Introduction

Message from M State's President

Since 2003, the four campuses of Minnesota State Community and Technical College (M State) have taken pride in delivering affordable and exceptional education programs and workforce training to meet the needs of diverse students and communities in west central Minnesota. Approximately 50% of the regular and transfer students M State serves are Pell-eligible, 23% are first-generation (using the Minnesota definition) and 28% are students of color. Online enrollment has been on an upward trajectory since the COVID-19 pandemic, with 43% of students taking online-only courses in FY22 compared to 31% in FY19.

Education and workforce landscapes have been changing at a fast pace over the last several years. The pivots and uncertainty of the pandemic challenged everyone in unprecedented ways, but the College's focus and dedication to M State's mission have remained constant and our vision of, "A success story for every student" continues to be of paramount importance. The students we serve have more needs and the communities we serve have different needs than they did just a few years ago. While we worry about these challenges, I know that M State is very strong and well-positioned. We are continuing our efforts to enhance the future for our students, region's employers and communities. Our unwavering dedication was recognized in 2021 when M State was selected for the seventh time as an Aspen Prize Top 150 U.S. Community College and 24/7 Wall St. ranked M State 18th on its list of the nation's 24 best online colleges, partly for the high marks the College received for its value.

On behalf of the students, faculty and staff of M State, we look forward to sharing our journey and growth with you in our Assurance Argument. You will find many examples of continuous improvement and notable progress being made with assessment, strategic planning and how the College uses data in decision-making processes.

Improvement highlights since M State's 2017 review include:

Assessment (4.B)

- Process improvements
- Faculty driven/Assessment Team
- Using results to improve student learning

Using Data (4.C, 5.A)

- Data visualization and report standardization
- External data benchmarks (e.g. Voluntary Framework for Accountability)
- Comprehensive use of system data

Strategic Planning (5.C)

- Planning retreats (e.g. college-wide participation, using data, linking budget processes, etc.)

I believe you will also see in the Assurance Argument our core values of integrity, inclusion and innovation in action and reflected in the College's strategic partnerships, creative problem-solving and welcoming environment. We are 'all in' and more committed than ever to rolling up our sleeves to shape a stronger, brighter future for all.

Institutional History and Context

Carrie Brimhall, Ph.D
President

Fergus Falls Community College (FFCC) was founded in 1960 by community leaders who rallied to create a college where students could complete the first two years of a four-year degree. The Wadena (1959), Moorhead (1965) and Detroit Lakes (1966) campuses – all part of Northwest Technical College (NTC) (1992 - 2003) – were established to meet the region's workforce needs through career and technical programs.

M State was created in 2003 by the merger of FFCC and NTC campuses to better serve the needs of the region, combining strong career and technical programs and liberal arts and science offerings within one comprehensive community college. Each campus brings its own distinctive characteristics to strengthen the College, while M State also continues building on its well-established reputation for comprehensive online opportunities.

We are a regional, student-focused institution poised for a strong future and the largest two-year college in Greater Minnesota, serving over 10,500 students in credit and non-credit courses each year. Our commitment to student success is reflected in all we do and in the services we provide for all students, on their journey from prospect to graduate.

The College offers Associate of Science, Associate of Applied Science, Associate of Arts and Associate of Fine Arts degrees, diplomas and certificates in its more than 70 degree, diploma and certificate programs. The largest programs by enrollment are Liberal Arts/Transfer, Business, Nursing, Dental Hygiene, Dental Assisting and Electrical Lineworker Technology.

Each year, M State serves more than 6,500 students (unduplicated headcount, including PSEO) in credit programs through on-campus, online, telepresence and blended courses. The College offers student life programming as well as leadership and service opportunities through active student organizations and student government associations on each campus. Students also have opportunities to enhance their college experience through band, choir, theatre, athletics and other experiences such as internships, clinicals and program-related competitions.

M State takes pride in our partnerships with business and industry employers, secondary schools and our two foundations. Through these partnerships, the College's Workforce Development Solutions division provided over 100,000 hours of skills-based training to over 8,000 participants in customized trainings in FY22. The revenue generated has grown by 32% since the last record high in 2017, which illustrates how this division has been able to adapt to meet the changing needs of business and industry. M State has strong partnerships with secondary schools and served more than 2,300 registered dual credit students who earned over 30,500 credits prior to their high school graduation in FY22 (includes Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO), Concurrent Enrollment Program and eCampus in the High School students). M State's foundations work with donors to raise funds to provide accessible and quality education through student scholarships and support innovation and updated resources to enrich hands-on learning experiences in the classroom. The foundations awarded 221 student scholarships totaling more than $350,000 in FY22. In addition, the Minnesota Legislature funded aid for students in high-demand programs, which resulted in over $200,000 in Workforce Development Scholarships being awarded to 94 M State students in manufacturing, agriculture, early childhood education, healthcare, information technology and transportation.

M State is a member of the Minnesota State system, a collective of 26 colleges, seven universities and 54 campuses governed by a 15-member Board of Trustees appointed by the Minnesota Governor, and a Board-appointed Chancellor. The core commitments of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities are to ensure access to an extraordinary education for all Minnesotans, be the partner of choice to meet Minnesota's workforce and community needs and deliver the highest value/most affordable higher education option to students, employers, communities and taxpayers. With 64% of Minnesota resident students pursuing an undergraduate credential at a Minnesota State college or university, system-wide efforts significantly impact advancement of strategic goals that are grounded in the Minnesota State system's core value of providing an opportunity for all Minnesotans to create a better future for themselves, their families and their communities.

Assurance Argument

Minnesota State Community and Technical College

Review date: 4/24/2023

1 - Mission

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

1.A - Core Component 1.A

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

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

Argument

1.A.1 The mission was developed through a process suited to the context of the institution.

M State's mission statement was developed by a process suited to a regional, student-focused community and technical college. In 2017, M State began to engage more than 800 business and education partners, students, employees and community members in a comprehensive strategic planning process to clarify higher education themes critical to students and citizens throughout the region and service area (23-0001). The process (23-0015) used data and input, such as:

Internal Scan

- Faculty and staff strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis (23-0015)
- Student Government Association focus group (23-0015)
- Employee PACE survey (23-0016)
- Student CCSSE survey (23-0025)
- Student and employee surveys (23-0030, 23-0030)
- Key performance indicators (23-0042)

External Scan

- External Stakeholder Survey (23-0030)
- Higher education trends (23-0030)
- Accreditation feedback (23-0039)

Gap Analysis

- Used Scan data to identify and formulate strategies to address gaps

The review process confirmed the College plays a vital role in developing the region's workforce. In the five years prior to the strategic planning review, M State graduated more than 7,000 individuals; among graduates headed directly into the workforce, 96% found their jobs in Minnesota and North Dakota. Another 7,000 individuals participated in one or more of M State's custom training opportunities, enhancing their careers and adding value for employers.

Stakeholder input also emphasized the importance of affordability for students and their families, who embrace affordability as an essential strength because, by making college affordable, it becomes possible. It was also determined the mission statement should include wording about M State providing high quality, or "exceptional" education and service, to prepare students to be productive citizens in their communities. Lastly, stakeholder feedback regarding the powerful impact of the College's welcoming and caring staff and faculty resulted in the addition of the word "welcome" to the mission statement.

M State's ideals are reflected in the mission and vision statements that emerged from the strategic planning process:

> **Mission:** *Minnesota State Community and Technical College specializes in affordable and exceptional education, service, and workforce training. We welcome all students and engage them in shaping their futures and their communities.*

> **Vision:** *A success story for every student.*

Recurrent themes emerged during the strategic planning process to align strategic objectives with the advancement of the College's mission, which evolved into M State's pillars of success:

> **Pillar I - Student Success** - Encompasses academic readiness for college, successful course completion, documented learning improvement, student persistence toward degree completion, graduation, placement, exam/certification/pass rates, transfer rates, cocurricular experiences and student awards and honors.

> **Pillar II - Equity and Inclusion** - Encompasses operating as a vibrant inclusive body of diverse students and employees who challenge, inspire and support each other.

> **Pillar III - Financial Sustainability** - Encompasses the prudent management of the college's enrollment, fiscal, physical and technological resources, and the enhancement of external revenue sources.

The strategic planning process also identified values that stakeholders should observe as the College works toward fulfilling its mission and vision. Employees are *'All In'* and strive to exhibit the core values of:

> **Integrity** - As dedicated professionals, we act with purpose in everything we do. We are sincere and honest in our relationships and communications, and hold ourselves accountable to doing the right thing even when no one is watching.

> **Inclusion** - We welcome, respect and accept people for who they are and celebrate the power of our collective differences in creating and shaping more robust, energized communities.

Innovation - Through the power of our four campuses, strategic partnerships and creative problem-solving, we enhance communities. We incorporate technology to improve the student experience, and we see continuous improvement as a constant.

In May 2018, the strategic planning process was recapped at a college-wide in-service event and the new mission, vision, values and pillars of success were rolled out. The last part of the presentation involved an exercise for employees to reflect on how they connected to the strategic plan and how they could intentionally bring it into their daily work (23-0021).

The College's mission statement was approved by the Minnesota State system's Board of Trustees on June 20, 2018 (23-0020) per the Minnesota State system Board Policy 3.24 and procedure 3.24.1, College and University Type and Mission, and System Mission (23-0023, 23-0024). It complies with Minnesota State Statute 135A.052, Postsecondary Missions (23-0013) and Minnesota State Statute 136F.05, Missions (23-0022). Comprehensive reviews of the mission statement align with the College's comprehensive strategic planning process timeline.

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

The major cycle of M State's strategic planning process will begin in approximately one year; however, the mission and related statements remain relevant. Through the mission, the College *specializes in affordable and exceptional education and service,* which is echoed in the vision statement, *A success story for every student*. For M State, based on a student intent question upon application, success for 80% of entering regular or transfer admission students means earning a certificate, diploma or degree. The other 20% of students are undecided or anticipate transferring after taking a few courses with M State. For students enrolled in Post-Secondary Education Opportunities or visiting students, less than 10% expect to complete an M State program.

Each year, M State confers approximately 1,150 degrees, certificates and diplomas. During the 2020-2021 academic year, there were 1,091 graduates. A graduate follow-up survey, to which M State received 927 responses (85% response rate), found that 43% of responding students continued their educations and 5.5% were not seeking related employment. Of the remaining 478 students, 94% reported being employed in a position related to their field of study. In addition, M State tracks licensure rates in Nursing (92.7%), Radiologic Technology (100%) and Criminal Justice (85.7%) programs; each of these values is from FY19 and each met or exceeded licensure exam pass rates of the previous year.

