outcome assessment tool, College Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP), which was first administered to freshmen in Fall 2009 and to seniors in Spring 2011. The University will examine the results from the CAAP assessment instrument to determine if it illustrates the achievement of students at UW-Superior. The CAAP will be administered again every three-years.
- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)

CLIMATE STUDY

The 2008 Climate Study Survey was designed for respondents to provide information about their personal experiences with regard to climate issues; their perceptions of the climate at the University, student and employee satisfaction; and respondents’ perceptions of institutional actions, including administrative policies and academic initiatives, regarding climate issues and concerns across the University. The findings suggest that UW-Superior has several challenges with regard to diversity issues, challenges that are also found in other higher education institutions across the country. Additional efforts will be initiated over the next several years to improve campus climate based on the study findings, as discussed in Criteria One and Two.
KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

As part of the annual reporting cycle, departments have been asked to identify key performance indicators against which to measure their performance and make improvements to meet and exceed these industry standards.

The Chancellor’s Cabinet has developed an initial set of key performance indicators against which to measure the University’s performance against historical performance. These categories the indicators represent include, but are not limited to, increased student enrollment; academic excellence; a culture of respect; campus life; and resources.

HOLISTIC ADVISEMENT

In Spring 2009, the UW-Superior Faculty Senate adopted a set of seven student learning outcomes for the undergraduate advisement program. Based upon the professional standards of the National Academic Advisement Association (NACADA), these student learning outcomes reflect a holistic understanding of the advisement process. In Fall 2009, UW-Superior began assessing its advisement program on the basis of these outcomes. Based on these results, the University is making ongoing changes and improvements in its advisement program to better achieve the program’s stated objectives.

ALIGNING CURRICULAR OFFERINGS WITHIN BUDGET CONSTRAINTS

In 2011-12 the University began a faculty-owned process, strongly supported by the administration, to examine the issues of budgeting for the size of university curricular offerings, as well as other identified issues.

The Planning and Budgetary Council of the Faculty Senate, was charged with:

- Examining factors that may have contributed to the increased instructional and academic affairs spending between FY 2008 and FY 2011, including the following: enrollment, curriculum, teaching load, instructional budget, overload/adjunct spending, and administrative appointments.
- Addressing the following questions relating to unbudgeted overload and adjuncts:

University of Wisconsin | 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.
What factors have contributed to the long-standing reliance on unbudgeted adjuncts and overload?
What factors have contributed to the growth of unbudgeted ad-hoc expenditures between FY 2008 and FY 2011 despite investment in new faculty lines?

- Developing criteria for resource reallocation to help align spending to the budget authority and to make strategic investments in programs and/or positions and/or changes to practices.

The Council reported back to the Senate and the University in April 2012 what it had discovered in its comprehensive review process and identified numerous factors contributing to long standing University reliance on unbudgeted adjuncts and overload. The Council found that

- The University continues to implement a coherent budget process, particularly at the department level, as part of the Integrated Planning Process.
- The planning and budgeting process for departments includes an institutional and centralized “buck-stops-here” decision-making or approval step in the Provost’s office.

Based on these findings, the Council recommended that

- There be an improved means for collecting, organizing, and accessing academic and budgetary data at the program, department, and institutional levels to support the Integrated Planning Process.
- The annual department chair training be institutionalized for both incoming and continuing chairs.
- Department chairs and departments be required to use the Integrated Planning Process as the basis for two-year cycles of academic course planning and balancing general education offerings.
- Departments be required to work with Distance Learning to develop Memoranda of Understanding that clarify and formalize each department’s commitment to distance learning as an important additional learning platform through which to deliver curriculum.

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7 This report may be found in its entirety at [http://www.uwsuper.edu/facultysenate/councils/budgetaryreview/attachments/11-12/index.cfm](http://www.uwsuper.edu/facultysenate/councils/budgetaryreview/attachments/11-12/index.cfm)
• Departments improve communication and coordination with one another on curriculum planning and scheduling.
• Academic program review be regarded as an essential, required examination of the department and its programs.
• Budgeting and staffing processes be institutionalized to provide stability and consistency during periods of “institutional churn” due to changes in administration.