M State is committed to providing excellent service to students. This includes many services such as tutoring, advising, career services, counseling, social work and opportunities for student life. These items will be addressed in more detail in 3.D.1. and 3.D.2. The distribution of the CARES Act Emergency Grants funds and other COVID-19 emergency aid grants are examples of how budgeting priorities align with M State's mission and vision. Details can be found in 3.D.1.

M State is also committed to providing an affordable education. One metric the College tracks is the percentage of students who attend tuition-free after grants and scholarships are applied to their accounts. Over the past three years, that percentage has been increasing, from 41% in FY20 to 52%

in FY22. Additionally, the College received a grant for the expansion of Open Education Resources (OER) and Z Degree (zero textbook cost) programs. Beginning fall 2022, the course schedule openly displays and identifies courses that are utilizing OERs, of which 30% of all courses with no textbook costs are OER. Courses with no textbook costs have increased 4%, from 36% in FY21 to 40% in FY22.

The 2017 strategic planning process highlighted for stakeholders the vital role M State plays in the regional workforce. The College continually demonstrates its strength at industry-responsive programming. While non-credit workforce training slowed during the pandemic, with restrictions in face-to-face interaction (from 95,691 training hours and 8,801 registrations in FY19 to 84,618 hours and 6,337 registrations in FY20), the years that followed saw tremendous growth. In FY22, training hours climbed to 101,904, with 5,466 registrations and the highest gross revenue in the history of M State's workforce development division, at over $2,048,000. This growth is due primarily to increases in Commercial Driver's License Training, Nursing Assistant Training and corporate demand for leadership, diversity, equity and inclusion training.

The final part of the mission statement relates to student access and students' engagement in shaping their futures and communities. Over the past several years, M State has become more racially and ethnically diverse, with a 26% diverse student population in the fall of 2017, and 31% in fall 2022. This far exceeds the diverse population percentages of the local region as a whole, where the most diverse area, the Fargo-Moorhead area, has a diverse population of 19% (U.S. Census Bureau 5-year estimate). One way M State has sought to engage this population is through the College's English Language Learner program, which works with community agencies in Moorhead to serve recent immigrants.

M State has also worked over the past several years to foster more diverse and inclusive communities, and has encouraged students to do the same. For example, in Fergus Falls, racially/ethnically diverse residents account for less than 8% of the city's total population. By comparison, 28% of M State-Fergus Falls students are racially/ethnically diverse, including 36% of student athletes (in FY22). Student athletic groups have hosted community outreach events such as sports camps and local volunteering opportunities (23-0043). The pandemic interrupted community outreach efforts, but events are beginning to be revitalized.

In addition, the M State Office of Financial Aid regularly works with high schools, students and parents to offer free FAFSA seminars while programs like Automotive Service Technology, Cosmetology, Dental, Nursing, Massage Therapy and PowerSports provide services for the public at a reduced cost. Automotive Service Technology also gives back to the community by helping with charity car projects; students in the program recently fixed a car that was donated to an M State nursing graduate and single mother of seven (23-0072). Prior to the pandemic, College social workers organized low-cost food options through Ruby's Pantry in Detroit Lakes and Moorhead.

Students at M State are also actively engaged in public service through organizations and clubs (23-0077). Each campus's Student Government Association (SGA) holds voter registration drives and Election Day reminder campaigns, and works with LeadMN, a statewide student advocacy group (23-0359). See the uploaded evidence for more examples of how M State students engage in public service (23-0043).

M State also shapes communities by playing a vital role in state and regional economies. A study commissioned by Minnesota State (23-0074) showed that, of the College's $229.7 million annual economic impact, $81.8 million is generated by spending on operations and capital projects, while

$147.9 million is generated by student and visitor spending. The College supports and sustains 1,739 jobs through direct and indirect employment, and generates $18.9 million in tax revenues for state and local government. Furthermore, the study estimates M State faculty, staff and students contribute an estimated $3.3 million in combined donations and volunteer services to local charitable organizations every year (23-0075).

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

M State's mission statement appropriately emphasizes affordability, education and workforce training. As stated in 1.A.2., M State has a focus on preparing students for the workforce or 4-year college transfer, and collaborates with the region on workforce development initiatives. This includes serving a diverse student body, as noted in 1.A.2. and 1.A.4. During the last review of the strategic plan, the College revised the mission statement to narrow the nature, scope and intended constituents of M State's educational offerings and services; this work will continue during the next review of the strategic plan framework and related statements in 2024-2025. The College has identified an opportunity to improve the next iteration of the mission statement by being more intentional about establishing metrics for, and the intended implications of, each component.

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

In alignment with M State's mission, the College offers certificates (30 or fewer credits), diplomas (over 30 credits) and associate degrees (AAS, AA, AS, AFA) (23-0224). Students taking academic offerings include dual enrollment (37%), regular admission/first-time in college (35%), transfer admission (23%) and visiting students (4%).

Of the 80% of M State students who are enrolled with an intent to graduate, approximately 28% are enrolled in liberal arts and sciences transfer-oriented programs. The remainder are enrolled in Health, Human Services and Nursing (35%), Business and Information Technology (22%), and Applied Technology (15%). Approximately 50% of these students receive Pell grants, 23% are first-generation college students (Minnesota State definition) and 59% are female. Additionally, M State has a long history of offering courses and programs online. As we come out of the pandemic, online enrollment has remained higher than anticipated. M State has introduced more hybrid and synchronous opportunities to support students' continuous progress in their programs of study, even though approximately 80% of M State students work at least part-time. See the enrollment profile (23-0041) and M State Talking Points (23-0002) for additional information.

This distribution of enrollment is indicative of the regional need for an institution that prepares students for transfer or the workforce. M State has several programs typical of community and technical colleges, such as transfer-oriented degrees and applied degrees and certificates in business, information technology, building trades, healthcare, human services and transportation. In addition, M State has several niche programs to support industry in rural areas of the state, including Electrical Lineworker Technology, Diesel Equipment Technology, Digital Marketing and Limited Scope Radiography.

The College also supports a healthy dual enrollment population through a standard Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) program, which allows students to take courses in-person and online with M State faculty to earn both high school and college credit (23-0241). The eCollege in the High School (eCHS) program allows students to take online classes from M State faculty with time allocated at the students' local high schools. In the Concurrent Enrollment Program (CEP), students take courses from a qualified high school instructor who is mentored in their discipline by an M State faculty member. Each of these programs offer high school students a quicker and more affordable pathway to college graduation. Over the past three years, the average dual enrollment student at M State graduated with 20 college credits when they completed high school (n=3,159). Over the 2021-2022 academic year, more than 30,500 credits were earned by dual credit students, saving students and their families over $5.5 million (based on resident tuition of $180.80 per credit).

As an open enrollment institution, M State is aware that our students face many challenges. Even prior to the pandemic, the College employed counselors and social workers to connect students with appropriate resources. Additionally, M State implemented a Student Intake Form spring 2022 to better allocate resources and adapt services to incoming student population trends. The College is still in a test phase with the form and is working to improve the process to ensure the data is collected and used appropriately. The ultimate vision is to use the data to proactively address the academic, social and mental health needs of students. See 3.D.1 for more information about the Student Intake Form.

Over the past several years, including throughout the pandemic, the College has strengthened services to support students. In response to a student survey taken six months into the pandemic, the College increased student mental health supports by licensing TalkCampus, began the expansion of campus food shelves into food pantries, expanded the loaner laptop program, and increased the promotion of tutor.com services. Details on these services and more are in 3.D.1. and 3.D.2.

In addition, M State invested in implementing guided learning pathways. With the help of the Community College Research Center, M State recently adopted the ACIP framework (23-0026). The College is early in the implementation phase, with the first pathway launched in fall 2022, and is wrapping several existing services into the framework, including career services, advising and enrollment management. More information on guided learning pathways is in 4.C.3.

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

M State's mission, vision and values are clearly and prominently displayed on every campus (23-0032), the College website (23-0027), in the Student Handbook (Page 4), meeting minutes template (23-0029) and many promotional materials (23-0002), and are shared with prospective and new employees during the interview and onboarding processes (23-0062, 23-0061). The website has pages dedicated to the strategic plan and annual work plan (including goals and strategies) (23-0027), and project charters describe major College projects (23-0033).

Sources

- 23-0001 - Resource - M State Service Area Map - FY21
- 23-0002 - Resource - M State Talking Points - FY23

- 23-0013 - Statutes - Minnesota Statutes 135A.052 Postsecondary Missions - FY23
- 23-0015 - Presentation - College Wide Open Forum Strategic Planning Update - FY18
- 23-0015 - Presentation - College Wide Open Forum Strategic Planning Update - FY18 (page number 3)
- 23-0015 - Presentation - College Wide Open Forum Strategic Planning Update - FY18 (page number 5)
- 23-0015 - Presentation - College Wide Open Forum Strategic Planning Update - FY18 (page number 8)
- 23-0016 - Data - M State News PACE Article - FY18
- 23-0020 - Minutes - Minnesota State system Board of Trustee_Meeting Minutes_M State Mission Approved - FY18
- 23-0020 - Minutes - Minnesota State system Board of Trustee_Meeting Minutes_M State Mission Approved - FY18 (page number 12)
- 23-0021 - Presentation - Duty Day Strategic Plan Rollout - FY18
- 23-0022 - Statutes - Minnesota Statutes 136F.05 Missions - FY23
- 23-0023 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 3.24 College and University Type and Mission and System Mission - FY23
- 23-0024 - Procedure - Minnesota State Procedure 3.24.1 College and University Type and Mission and System Mission - FY23
- 23-0025 - Data - CCSSE M State Executive Summary - FY17
- 23-0026 - Resource - CCRC ACIP Onboarding Research Brief - FY22
- 23-0027 - Website - M State Mission Vision Values Strategic Plan Website - FY23
- 23-0029 - Resource - Meeting Minutes Example - FY23
- 23-0030 - Presentation - Strategic Planning Work Group Recommendations - FY18
- 23-0030 - Presentation - Strategic Planning Work Group Recommendations - FY18 (page number 11)
- 23-0030 - Presentation - Strategic Planning Work Group Recommendations - FY18 (page number 14)
- 23-0030 - Presentation - Strategic Planning Work Group Recommendations - FY18 (page number 18)
- 23-0030 - Presentation - Strategic Planning Work Group Recommendations - FY18 (page number 23)
- 23-0032 - Resource - Examples of Mission Vision Values on Campus - FY23
- 23-0033 - Website - Project Charters Web Home Page and Example Charter - FY23
- 23-0039 - Presentation - Example ALO HLC Feedback Summary Presentation - FY19
- 23-0041 - Data - PowerBI Enrollment Profile - FY23
- 23-0042 - Data - Minnesota State System Accountability Dashboard - FY17
- 23-0043 - Resource - Public Service Examples_Student Organizations_Athletics_Other - FY23
- 23-0043 - Resource - Public Service Examples_Student Organizations_Athletics_Other - FY23 (page number 2)
- 23-0043 - Resource - Public Service Examples_Student Organizations_Athletics_Other - FY23 (page number 3)
- 23-0061 - Resource - Culture Card - FY22
- 23-0062 - Resource - Benefit Information_Mission Vision Values Example - FY23
- 23-0072 - Resource - Inforum Article_Auto Program Car Donation to Nursing Graduate - FY23
- 23-0074 - Resource - M State Economic Impact Report - FY23
- 23-0075 - Resource - M State News_Economic Impact Study Article - FY23
- 23-0077 - Resource - M State Student Organizations and Clubs - FY23

- 23-0224 - Resource - M State Program List - FY23
- 23-0241 - Resource - K12 Collaborations Programs - FY23
- 23-0359 - Website - LeadMN About Website - FY23

1.B - Core Component 1.B

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

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

Argument

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

M State understands its responsibility to serve the public good as a comprehensive, open enrollment community and technical college. As illustrated in 1.A, the College's mission statement articulates the role of the College in providing affordable education and service while also addressing local workforce and community development needs. M State's organizational structure (23-0266) supports education, service, community and workforce development. Additionally, the College engages both internal and external constituents in the mission and vision development process.

Equity and Inclusion

M State supports and promotes equity and inclusion through several demonstrable efforts, including the setting of a critical goal of the Minnesota State system: By 2030, Minnesota State will eliminate educational equity gaps at every Minnesota State college and university (23-0044). See 1.C.3 for more details, including campus climate evaluation and improvement, Equity Scorecard data, student and employee resource groups, and Campus Inclusion Incident Reporting.

Equity values, goals and strategies are communicated to M State constituents and the public through the College's strategic plan (23-0083), annual plans (23-0085) and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The primary goal is to eliminate all equity gaps by 2030. The College's strategic and annual plans have three pillars, with the second pillar devoted to equity and inclusion.

Equity KPIs and strategies are updated annually. M State disaggregates data by race/ethnicity, Pell eligibility, first-generation status, gender, student type and age grouping. KPIs include first-term success, retention or graduation rates, three-year completion rates and related employment rates. The College incorporates this data into PowerBI reports that allow individuals to review data by school, meta-major and major level (23-0041).

English Language Learners

M State takes pride in continually working to improve access to enrollment. The College offers English Language Learners (ELL) curriculum to help multilingual students build communication

skills. M State participates in system-level work groups to support ELL initiatives and offers credit and non-credit English instruction within our communities ([23-0035](#)).

K-12 Collaborations

M State believes college access begins in primary and secondary education. Dual enrollment comprises one-third of enrollment, so the College collaborates with high school partners and K-12 students to host several events, including college and career awareness events and workshops for career and technical programs ([23-0036](#)). M State educates area K-12 counselors, teachers, administrators and youth-serving agencies during Connect to a Career events, which have encompassed 127 participants and 54 programs since FY17 ([23-0037](#)). Additionally, M State engaged over 20 high schools in the High School Partners Program to share data and work together to support academic preparedness and college readiness ([23-0036](#)).

Another example of how M State serves the public through K-12 partnerships is by bringing a dual credit Early Childhood Education program to an area high school. In response to child care shortages impacting families nationwide, this program gives high school students an opportunity to explore careers in early childhood, earn college credit at no cost to them, and decide if it's a good fit before they get to college ([23-0100](#)). Lastly, as part of a Perkins V grant, the College is working with a subset of partner high schools to diversify student entry into dual enrollment programs; implementation is planned for fall 2023.

Workforce Development Solutions

The College's Workforce Development Solutions (WDS) division has a strong 20-year history of supporting businesses and industries by helping them expand, increase efficiencies and develop highly skilled employees ([23-0063](#)). WDS has worked with more than 110 regional companies each year since FY18. The WDS team, under the leadership of the executive director of WDS, delivers skills and technology training for individuals and organizations in each of the College's four communities and throughout west central Minnesota and eastern North Dakota. Flexibility in program and service delivery remains important to clients and students, thus both hour-based and credit courses are offered to prepare workers for new responsibilities and advancement opportunities. Since FY18, the College has delivered 941 courses/trainings in business technology, electrical, leadership development, mechanical and technical, safety and compliance, transportation and health services. In FY22, WDS provided more than 101,000 hours of training on-site, online, on campus or via a blended delivery method.

West Central Small Business Development Center

In January 2023, M State became the host site of the West Central Minnesota Small Business Development Center (SBDC) ([23-0071](#)). The SBDC is designed to provide high quality business and economic development technical assistance to small businesses and entrepreneurs. To accomplish these objectives and meet the specialized and complex needs of the increasingly diverse small business community, SBDCs create a broad-based system of assistance by linking the resources of federal, state and local governments with the resources and knowledge of institutions of higher education, regional and local economic development organizations and the private sector. Hosting the SBDC provides M State with a means to connect to and serve our communities, and provides opportunities for faculty and students to gain valuable experience working with entrepreneurs and small businesses.

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

M State's primary purpose, planning, and budgeting inform the institutional mission to provide affordable and exceptional education, service and workforce training.

1. The Minnesota State Board of Trustees (23-0011) is appointed by the Minnesota governor and has general authority set forth by Minnesota Statute 136F.06 (23-0010) to govern M State (see 2.A).
2. The College conducts biannual Community Advisory Council meetings with over 75 representatives from community businesses and industries, agencies, and secondary and postsecondary schools, who help inform the College of local and regional trends.
3. As a public community college, M State receives state allocations with a limited amount (<1% of total allocation) dedicated to performance-based funding. The College's IPEDS data (23-0047) shows the College spends 84% on instructional activities including instruction, academic support, student services and institutional support. The remaining balance is allocated to auxiliary enterprises (8%), scholarship expenses (7%), research (1%) and other functional expenses (<1%).
4. M State has two 501c3 organizations: Fergus Falls Area College Foundation and M State Foundation and Alumni. Both organizations secure resources to support students (over $350,000 in scholarships for FY22) and help fund College priorities (23-0046).
5. The College has an active grants program that secures outside funding to serve students (Title III, Bremer Foundation) and aid in operational planning (Lumina ACCRAO grant). See the M State Federal Grants Summary for more information (23-0034).
6. M State has several committees, councils and workgroups dedicated to achieving organizational effectiveness (23-0038). The Institutional Effectiveness Council is focused on developing a culture of continuous quality improvement and reviews data and processes through the lens of accreditation to promote practices that fulfill the College's mission (23-0053).

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

M State engages with external constituencies and responds to their needs in alignment with the College's mission. Stakeholders are engaged in the strategic planning process (1.A.1) and in many other forms at the institutional and program levels.

President's Advisory Councils

At the institutional level, M State utilizes the President's Advisory Councils to stay connected to regional leaders and needs. These councils provide direct and meaningful input on strategies and opportunities for collaboration to help build strong, educated, inclusive and vibrant communities. The councils meet biannually and include more than 75 representatives from business and industry, community agencies, and secondary and postsecondary education. Each M State campus community has representation on the councils. Ways M State has acted on council input include meeting with

Sanford Health to discuss surgical technology program requirements and workforce needs, exploring ways to reduce textbook costs for students by using Open Education Resources, researching models of flexible delivery to reduce conflicts with clinicals in students' home communities, and collaborating with public schools on their Career Academy projects (23-0070). In FY23, council input will be used in the campus academic planning process (see 5.C.3 for more information).

K-12 Collaborations

Another institutional example of how M State engages with external constituencies and responds to their needs is by offering summer camps to high school students for hands-on, interactive experiences in career pathways like healthcare and building trades. The College also promotes college and career awareness by hosting events such as Seeds for Hope, where nearly 1,400 children grades kindergarten through fifth visited the Moorhead campus and engaged in activities related to careers (23-0036). Additionally, M State works with regional high schools to deliver informational presentations to students and parents regarding College opportunities, admission and eligibility, student responsibilities and benefits, course/credit transfer and financial aid information.

Program Advisory Committees

At the program level, technical programs engage local industry through Program Advisory Committees, collaborations and internship opportunities. The College values the work of Program Advisory Committees to ensure high-quality and relevant educational programs for students. Every M State program must establish and meet bi-annually with a Program Advisory Committee per Minnesota Statute 3505.1400 Local Advisory Committee (23-0048), Minnesota State System Board Policy 3.30 (23-0049) and Procedure 3.30.1 (23-0050) College Program Advisory Committees, and M State's Program Advisory Committees Policy (23-0052). These committees follow the guidelines and processes outlined in the Minnesota State system's Program Advisory Committee Handbook (23-0051). The College identifies Program Advisory Committee members for their expertise in their respective career fields.

Program Advisory Committee members serve voluntarily and review program content, instructional strategies and student success data to help ensure content, instruction, equipment and facilities remain up-to-date and aligned with business and industry standards. Moreover, the committees serve an invaluable role in helping programs identify continuous improvement strategies such as verifying skill requirements and identifying emerging industry requirements. The College incorporates continuous improvement feedback from these committees in several key processes, including curriculum development and comprehensive program review (23-0071). Examples include:

- Accounting - Updated program and course outcomes to reflect current industry needs.
- Architectural Drafting and Design - Implemented more REVIT software into courses and added a service learning course into the program plan.
- Criminal Justice - Began bringing staff in for role playing so students get more experience talking to people they don't know when taking a police report.
- Dental - Added more treatment planning instruction and case study assignments, began having students do a spelling test for the top 20 dentistry drugs, added curriculum for hands-on experience with oral photographs, and purchased 3D scanners.
- Human Resources - Created a new diversity, equity and inclusion assignment to focus on the challenges diverse organizations can encounter, and possible solutions.
- Radiologic Technology - Increased the number of students who can bridge into the program and is considering offering more online courses to reach students working in rural healthcare

(lab, nursing).

Internships

Several technical programs connect with industry through the College's internship program. Internship courses are offered in 14 programs as part of the program plan; 211 students participated in FY22. These internships not only give students on-the-job experience but also create opportunity for feedback on how effectively the College prepares them for the workforce. Employers provide input on student performance by submitting internship evaluation surveys (23-0076), students write final reports or present about their experiences, and faculty conduct meetings with students and employers to gather data. Feedback is reviewed and used by faculty to evaluate and improve internship experiences.

Employer Partnerships

M State has established strong industry and community partnerships that leverage external funding to support and sustain programmatic excellence. For example, during the initial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, M State Foundation and Alumni received in-kind donations of more than $400,000 to directly support innovation, equipment and training for technical programs.