As a direct result of this report, several initiatives have already been launched:

• The process and expectations for departmental budget proposals was clearly delineated and followed by Departments in Spring 2012 for the first time in a number of years; chairs were given a spreadsheet for FY 2012-13 with staffing levels and specific amounts available to them for staffing. They were also directed to identify student worker needs; plans for sabbaticals; adjunct and other staffing needs; new position requests anticipated; release and reassignment time (chair, new faculty orientation, and so forth); overloads on campus and in Distance Learning, on-going currently unfunded or underfunded needs; and special one-time needs. Where justifications were needed, they were to be provided (for example, for over-loads or special needs).
• The Interim Dean of Faculties is working with chairs to develop a chairs’ handbook and orientation tool.
• Programs and departments are being expected by the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs/Provost to use the PBC report during Fall 2012 to do “audits” of their areas to see what reorganization could help streamline and balance their offerings to better align departmental curriculum to resources.

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PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT
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University planners – working collaboratively with UW System capital planning staff, the State’s Division of State Facilities, and University staff – assess the condition of existing facilities, discuss academic growth areas, discuss physical plant inadequacies, and review facility use statistics to develop a list of physical development issues. A variety of possible solutions to the issues are evaluated, and a six-year physical development plan emerges. Components within this plan are prioritized so that the UW System can prepare capital budgets according to the University’s needs. These six-year plans are updated as
part of every biennial budget. This process has enabled the University to become physically transformed over the last several years with a number of newly constructed buildings and several renovated facilities.

EXTERNAL CONSULTANTS

The University subscribes to the services of the Educational Advisory Board’s University Leadership Council, and Business Executive Roundtable. These two services provide members with expert advice and innovative strategies and practices for tackling their most pressing issues. Provosts and CBOs benefit from the learning of thousands of other universities facing the same challenges. UW-Superior uses the plethora of qualitative and quantitative resources available via the Educational Advisory Board to make operational improvements based on proven track records by other universities.

UW-Superior has also used external consultants to provide an objective review of particular operations. These consultants have been used periodically to look at advising, library operations, marketing and public relations, advancement functions, facilities management, and (most recently) technology services. The reports generated by these consultants have provided valuable information for improving services and recommending structural adjustments.

Website and Twin Cities Marketing Initiative

As part of strategic plans for Enrollment Management, the marketing initiative (WATR) includes language about the evaluations that lead to the proposal and funding from UW System discussed in Component 5.A, above.

The University has engaged in a number of administrative “lean” process reviews in which a detailed analysis is conducted in order to identify non-value-added activities with the goal of eliminating waste and improving service times. This technique has been used with the University’s procurement card process, the student orientation process, the financial aid verification process, and unclassified hiring practices.

OFFICE OF ASSESSMENT

The Office of Assessment was created in May 2010 under the Provost’s jurisdiction. The Director’s main charge is to assist, support, and coordinate institutional and program-
level assessment activities at UW-Superior. “Doable, meaningful, and usable assessment” is the motto of this office, as it recognizes the dual purposes of assessment. Assessment is an essential aspect of teaching and learning. Inquiry, research, discovery, reflection, and action regarding student learning are critical to the improvement of students’ educational experience. Assessment of student learning also provides important evidence for institutional accountability, particularly but not limited to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). The Office of Assessment is committed to engaging the University in assessment activities that encompass both of these purposes.

In 2010-2011, the Office of Assessment focused on the development of an assessment infrastructure at UW-Superior. Specifically, it drafted a University Assessment Plan (approved by the Faculty Senate in December 2010), offered professional development opportunities for assessment (in collaboration with the CETL), created the Assessment Liaison position in each academic department to support program-level assessment, supported the process of planning institutional and general education learning goals, and devised an administrative structure to implement the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) test to seniors.

The Office of Assessment will continue to provide assistance and resources for institutional and program-level assessment activities across the University and to create opportunities to strengthen the culture of assessment at UW-Superior. In addition, it will help the University document assessment processes and results and contribute to the successful accreditation visit in Spring 2013.

DEPARTMENTAL REORGANIZATION AND RECONFIGURATIONS

UW-Superior has monitored the effectiveness of its academic department structure and has adapted and reconfigured it to meet the needs of today’s students. During Spring 2009, the number of academic departments was collapsed from 16 to 12 through reorganization and reconfiguration. During the 2010-2011 academic year, additional departments were reorganized or reconfigured.

STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM

This past August, Chancellor Wachter announced an organizational realignment that created a Student Success Center to help students to take charge of their progress at UW-
Superior. Created with existing lines and funding, the Student Success Team is comprised of Undergraduate Academic Advisement, Career Services, Student Support Services, Multicultural Affairs, and First-Year Experience – areas critical to an engaging student experience and degree completion. Through coordination of these programs and referral to the University’s other excellent curricular and co-curricular resources, the Student Success Team will foster undergraduate student excellence and persistence to graduation. Learning is not limited just to the classroom. Here, the objective is to challenge students to create educational plans and experiences that position them to thrive at the University and beyond. As part of the area of enrollment management, the Student Success Team also recognizes that the overall quality of academic experience and student life is a necessary prerequisite for retention of a thriving student body.

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**ADVISEMENT**

UW-Superior has long had in place a faculty-based academic advisement model that fosters close relationships between the student and the faculty advisor. Within this model, advisement has traditionally focused on the academic major and course registration. In light of its Public Liberal Arts mission, UW-Superior is working to use a more holistic approach to academic and professional development. The University is also working to improve advisement for incoming first-year and transfer students in particular.

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**FIRST-YEAR AND TRANSFER STUDENT ADVISEMENT**

In 2003, UW-Superior instituted a program entitled Summer Orientation, Advisement, and Registration Program (SOAR), which provides spring and summer advisement for new first-year students and transfer students with under 20 credits. An electronic virtual SOAR has since been developed for students unable to attend an on-campus session. Upon completion of the virtual SOAR, students are provided with advisor contact information in order to be advised regarding initial courses to take.

Beginning Fall 2009, first-semester advisement for undeclared and pre-business majors was provided by professional advisement staff housed in the Undergraduate Academic Advisement Office. In 2010, an electronic virtual advisement module was also made available for new transfer students with 20 or greater credits. By this means they, too, are provided advisor contact information for advisement and registration.
CAREER SERVICES

UW-Superior’s Career Services Office was re-established in 2008 as a result of a tuition differential proposal approved by the Student Government Association. Since then, it has demonstrated through continuous feedback processes the type of learning organization it aspires to. For example, after the Annual Job Fair, employers are asked for feedback on our students’ preparedness. This qualitative feedback is used to adapt and improve programming for the following year. An area that has been noted in the past is the need for improvement in students’ expressed career direction and goals. One result in programming improvement is the Career Services partnerships with some academic departments to create and implement a career e-portfolio project to assist students in developing career direction and goals for their chosen major.

A traditional graduate survey is completed each year, but obtaining responses is challenging, with a response rate of 63 percent. Efforts are made in each cycle to improve the response rate. Interesting results from the most recent survey (2010) tell us that of the students who find employment 47 percent are in Minnesota, 39 percent in Wisconsin, with 48 percent of the total finding employment in the Duluth and Superior area. As Career Services analyzes this information further, it is able to show current students what alumni are doing and achieving. The employment statistics also show how important the University’s partnership is in serving the regional community.
Criterion Five Summary

UW-Superior works diligently to assure its resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission. As experienced by many other institutions, fiscal constraints complicate the ability to respond to challenges and opportunities as quickly or thoroughly as one would choose while continuing to uphold dedication to quality educational offerings. Issues of fiscal and human resource allocation, exacerbated by retirements, as well as the continual need for disbursements for improving infrastructure and technology, will play a significant role in future planning as the University works to bring continuous improvement through systematic and integrated planning ever closer to the mission. However, both membership in the UW System and the internal commitment to shared governance will continue to enable UW-Superior to develop effective and collaborative processes and structures.
Appendix B: Required Supplement

Institutional Snapshot

- Institutional Snapshot

Federal Compliance Assurance Materials

- Federal Compliance Summary
- Federal Compliance Worksheet and Attachments

Documents in Resource Room

- List of Documents in Resource Room
Materials Set II: Self-Study Supplemental Materials

All current faculty and staff handbooks

- Unclassified Staff Handbook
- Classified Staff Handbook

All current student handbooks

- Student Conduct Handbook
- Student Athlete Handbook
- Student Policies Handbook

Audited financial statements for the two most recent fiscal periods

- UW System Financial Report 2010
- UW System Financial Report 2011

All current institutional catalogs or course bulletins

- UW-Superior Undergraduate 2012-14 Catalog
- UW-Superior Graduate 2012-14 Catalog