M State regularly convenes industry, program and community advisory groups to verify skill requirements and obtain assistance in developing curricula for professional and technical programs. The College has a long track record of participating in regional sector initiatives and partnering with local businesses, workforce and economic development agencies along with other community organizations to address the skill needs of critical industries. Examples include:

- A partnership with a large private employer that led to the co-creation of a Digital Marketing program (23-0440). A representative of the company worked alongside M State faculty to review course delivery strategies and develop key competencies and experiences required for practitioners. The company has hired M State graduates and regularly provides feedback on the strengths and opportunities of the curriculum.
- The Psychology Department piloted a project with Pediatric Partners Neurobehavioral Health in Fargo, N.D., to provide certification of Registered Behavior Technician (RBT) training through M State's Behavior and Environmental Management course (23-0441). Other local agencies that employ RBTs have expressed interest in participating in this partnership in the future.
- In response to a need from energy companies to attract new employees to the industry and address a pending labor shortage, M State partnered with Xcel Energy and the Minnesota State Energy Center of Excellence to launch the Energy Careers Academy in fall 2023 (23-0073). The academy is designed to engage students with more diverse backgrounds in energy-related fields of study and to be accessible to an urban student population in order to remove potential geographical barriers. The academy currently offers training in Electrical Linework and plans are developing to add a Gas Utility Construction and Service program.
- M State has a strong tradition of collaboration between credit and non-credit programs to address shortages in healthcare professions (i.e. CNAs, nurses) while creating custom programming to address technical training among the armed forces (i.e. North Dakota Air Guard). The College's Workforce Development Solutions division is participating in Minnesota's Next Generation Nursing Assistant Training, a state initiative to offer free CNA courses to combat statewide staffing shortages at long-term care facilities and veterans homes. To date, over 200 students have completed their CNA training at M State as part of this

initiative (23-0396).
- Business and industry sponsorships offer students in healthcare, transportation and trade programs employment opportunities and scholarships for tuition, books and tools (23-0225).

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- 23-0085 - Strategic Plan - M State Annual Strategic Plans - FY19-23
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1.C - Core Component 1.C

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

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

Argument

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

As stated in M State's inclusion value, "We welcome, respect and accept people for who they are and celebrate the power of our collective differences in creating and shaping more robust, energized communities." Equity and inclusion are primary themes in the College's Strategic Plan.

During the fall 2022 term, M State adopted a new set of Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) ([23-0064](#)). These ILOs work in concert with the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum ([23-0065](#)) goal areas that, related to this subcomponent, develop information awareness through the discernment of useful, truthful and meaningful information from ambiguous, misleading and trivial information. This promotes equity and inclusion in that graduates leave M State with an understanding of the importance of the variety of world views, lifestyles, identities, occupations and commitments that contribute to meaningful lives. Through the MnTC goal areas, students take general education courses that prepare them for informed citizenship and workplace success.

Additionally, M State has curricular offerings for English learners and American Sign Language, and a certificate in Global and Intercultural Studies that is embedded in any transfer or technical degree.

Several programs, through formal curriculum or student groups, provide community service opportunities. These include the organization of blood drives (nursing) and community dental clinics (dental programs), and providing repair services (PowerSports, Automotive Service Technology) and cosmetology and massage therapy services.

M State engages students in programs to support classmates and the community ([23-0043](#)). For example, the College has organized annual Empty Bowls fundraiser events on the Fergus Falls campus, raising over $71,000 for the Salvation Army food program since 2005. The events have drawn an estimated 4,000 attendees, and pottery students, together with area artists, have created approximately 4,500 bowls ([23-0442](#)). M State also launched local branches of Ruby's Pantry to help address food insecurities. A branch was opened on the Detroit Lakes campus in December 2016, and another on the Moorhead campus in August 2017 ([23-0443](#)). M State faculty and staff participated in the intake and distribution of food to students and community members. Excess food not distributed

at the event was used at campus food pantries or donated to area food shelves. Detroit Lakes donated 12,548 shares and Moorhead donated 8,876 shares. Ruby's Pantry distribution on M State campuses was discontinued due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but in FY23 M State began opening its own food pantries to reduce food insecurity among students. The Fergus Falls and Wadena campus pantries are operational and construction on the other two campuses is expected to be complete in spring 2023 (23-0098).

As M State continues the development of guided learning pathways, students will be increasingly exposed to co-curricular options that prepare them for informed citizenship and workplace success. In fall 2022, the business pathway's Introduction to Business course included a "CareerX" event with speakers from a variety of business fields (23-0433). The event's primary outcomes were to help students understand what skills are most important for graduates, and what types of jobs specific majors lead to.

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

M State's vision and strategic plan explicitly state the College's commitment to an inclusive and equitable environment. The College is committed to and accountable for improving student outcomes by ensuring each student receives the resources they need to advance and successfully achieve their goal(s). Over the past several years, M State has taken steps to improve equitable access and outcomes for diverse populations and devoted significant resources to support these efforts. The College conducted a diligent review of data related to policies that impact students' ability to attend, for example, and allocated funding to support student populations during the pandemic.

The policy and procedure review process at M State incorporates Minnesota State system policies and procedures and feedback from M State faculty and staff, who are encouraged to identify areas where policies or procedures may disproportionately affect different student populations. In addition, the 2019-2020 annual plan included a specific review of policies that was assigned to the Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Council. While several policies did not have a disparate impact on at-risk populations, the policy and procedure for satisfactory academic progress did. As a result, the College has been modifying that policy, procedure and related documents (23-0144). Results of this analysis are in section 4.C.3.

The College allocated significant resources to help students overcome barriers to technology during the pandemic. This included expanding the College's loaner laptop program, providing 500 free laptops to students with a demonstrated need (23-0095), and introducing park-and-learn Wi-Fi hot spots.

M State, like many institutions, has invested in an Office of Equity and Inclusion, led by a dean of equity and inclusion. This office is tasked with many responsibilities, including developing and implementing campus inclusion reporting, professional development for students, faculty and staff, and collaborating with other institutional units in developing plans to achieve equitable outcomes.

As per the FY23 annual plan (23-0054), additional strategies will be employed to implement campus inclusion reporting and collaborate with instructional schools on the development of school-specific equity plans. These include:

- Evaluating current structures impacting Accessibility Resources and equity for students needing accommodations.
- Creating resource materials for inclusive and universal design practices in the classroom.
- Collaborating with academic advisors on Early Alerts to support students receiving accommodations.
- Implementing a Campus Inclusion Incident Report to identify themes that impact the inclusion process.
- Providing the following focused professional development for faculty:
  - Microaggressions in the Classroom
  - Managing Hot Moments in the Classroom
  - Culturally Responsive Teaching
  - Inclusive Syllabus
  - How to Decolonize Classroom Practices and Policies to Mitigate Structural Barriers

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

M State evaluates the College culture from a faculty and staff perspective as well as a student perspective. The College administered the Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) in FY19, revealing strengths (items with a low gap between satisfaction and importance) such as: students feel welcome, most students feel a sense of belonging and staff is helpful and caring (23-0055). A summary of the survey results was distributed college-wide and the Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Council conducted a deeper dive into the strengths and challenges identified in the survey. The IE Council supported a research proposal by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to conduct student focus groups in order to contextualize data through a qualitative approach (23-0056). One focus group was conducted on the Moorhead campus in the spring of 2020 and a thematic analysis was done (23-0058), but plans to conduct focus groups on all the College's campuses were interrupted by the pandemic. It was decided to postpone administration of the survey again until the pandemic eased and a greater number of students returned to campus. M State is slated to launch the next SSI during the spring 2023 term.

In the past, the College has used the Personal Assessment of the College Environment Survey to assess campus climate and employee perceptions regarding College leadership (23-0060). The next assessment will be administered in AY24 to students and employees using the Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium survey instrument. The Minnesota State system is implementing a new framework over the next three fiscal years (starting in FY23) intended to promote regular, open and constructive communication on employee and student perceptions of campus climate, including perceptions of how the College supports diversity and equity. Results, analysis and action plans will be discussed with the chancellor during the College's annual evaluation (23-0059).

Equity 2030

The Minnesota State system Board of Trustees approved a strategic vision in 2019 to eliminate educational equity gaps by the end of 2030 at every Minnesota State college and university (23-0044). The focus spans six strategic dimensions:

- **Enhanced Access** to higher education by strengthening partnerships and collaborations with K-12, business and industry, community-based organizations, and philanthropic partners to

expand and grow current programming and identify new ways to support students.

- **Academic Success** by establishing guided learning pathways that focus on academic preparation, progression and accomplishment within an area of study and career.
- **Student Engagement** within the institution, both academic and non-academic, including supporting basic needs.
- **Evidence-based** decision-making by building a technology infrastructure and expanding capacity for deeper data analytics.
- **Financial Resources** for students and growing the financial resource base for campuses.
- **Workforce and Talent Diversity** by incorporating local and national context with changing student and employee demographics and needs, focusing on cultural competence development, inclusive hiring practices and improved campus climate.

The system office rolled out the Minnesota State Equity Scorecard in summer 2022 with key performance indicators to use as a tool to foster institutional change through data-informed decision-making (23-0079). The scorecard data can be filtered by institution for campus-level discussions, to establish baselines and identify if equity gaps in student success, compositional diversity, employee retention and development and supplier diversity are widening, narrowing or at parity or better (23-0078).

M State has many accomplishments to support the system-wide vision of Equity 2030 (23-0080), but there is still work to be done. M State's current initiatives can be found on the FY23 Strategic Work Plan, under Pillar II Equity and Inclusion (23-0054). M State's College Inclusion Education Plan (23-0066) and Equity 2030 Development Plan for Faculty (23-0067) provide further details about FY23-24 plans for professional development, inclusion reporting, reviewing and using data for decision-making, and developing Equity Gap Diversity Plans.

M State's Office of Equity and Inclusion

M State's Office of Equity and Inclusion empowers students, faculty, staff and administrators to explore a deeper understanding of and respect for diversity in its many forms. This extends to everyone regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, physical ability and national or regional origin. The office coordinates programs and fosters conversations about equity and cultural understanding among M State community members. See the equity and inclusion event examples for professional development and community engagement highlights (23-0081).

President's Council on Equity and Inclusion

M State created the President's Council on Equity and Inclusion in 2019. Comprised of representatives from all four campuses, including faculty, staff, administrators and students, the council was charged with updating M State's Affirmative Action and Strategic Diversity and Inclusion plans and ensuring and sustaining diversity and inclusive excellence at the College. The council met monthly to discuss items such as climate survey results, the racial equity summit, Office of Civil Rights review, Office of Equity and Inclusion staffing, Intercultural Development Inventory, affinity groups, college-wide events and professional development. Input from the council resulted in the College financially supporting 20 supervisors and council members with Intercultural Development Inventory assessment and coaching, eliminating the word "chief" in position titles, hiring an associate director of equity and inclusion, and supporting the decision to have that administrative-level position be a member Cabinet.

In September 2021, a new task force structure for the council was established to leverage the broad knowledge base and skill sets that employees bring to the College. The diversity task forces were to focus on:

- Improving systems, policies and practices that create inequities and perpetuate achievement gaps for students.
- Equitable and inclusive curriculum, teaching and learning.
- Celebrating equity and inclusion.
- Equity and inclusion professional development.
- Seeking student voices to influence the work of the council and task forces.
- Workforce diversity and talent management.

Shortly after the president sent a communication about the task forces and invited interested employees to become council members (23-0069), the council was placed on pause due to staff turnover in the Office of Equity and Inclusion. The College welcomed a new dean of equity and inclusion in February 2022 and plans are underway to re-convene the council in spring 2023.

Employee Professional Development

A series of employee professional development days focused on student success, culture, diversity and inclusion began in February 2017 (23-0082). The first day in the three-part series, "Building Our Voices," addressed the understanding of self and cultural context. The second day, "Celebrating Our Values," addressed learning and experiencing cultural diversity and inclusion. The final day, "Living Our Vision," occurred in September 2017 and focused on fulfilling the College's vision of ensuring a success story for every student. After the conclusion of this series, an employee survey was conducted and feedback informed learning sessions in 2018 on mental illness and white privilege. Each cohort consisted of three, 1-hour sessions with the intent that an employee would: 1) Learn about the subject through building a better understanding via education and awareness; 2) Discuss with peers to broaden and strengthen knowledge; and 3) Apply what was learned to their work. After the learning sessions concluded, M State offered several Intercultural Development Inventory opportunities from spring 2019 to fall 2020 to administrators, supervisors, union bargaining unit leaders and the President's Council on Equity and Inclusion.

Beginning spring 2020, the pandemic shifted from in-person, college-wide coordinated professional development to being mostly online, Minnesota State system experiences that support Equity 2030. For example, M State employees have participated in Minnesota State Inclusive Classroom Training, learning communities, Equity Book Group, and Network for Educational Development workshops, webinars and courses (see 23-0104 for more examples). All Minnesota State system employees are also encouraged to participate in training and professional development opportunities offered by the system's Equity and Inclusion Office (23-0096).

In February of this semester, 25 M State supervisors completed Inclusive Leadership Training to ensure they understand their roles in creating an inclusive work environment. Other professional development opportunities planned for all employees in spring 2023 include (23-0066):

- Campus Inclusion Incident Report Education
- What is College Inclusion Reporting?
- Understanding Bias and Microaggressions
- Cultural Competency Continuum
- Strategies to Work Toward Inclusion

Employee Recruitment and Retention

M State's student body is more diverse than the populations of our four campus communities, but our staff are at or below those levels of diversity. To improve employee diversity, the College has made a significant attempt to recruit, value and retain BIPOC employees. Recruiting efforts include examining candidate pools prior to interviews and hiring search firms to assist in finding a diverse and qualified applicant pool for dean level or higher administrators. This has increased employees of color from 3.2% in FY2015 to a high of 6.3% in FY2020. The College experienced a slight decrease after the pandemic, to being at or near 5% the last two fiscal years. As a reference, the most diverse campus is in a city that is approximately 85% white, and the least diverse city is 95% white (source: ACS Survey, United States Census Bureau). See 3.C.1 for more information regarding M State's commitment to increase and retain diversity in employees.

M State's Office of Equity and Inclusion launched Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) in spring 2021 to support and retain traditionally underrepresented employees. ERGs are voluntary spaces for employees to collaborate on common goals, network with peers, strengthen sense of belonging and experience mentorship opportunities.

Although the ERGs were not active for a period of time, the spring 2023 plan is to:

- Reconvene the President's Council on Equity and Inclusion to support campus inclusion and campus climate survey efforts.
- Determine the current list of employees at M State to invite as members of ERGs.
- Collaborate with marketing and human resources to determine interest in participation.
- Identify a volunteer to chair and provide leadership for ERGs.
- Conduct a focus group to identify needs and determine function and purpose of ERGs.
- Establish actionable items to advance the culture of inclusion and equity at M State.

Campus Inclusion Incident Reporting

M State will begin using Campus Inclusion Incident Reporting in spring 2023 (23-0068) to assist the college community with identifying acts of bigotry, harassment or intimidation motivated in whole or part by bias based on an individual's or group's actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status or sexual orientation. Themes will be assessed to determine frequency of incidents according to individual or group identities to inform the leadership of education needs and intervention strategies to mitigate structural inequities.

A College Inclusion Team (CIT) will be responsible for examining data and college climate to inform direction for Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion (JEDI) work at college campuses. The team will assist in making recommendations for inclusion interventions and will work with identified/designated/supervisory staff to effectively address areas of support. The CIT team is not responsible for determining whether policy has been violated and/or for imposing disciplinary action. The team has oversight to follow through with an incident report, humanize and address harm, and approach incidents through a restorative justice lens. The team will participate in the following training in spring 2023:

- Cultural Competence Continuum
- The Science of Bias and Debiasing
- Microaggressions: What Are They and Successful Strategies for Intervention

- First Amendment and Protected Speech
- Academic Freedom
- Cultivating a Community that is Inclusive and Belonging
- Identities and Social Locations
- What is Oppression?

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1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

Summary

M State's mission and related values statements are clear and articulated to the public on the College website, in promotional materials and through prominent on-campus displays. The meaning and intent of the statements are defined and reinforced by their recurring themes of educational excellence, affordability, equity and inclusion, public service, workforce training and student support, engagement and success. These themes frame campus culture and guide the College's operations at every level. They are the foundation for M State's vision, "A success story for every student," and inform efforts to realize that vision. The College's mission and related statements align with the ideals and policies of the Minnesota State system, of which M State is a part, and were crafted through a process suited to the context of the institution, with significant input from faculty, staff and students along with institutional- and program-level advisory committees and other community stakeholders. Thus, they reflect what's important to M State as well as the communities the College serves. The College's demonstrated commitment to education, uniquely comprehensive student support services and resources, leading-edge workforce training programs, embrace of equity and inclusion initiatives, low tuition rates and free technology and textbook programs, and substantial contributions to public service are among the many examples of how M State's mission is current and put into practice, for the good of our students and communities.

Sources

There are no sources.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

2.A - Core Component 2.A

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

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

Argument

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

M State operates within the Minnesota State system of colleges and universities. State statutes, Board of Trustees (BOT) policies and system procedures guide the work of the College.

Through policy and procedure, the Minnesota State system defines the parameters for local development of the College's mission and subsequent approval by the BOT. Minnesota State Board Policy 1A.1 (23-0110) specifies that each college or university within the system "has a distinct mission" that aligns with the system mission. Board Policy 3.24 (23-0023) states that each institution should be given "considerable latitude to express its mission" in consultation with students, faculty and staff while the Board maintains authority to approve the mission. Procedure 3.24.1 (23-0024) delineates the procedure whereby the institution develops and submits the mission to the system office along with requirements for the review and details of the approval process.

Evidence of how M State revised its mission in consultation with students, faculty, staff and stakeholders, along with the subsequent approval processes, is described in 1.A.

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

Governing Board and System Administration

Minnesota Statute 136F.02 (23-0130) establishes the Minnesota State BOT and Minnesota Statute 136F.06 (23-0010) authorizes the BOT to serve as the governing authority for all Minnesota State colleges and universities. Minnesota Statute 136F.07 (23-0006) requires the BOT to appoint a chancellor to serve as the primary administrator, with powers and duties as delegated by the Board. Under laws and statutes of the state of Minnesota and regulations of Minnesota Management and Budget, Minnesota State system policies and procedures ensure system institutions operate with integrity in financial, academic, human resource and auxiliary activities.

All BOT actions and meetings are public events and are subject to the Minnesota Open Meeting Law (23-0139). Minnesota Statute 43A.38 (23-0131) sets forth a code of ethics for employees in the executive branch, Board Policy 1C.1 (23-0014) prescribes the BOT Code of Conduct, and System Procedure 1C.0.1 (23-0113) establishes a code of conduct for all employees of Minnesota State, including system administrators.

Financial

Minnesota State Board Policy 7.1 Finance and Administrative Authority of Board, Chancellor and Presidents (23-0111) delegates authority to the chancellor to develop procedures and guidelines to implement the Board's policies for administrative and financial management of the system, including all colleges and universities. Board Policy 7.3 Financial Administration (23-0112) requires that system procedures assure financial records are complete and safeguarded, financial information is accurate, reliable and useful for management reporting, and financial management methods support short-term and longer-term system and college and university strategic objectives.

Under Board Policy 5.9 Biennial and Annual Operating Budget Planning and Approval (23-0114), colleges, universities and the system office are required to prepare balanced budgets consistent with Board policies and system procedures. The chancellor is responsible for monitoring the system, system office, and college and university budgets. Further, under Board Policy 5.10 Reserves and Year-End Balances (23-0115) and Board Procedure 5.10.1 General Operating Fund Reserve (23-0116), all institutions in Minnesota State are required to accurately report financial data, which includes, but is not limited to, the composite financial index (CFI); primary reserve ratio; return on net assets; viability ratio; and operating margin ratio.

The BOT also maintains authority to set tuition rates for all system institutions and regulates fees charged to students in accordance with Board Policy 5.11 Tuition and Fees (23-0117) and System Procedure 5.11.1 Tuition and Fees (23-0118).

Board Policy 7.4 Financial Reporting (23-0119) requires the institution to file financial reports and statements, subject to audit, on an annual basis.

Academic

Minnesota Statute 135F.06, Subdivision 1 (23-0010) provides that the Board shall approve programs of study and requirements for completion of programs and approve the awarding of appropriate certificates, diplomas and degrees. Board Policy 3.36, Part 4 (23-0120), lists the academic awards authorized by the Board, and Part 6 delegates to the chancellor the authority to approve new academic programs, changes to existing programs, suspension of programs, and closure of programs at system colleges and universities.

Minnesota State Board policies and related system procedures also govern the following areas of academic functions:

- 2.9 Academic Standing and Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (23-0132)
- 3.21 Undergraduate Course and Credit Transfer and the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (23-0089)
- 3.22 Course Syllabi and Course Outlines (23-0125)
- 3.29 College and University Transcripts (23-0121)
- 3.39 Transfer Rights and Responsibilities (23-0126)

- 3.4 Undergraduate Admissions ([23-0133](#))
- 3.5 Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) Program ([23-0122](#))
- 3.6 Student Conduct ([23-0123](#))
- 3.8 Student Complaints and Grievances ([23-0124](#))

Personnel

Minnesota State requires nondiscrimination and equal opportunity in both its educational and employment practices. Board Policy 1B.1 Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination in Employment and Education ([23-0107](#)) defines the criteria for this standard and provides clear direction for accountability to campuses, faculty and staff. The conduct of BOT members is governed under Board Policy 1C.1 Board of Trustees Code of Conduct ([23-0014](#)) and employees are held to a high standard of integrity through Board Policy 1C.2 Fraudulent or Other Dishonest Acts ([23-0127](#)) and procedure 1C.0.1 Employee Code of Conduct ([23-0113](#)). Personnel standards include:

- Members of the Board must disclose any potential conflicts of interest and are not permitted to use their political appointment to secure personal benefits. Trustees may not exert personal influence over hiring or contractual agreements at the institutional or system levels.
- Likewise, all Minnesota State employees are held to standards to prevent use of their position as a state and system employee to their personal advantage.
- Minnesota State is committed to providing equal employment opportunities and all employees are held accountable for not allowing harassment of fellow employees or potential hires.

New employees are required to complete training on the Minnesota State Code of Conduct, the use of private data, sexual harassment, and, if applicable to the position, safety and security. Newly hired supervisors and managers are required to complete the Art and Science of Supervision in order to meet the requirements of Minnesota Statute 43A.21 ([23-0134](#)).

Administrators, supervisors and human resources must comply with the following Minnesota State Board policies and related system procedures regarding equal education and employment opportunity:

- 1B.0.1 Reasonable Accommodations in Employment ([23-0135](#))
- 1B.1 Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination in Employment and Education ([23-0107](#))
- 1B.2 Affirmative Action in Employment ([23-0136](#))
- 1B.3 Sexual Violence Policy ([23-0137](#))
- 1B.3.1 Response to Sexual Violence and Title IX Sexual Harassment ([23-0141](#))
- 1B.4 Access and Accommodation for Individuals with Disabilities ([23-0138](#))

All faculty and staff positions are covered by collective bargaining agreements that articulate requirements and protections for the position. Administrator positions are covered under the Minnesota State Administrators Plan. Each contract defines rights and responsibilities of employees, as well as procedures for grievances and discipline.

Auxiliary

Board Policy 7.3 Financial Administration ([23-0112](#)) establishes general provisions for sound financial administration to safeguard the resources of the State of Minnesota, the system, the colleges and universities, and the constituencies they serve. System Procedure 7.3.2 Auxiliary Operations ([23-0128](#)) regulates auxiliary enterprises that are part of the college or university for proper and efficient

management and System Procedure 7.3.5 Revenue Fund Management ([23-0129](#)) establishes parameters for management of the revenue fund. These policies and procedures apply to housing services, food services, health services, wellness centers, retail sales, student Perkins loan programs, parking and other contracted services.

Sources

- 23-0006 - Statutes - Minnesota Statutes 136F.07 Chancellor - FY23
- 23-0010 - Statutes - Minnesota Statutes 136F.06 Powers and Duties - FY23
- 23-0014 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 1C.1 Board of Trustees Code of Conduct - FY23
- 23-0022 - Statutes - Minnesota Statutes 136F.05 Missions - FY23
- 23-0023 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 3.24 College and University Type and Mission and System Mission - FY23
- 23-0024 - Procedure - Minnesota State Procedure 3.24.1 College and University Type and Mission and System Mission - FY23
- 23-0048 - Statutes - Minnesota Statutes 3505.1400 Local Advisory Committee - FY23
- 23-0089 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 3.21 Undergraduate Course and Transfer and the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum - FY23
- 23-0107 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 1B.1 Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination - FY23
- 23-0110 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 1A.1 Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Organization and Administration - FY23
- 23-0111 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 7.1 Finance and Administrative Authority - FY23
- 23-0112 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 7.3 Financial Administration - FY23
- 23-0113 - Procedure - Minnesota State Procedure 1C.0.1 Employee Code of Conduct - FY23
- 23-0114 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 5.9 Biennial and Annual Operating Budget - FY23
- 23-0115 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 5.10 Reserves and Year-End Balances - FY23
- 23-0116 - Procedure - Minnesota State Procedure 5.10.1 General Operating Fund Reserve - FY23
- 23-0117 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 5.11 Tuition and Fees - FY23
- 23-0118 - Procedure - Minnesota State Procedure 5.11.1 Tuition and Fees - FY23
- 23-0119 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 7.4 Financial Reporting - FY23
- 23-0120 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 3.36 Academic Programs - FY23
- 23-0121 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 3.29 College and University Transcripts - FY23
- 23-0122 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 3.5 Post-Secondary Enrollment Options - FY23
- 23-0123 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 3.6 Student Conduct - FY23
- 23-0124 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 3.8 Student Complaints and Grievances - FY23
- 23-0125 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 3.22 Course Outlines and Course Syllabi - FY23
- 23-0126 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 3.39 Transfer Rights and Responsibilities - FY23
- 23-0127 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 1C.2 Fraudulent or Other Dishonest Acts -

FY23
- 23-0128 - Procedure - Minnesota State Operating Instructions 7.3.2 Auxiliary Operations - FY23
- 23-0129 - Procedure - Minnesota State Operating Instruction 7.3.5 Revenue Fund Management - FY23
- 23-0130 - Statutes - Minnesota Statutes 136F.02 Board of Trustees - FY23
- 23-0131 - Statutes - Minnesota Statutes 43A.38 Code of Ethics - FY23
- 23-0132 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 2.9 Academic Standing and FA SAP - FY23
- 23-0133 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 3.4 Undergraduate Admissions - FY23
- 23-0134 - Statutes - Minnesota Statutes 43A.21 Training Programs - FY23
- 23-0135 - Procedure - Minnesota State Procedure 1B.0.1 Reasonable Accommodations in Employment - FY23
- 23-0136 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 1B.2 Affirmative Action in Employment - FY23
- 23-0137 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 1B.3 Sexual Violence Policy - FY23
- 23-0138 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 1B.4 Access and Accommodation - FY23
- 23-0139 - Resource - Minnesota Open Meeting Law_MN House Research - FY22
- 23-0141 - Procedure - Minnesota State Procedure 1B.3.1 Response to Sexual Violence - FY23

2.B - Core Component 2.B

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

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

Argument

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

M State's website (www.minnesota.edu) is the primary communication tool for presenting information to students and other constituencies. Through the website, M State prioritizes academic information, admissions and financial aid information, projected student costs, student support and opportunities in student life.

- **Academic Offerings** – The website lists all programs available to students. Program webpages contain program descriptions and credential information (degree, diploma, certificate), credits required for completion and a brief synopsis of what students learn. Degree webpages contain information on program outcomes, accreditation information, courses required for completing the program and suggested course sequences (23-0163, 23-0164). Programmatically accredited and selective admission programs include additional information on application requirements and specific data as required by the accreditor (23-0165).
- **Program Requirements** – Information on program-specific requirements, such as selective admission (23-0167) or computer requirements (23-0166), is included on program webpages. When a student fills out an application for a program with special requirements, they receive a confirmation email along with mailed checklists and information. For example, transportation program applicants receive tool lists and Tool Day information (23-0210), and nursing applicants are mailed an eligibility criteria checklist if their file is incomplete (23-0209).
- **College Catalog** – The College Catalog covers information about programs, courses and other student service and academic functions and is available for download on the College's website (23-0213, 23-0211).
- **Know Before You Go** – This webpage outlines important information for students prior to the first day (23-0168).
- **Student Right-to-Know and Consumer Information** – Student Right-To-Know Act information is posted on the website, as required for higher education institutions participating in federally funded financial aid programs (23-0212).
- **Faculty and Staff** – In addition to faculty listed on program pages, a full directory is available to the public (23-0351).
- **Tuition and Fees** – The website includes detailed costs for tuition, including special program

tuition as well as all fees and an explanation of those fees (23-0169). M State also links directly to a Net Price Calculator from the page.

- **Governance** – The "About M State" webpage provides an overview of the College's governance structure (23-0195).
- **Accreditation and Memberships** – The website includes a page dedicated to all accreditation and licensure bodies (23-0170).

Students are also mailed or emailed important information (23-0268).

Professional Licensure Disclosures

M State complies with the U.S. Department of Education Code of Federal Regulations CFR §668.43 by communicating professional licensure disclosures publicly on the College's website and directly to prospective and current students in programs that lead to a licensure or certification that is necessary for employment. The professional licensure disclosures website landing page (23-0171) hosts general information about professional licensure disclosures, a link to the College's Professional Licensure Disclosures: Determining Student Location Policy (23-0172) and branches to relevant program subpages that list whether or not the program's curriculum meets licensure requirements for each state, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories (23-0173). The subpages also include links to state licensing board contact information when applicable. If a current or prospective student's permanent location is identified as being in a state that does not meet, or is not determined if it meets, licensure requirements for their program of study, a direct disclosure is emailed to the student within 14 calendar days (23-0174). The direct disclosure is emailed a second time within another 14 calendar days to make a reasonable attempt to reach the student. Professional licensure disclosure webpages, program determinations and direct disclosure processes are reviewed and updated annually.

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

M State's mission is defined by providing an affordable education (see 1.A.2) and engaging with communities. The College, in collaboration with the Minnesota State system, commissioned an Economic Impact Study that demonstrates the impact of M State on the region (23-0074). Highlights from the study include: M State generates an annual impact of $229.7 million, supports and sustains 1,739 jobs (direct and indirect), and contributes an estimated $3,312,330 in charitable donations and volunteer services.

M State engages communities in several ways, such as with career and technical advisory committees (see 1.B.3), community advisory panels, non-credit training through Workforce Development Solutions, and several services and events located on M State campuses. Research is completed on the effectiveness of these processes and includes:

- Advisory Committee Member Feedback Surveys (23-0175)
- Non-Credit Training Satisfaction Surveys (23-0335)
- Student Survey on Basic Needs (23-0176), which led to the development of campus food pantries (23-0098)

Sources

- 23-0074 - Resource - M State Economic Impact Report - FY23
- 23-0098 - Website - Food Pantry Project Charter - FY23
- 23-0163 - Website - Accounting Program Webpage Examples - FY23
- 23-0164 - Website - Automotive Service Technology Webpage Examples - FY23
- 23-0165 - Website - Radiologic Technology Program Webpage Examples - FY23
- 23-0166 - Website - Graphic Design Program Webpage Examples - FY23
- 23-0167 - Website - Nursing Program Webpage Examples - FY23
- 23-0168 - Website - Know Before You Go - FY23
- 23-0169 - Website - Tuition and Fees - FY23
- 23-0170 - Website - Accreditation - FY23
- 23-0171 - Website - Professional Licensure Disclosures - FY23
- 23-0172 - Policy - M State Professional Licensure Disclosures Determining Student Location - FY23
- 23-0173 - Website - Professional Licensure Disclosure Program Page Examples - FY23
- 23-0174 - Resource - Professional Licensure Disclosure Email Template Example - FY23
- 23-0175 - Resource - Advisory Committee Survey Results - FY22
- 23-0176 - Data - Hope Center ICBC Survey Results - FY22
- 23-0195 - Website - Governance Structure Information - FY23
- 23-0195 - Website - Governance Structure Information - FY23 (page number 4)
- 23-0209 - Resource - Nursing Eligibility Criteria Checklist - FY23
- 23-0210 - Resource - Tool Day and Tool List Examples - FY23
- 23-0211 - Resource - M State College Catalog - FY23
- 23-0212 - Website - Student Right to Know Webpage - FY23
- 23-0213 - Website - College Catalog Webpage - FY23
- 23-0268 - Email - Annual Notification to Students - FY23
- 23-0335 - Resource - Workforce Development Surveys - FY23
- 23-0351 - Website - M State Directory Website - FY23

2.C - Core Component 2.C

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

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

Argument

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

Minnesota State trustees take part in a new trustee orientation program upon their appointment to the Board of Trustees (BOT) to ensure they are trained, knowledgeable and meet legal and fiduciary responsibilities (23-0003, 23-0004). Orientation covers a variety of topics, including an overview of the system, core values and strategic framework; BOT roles; Board/management culture; legal overview including the Open Meeting Law, public/private data and conflict of interest; financial overview including sources and uses of funding, the legislative request process, facilities use and maintenance; and an overview of current strategic initiatives and enterprise risks.

Ongoing Board development occurs through regular retreats and training sessions, scheduled at the discretion of the Board chair and focused on topics relevant to their work (23-0005, 23-0105). The Minnesota State system is a member of both the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) and the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT), thus trustees have access to professional development via resources provided by these national organizations and by attendance at national conferences.

The system's Office of Internal Auditing provides independent and objective assurance, investigative, consulting and advisory services designed to add value and improve the organization's operations (23-0160). The Board of Trustees Audit Committee oversees the service of internal and independent external auditors. Annual Audit Plans are developed in consultation with leaders from across the system, including presidents, BOT members, the Chancellor's Cabinet, bargaining groups and student association leaders, who discuss risks, concerns and project objectives (23-0161). The Audit Committee and BOT approve the Annual Audit Plan, and an external consulting firm assists with the audits. FY23 projects include:

- Ethics, Employee Conduct, and Fraud review

- Transfer Pathways
- Equity 2030
- Controlled Use of Administrative Privileges

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

The delegation of authority of the BOT is outlined in Minnesota Statute 136F.06 (23-0010) and its detailed execution is in Minnesota State system Procedure 1A.2.2 Delegation of Authority (23-0009). The BOT must appoint a chancellor to perform duties as delegated by the Board, directed by Minnesota Statute 136F.07 (23-0006) and Minnesota State Board Policy 1A.3 System Administration, Chancellor (23-0008). Each college or university has a president appointed by the BOT upon recommendation of the chancellor. Minnesota State Board Policy 4.2 Appointment of Presidents provides that among college and university administrators in Minnesota, the president is appointed by the Board recommendation of the chancellor (23-0007), and other colleges and university administrators are appointed by the president.

The BOT meets monthly to discuss, review, and deliberate the needs of campuses throughout the state including fiscal matters, academic concerns, and adherence to system policies. Board meetings are open to the public in compliance with the Minnesota Open Meeting Law and meeting dates, agendas, minutes, materials and audio recordings are posted on the Minnesota State website (23-0139).

In addition to the BOT mandatory meetings for all college and university presidents, M State leadership has presented to the Board on successful initiatives and participates in system-level workgroups (23-0156). For example, M State's president co-led a Post-Pandemic Workplace Workgroup which resulted in a Board approved framework institutions can adapt to address hybrid and remote work. M State Human Resources is currently reviewing the findings from two institutions that piloted the program to develop the College's plan to move forward with a remote work framework. Other examples of how the governing Board interacts with the College include FY23 Biennial Budget Listening Sessions and annual workplan enterprise chancellor reports (23-0162).

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

While BOT members are appointed by the governor, the governor "must consider the needs of the Board and balance of the Board membership with respect to labor and business representation and racial, gender, geographic, and ethnic composition" as stated in Minnesota State Board Policy 1A.2 Board of Trustees (23-0011). The trustees must comply with Board Policy 1C.1 Board of Trustees Code of Conduct (23-0014), which requires the disclosure of potential conflicts of interest and prohibits the use of the position to secure personal benefits, disclose confidential communications or exert influence in hiring/awarding contracts.

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

As stated in Minnesota State Board Policy 4.2 Appointment of Presidents, Part 1 (23-0007), the president is the primary spokesperson for college or university interests and consults regularly with students, faculty, staff and members of the community. The president advises the chancellor, the staff of the system office, and the BOT on matters of Board policy as appropriate, and otherwise administers and supports all Minnesota State policies and programs. The president also leads in generating and sustaining the College vision as an integral part of the Minnesota State system. The duties and responsibilities of the president include, but are not limited to, adhering to Board policies and system procedures, employing personnel, supplying innovative educational leadership, allocating campus resources, and implementing the Board's strategic plan.

Minnesota State faculty are represented by a collective bargaining unit and the respective agreement assigns responsibilities for academic matters to the faculty. Faculty at the universities are represented by the Inter Faculty Organization (IFO) and the faculty at the colleges are represented by the Minnesota State College Faculty (MSCF). The 2021-2023 IFO Contract, Section A, Subdivisions 2 and 3 (23-0012) provides, among other things, that each faculty member shall be a member of a department and that department faculty shall establish, annually or more frequently as appropriate, through a democratic process and in a manner consistent with university procedures and the provisions of the agreement, departmental goals, objectives, policies, procedures, and teaching and other work schedules. In addition, each program may establish program-specific goals, objectives, policies, procedures and schedules. The department makes every effort to ensure teaching and other work schedules meet program, department, college and university objectives. The administration may develop guidelines to aid in this effort. Similarly, the MSCF contract assigns a critical role to faculty in the Academic Affairs and Standards Council. Article 8, Section 2 (23-0045 (Page 25)) states, "faculty have a fundamental and unique responsibility in matters affecting the academic well-being of the state colleges. The parties agree that the faculty hold a critical role in academic decision-making at the colleges. To ensure such a role, the parties agree to set up an Academic Affairs and Standards Council to which management and faculty bring all proposals about academic affairs and standards."

Sources

- 23-0003 - Agenda - New Board of Trustee Orientation - FY23
- 23-0004 - Resource - New Board of Trustee Orientation Packet - FY21
- 23-0005 - Agenda - Board of Trustees Retreat Schedule and Governance Session - FY20
- 23-0006 - Statutes - Minnesota Statutes 136F.07 Chancellor - FY23
- 23-0007 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 4.2 Appointment of Presidents - FY23
- 23-0008 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 1A.3 System Administration Chancellor - FY23
- 23-0009 - Procedure - Minnesota State Procedure 1A.2.2 Delegation of Authority - FY23
- 23-0010 - Statutes - Minnesota Statutes 136F.06 Powers and Duties - FY23
- 23-0011 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 1A.2 Board of Trustees - FY23
- 23-0012 - Contract - Inter Faculty Organization Agreement 2021-2023 - FY23
- 23-0012 - Contract - Inter Faculty Organization Agreement 2021-2023 - FY23 (page number 67)
- 23-0014 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 1C.1 Board of Trustees Code of Conduct - FY23

- 23-0045 - Contract - MSCF Union Master Contract 2021-2023 - FY23
- 23-0045 - Contract - MSCF Union Master Contract 2021-2023 - FY23 (page number 25)
- 23-0105 - Agenda - Board of Trustees Retreat - FY23
- 23-0139 - Resource - Minnesota Open Meeting Law_MN House Research - FY22
- 23-0156 - Resource - Board of Trustees Meeting Packet Excerpt - FY22
- 23-0160 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 1D.1 Office of Internal Auditing - FY23
- 23-0161 - Resource - FY23 Proposed Internal Auditing Plan - FY22
- 23-0162 - Resource - Governing Board Reviews - Additional Examples - FY23

2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

Argument

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

M State is committed to academic freedom as codified in several sources within the Minnesota State system, including Board policy and the faculty contract.

Minnesota State Board Policy 1B.1 Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination in Employment and Education, Subpart B (23-0107) states, "Minnesota State shall maintain and encourage full freedom of expression, inquiry, teaching and research." This is further articulated in the faculty collective bargaining agreement, Article 23, Section 3 (23-0045), which says the College shall "maintain and encourage full freedom, within the law, of inquiry, teaching and research." Additionally, this section protects a faculty member's right to "discuss his/her own subject in the classroom," along with faculty members' "obligation to respect the dignity of others, to acknowledge their right to express differing opinions, to foster and defend intellectual honesty, freedom of inquiry and instruction."

Academic freedom includes student rights and responsibilities as described in Minnesota State Board Policy 3.1 Student Rights and Responsibilities (23-0108) and the M State Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy (23-0109). This includes freedom to learn, freedom of expression and freedom of association. M State's Student Handbook (23-0106) references both policies and emphasizes the importance of these responsibilities, stating, "The college believes students play a critical role in creating an educational atmosphere that supports these rights for all members of the academic community; thus, we expect students to exercise these freedoms with responsibility."

Sources

- 23-0045 - Contract - MSCF Union Master Contract 2021-2023 - FY23
- 23-0045 - Contract - MSCF Union Master Contract 2021-2023 - FY23 (page number 156)
- 23-0106 - Resource - M State Student Handbook - FY23
- 23-0106 - Resource - M State Student Handbook - FY23 (page number 24)
- 23-0107 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 1B.1 Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination - FY23
- 23-0108 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 3.1 Student Rights and Responsibilities - FY23
- 23-0109 - Policy - M State Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy - FY23

2.E - Core Component 2.E

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

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

Argument

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

The College has established an Institutional Review Board (IRB) to support efforts and provide training for students engaged in research within the context of course projects. This information is communicated to stakeholders through the M State website (23-0145). The IRB is co-chaired by the Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness and a faculty representative. The IRB strives to include one member from a scientific area, one from a non-scientific area and one from outside the institution. The College struggles with filling the latter position on a consistent basis.

Prior to the pandemic, the IRB received approximately 1-2 requests per year for research projects (FY17=2, FY18=2, FY19=1, FY20=1, FY21=0, FY22=1). These requests typically originate from two sources: graduate students from partner universities within the Minnesota State system and M State personnel researching student support needs through external evaluation tools. Additionally, faculty have submitted questions to the IRB regarding ethics of survey research. As a result, the IRB advised faculty regulations concerning exempt status and use of informed consent.

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

To provide students with research and database help, M State's librarian compiled an A-Z database list (23-0148) with general descriptions for each database to help students find the best resources available. Additionally, library staff created two LibGuides, Research Basics (23-0147) and Writing a Research Paper (23-0149), to walk students through the basic process of starting a research project using M State databases and using that information for a final product. If an instructor requests an in-person visit, the librarian speaks to the class and, depending on class needs, provides either an overview of library services and database searching or spends the entire class period on the research process with a comprehensive description of databases and subscriptions (23-0146).

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

M State provides guidance in the ethics of research and use of information resources via two primary sources. The first is training by the College librarian and librarian staff (see 2.E.2), which includes the addressing of specific questions regarding copyrights and resource usage. The second is faculty-to-student communication of M State's Academic Honesty and Integrity Policy (23-0151) in syllabi statements, course discussions and use of TurnItIn. M State acquired a license for TurnItIn in late FY2017 for implementation in FY2018. Use of the software has expanded from 3,699 submissions in the first year (FY18) to 13,738 submissions in FY22 (23-0150).

The M State Center for Teaching and Learning Technology (CTLT) creates and maintains teaching resources, including example syllabi and a syllabus checklist (23-0155) that lists Academic Honesty and Integrity as an essential policy. TurnItIn is used as a tool for evaluating students and for students to self-evaluate their ability to cite material (23-0154).

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

M State's enforcement of this policy is based on the Academic Honesty and Integrity Procedure (23-0152) and occurs at either the course or administrative level. As demonstrated in the sample syllabus taken from an actual M State course, faculty maintain a high degree of latitude in handling violations of academic honesty and integrity (23-0154).

Several recent improvements have been made to the College's process to track academic honesty and integrity violations. First, the College identified inefficiencies using a Qualtrics form to document and track violations over the past several years, and in summer 2021 Maxient software was implemented to track student conduct code and academic integrity violations. To make the form easy to access, faculty are able to report data through a link on the Employee Portal homepage.

Another improvement was updating the Academic Honesty and Integrity Procedure. After full implementation of Maxient, the College revised its former procedure (23-0153), which only required faculty to submit a report when the consequence of the violation resulted in a failing course grade, to encourage reporting of all violations (23-0152). This makes it possible to track overall rates, trends and any students who are persistent violators of the policy.

During the first year of using Maxient, the College was still under the old procedure, limiting reports of violations. During that year, there were 10 violations submitted to academic administration (six for cheating and four for plagiarism). Under the revised Academic Integrity Procedure, the goal is for 100% reporting of violations, even when the incident is resolved between the instructor and student. With implementation of the new procedure expected in fall 2023, academic affairs will review all submissions at the completion of each term to identify trends and students with repeat offenses.

Sources

- 23-0145 - Website - M State Institutional Review Board - FY23
- 23-0146 - Resource - Librarian Classroom Visits - FY19-23
- 23-0147 - Website - LibGuides Research Basics - FY23

- 23-0148 - Website - LibGuides A-Z Databases - FY23
- 23-0149 - Website - LibGuides Writing a Research Paper - FY23
- 23-0150 - Data - TurnItIn Usage - FY23
- 23-0151 - Policy - M State Academic Honesty and Integrity Policy - FY23
- 23-0152 - Procedure - M State Academic Honesty and Integrity Procedure_Revised Version - FY23
- 23-0153 - Procedure - M State Academic Honesty and Integrity Procedure_Prior to Revision - FY23
- 23-0154 - Resource - ENGL 1101 Sample Syllabus - FY23
- 23-0154 - Resource - ENGL 1101 Sample Syllabus - FY23 (page number 5)
- 23-0155 - Resource - Syllabus Checklist - FY23

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Summary

M State operates within the Minnesota State system of colleges and universities. State statutes, Board of Trustees (BOT) policies and system procedures guide the work of the College, along with the College's own mission, vision and values commitments. The system's BOT is autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of all system institutions. BOT policies provide safeguards for ethical and responsible conduct by system institutions to ensure they act with integrity. Day-to-day management of the College is delegated to the M State President.

M State is committed to academic freedom and faculty oversight in academic matters as evident in the faculty contract, Student Handbook and Board policies. The College's Academic Honesty and Integrity Policy and Procedure, libraries, Center for Teaching Learning and Technology, and Institutional Review Board support responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by faculty, staff and students. The College's website is the primary communication tool for presenting accurate, clear and complete information to students and other constituencies.

Sources

There are no sources.

3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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

3.A - Core Component 3.A

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

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

Argument

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

M State courses and programs remain current and appropriate to higher education through several policies and procedures enacted by the College and by the Minnesota State system of colleges and universities.

The Minnesota State Board of Trustees, through Board Policy 3.36 (23-0120), gives M State the authority, as a community and technical college, to confer undergraduate certificates, diplomas, associate of applied science, associate of science, associate of arts and associate of fine arts degrees. Part 4 of the policy (23-0120) states, "The chancellor shall specify the characteristics of academic awards" and maintains authority over approval of academic programs through elaboration of total required credits, required general education coursework and required vocational/technical credits**.** In Part 6 (23-0120), the chancellor outlines the requirements for approval of new academic programs. Additionally, Minnesota State Statute 136F.32 (23-0227) requires that, when feasible, institutions develop certificates or diplomas for technical education programs that lead to a degree.

General education coursework in the Minnesota State system adheres to the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC) and associated goal areas. As specified in Part 3 of Board Procedure 3.36.1 (23-0228), these certificates, diplomas and degrees each have a required number and distribution of credits within MnTC goal areas (23-0065). In addition, Operating Instruction 3.21.1.1 Minnesota Transfer Curriculum Instructions (23-0229) delineates expectations for classes to be assigned a goal area.

M State's Academic Affairs and Standards Council (AASC) approves curriculum as described within the Minnesota State College Faculty (MSCF) contract Article 8, Section 2 (23-0045) and the AASC bylaws (23-0230). AASC membership consists of nine faculty members and four administrators.

Courses and programs are submitted for review in a Curriculum Design and Management (CDM) software program that tracks key elements of courses and programs, including course competencies, program outcomes, mapping of course competencies to program outcomes, rationale for the course or program, descriptions and MnTC goal areas (23-0233). All faculty and staff may comment on proposed courses and programs, but it is the responsibility of AASC members to approve the curriculum. The College also adheres to its Definition of a Credit Hour Policy (23-0231) and Procedure (23-0232), meeting the federal standards of a credit hour.

M State programs and courses remain current through several processes, including input from Program Advisory Committees and by meeting standards set by program accrediting agencies (23-0170). Technical/occupational Program Advisory Committees meet two times per academic year and adhere to the M State Program Advisory Committees Policy (23-0052) as well as Minnesota State system Board Policy 3.30 (23-0049) and Procedure 3.30.1 (23-0050). Advisory board members consist of industry personnel who are active in their fields or retired after a career of distinguished service. Board members review curriculum, provide advice on current and future technical trends and industry needs, and help programs promote opportunities for internships, apprenticeships and cooperative education placements.

Advisory boards recommend actions for programs, which are documented in meeting minutes (23-0255) uploaded by faculty via an online form for academic deans to review. Meeting minutes are also uploaded to the College's assessment software in an attachments repository, so they are easily accessible to all program faculty members. A sampling of advisory board recommendations includes (23-0071):

- Accounting - Updated program and course outcomes to reflect current industry needs.
- Architectural Drafting and Design - Implemented more REVIT software into courses and added a service learning course into the program plan.
- Criminal Justice - Brought staff in for role playing so students get more experience talking to people they don't know when taking a police report.
- Dental - Added more treatment planning instruction and case study assignments, has students do a spelling test for the top 20 dentistry drugs, added curriculum for hands-on experience with oral photographs, and purchased 3D scanners (23-0234).
- Human Resources - Created a new diversity, equity and inclusion assignment to focus on the challenges diverse organizations can encounter, and possible solutions.
- Radiologic Technology - Increased the number of students who can bridge into the program and is considering offering more online courses to reach students working in rural healthcare (lab, nursing).

General education programs fall into two categories at M State: A general liberal arts Associate of Arts degree (required collection of MnTC goal areas) and several Transfer Pathway degrees. The Transfer Pathway degrees were developed through a system office initiative in collaboration with state colleges and universities. These degrees are evaluated for currency and relevancy at the state level using input from each institution (23-0238). Review of these Transfer Pathways occurs locally in the program review process (see 4.A.1) and at the system level to ensure consistency and relevancy across the system. Illustrating the system review process are: A Transfer pathway program review (23-0235), a sample meeting agenda (23-0236) and recommended changes (23-0237, 23-0239).

3.A.2 The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate,

graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate and certificate programs.

M State confers certificates, diplomas and degrees. Learning goals between those credentials are differentiated by course numbering and course competencies. Course numbers that begin with 00 are development courses while courses in the 1000s are generally first-year courses and 2000s are second-year courses. The Academic Affairs and Standards Council (AASC) approves the learning goals for each certificate, diploma and degree, considering the learning level, sequencing and credential being proposed. Learning goals are recorded in a Curriculum Design and Management (CDM) software at the time the course or program is submitted for approval, along with descriptions and rationale (23-0242, 23-0243). Through this process, course competencies are mapped to program outcomes (23-0244). Any M State faculty or staff may comment on course and program proposals for consideration by the program faculty and by AASC.

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

All program and course offerings, regardless of modality or location, adhere to the same outcomes and competencies according to M State's Course Syllabi and Course Outlines Policy (23-0240) and are approved by the Academic Affairs and Standards Council (AASC) as outlined in the Minnesota State College Faculty (MSCF) contract, Article 8, Section 2 (23-0045) and the AASC bylaws (23-0230). Program outcomes are listed on program webpages (23-0245) and course competencies are included in all course outlines (23-0246). Faculty adhere to the same credentialing requirements regardless of modality or location (see 3.C.3).

Course outlines at M State form the basis of all courses and are publicly available. Deans are responsible for instruction within their division, regardless of location or modality, as well as implementing course surveys that are consistent across all modalities (23-0198). See the Course Success by Modality evidence for course success rates by modality and by school, which can be drilled down to the subject and course levels (23-0334).

Many faculty who instruct through different delivery modalities also teach, or have taught, equivalent courses on campus. New faculty are onboarded with the help of the supervising dean and the Center for Teaching and Learning Technology (CTLT). The CTLT is a faculty-led group that helps colleagues incorporate effective teaching practices and support student learning with college-wide curriculum delivery resources, technology and teaching tools, and is currently in the process of creating a mentoring curriculum to further enhance the onboarding experience (23-0276).

The CTLT provides support for faculty across all modalities. All College employees have access to the CTLT Commons (23-0226), a repository of teaching resources such as D2L Brightspace tutorial videos (M State's LMS), software support, professional development opportunities, and updates from administration. The CTLT also addresses topics such as D2L Brightspace governance, software tool adoption and online course engagement (23-0270, 23-0301). The FY23 plan for the CTLT includes developing a holistic strategy to shift the group's focus to comprehensive instructional design (23-0208). The CTLT offers trainings during faculty in-services and through various sessions throughout the year (23-0087, 23-0270). Additionally, the College has recently adopted and is in the process of implementing Class Technologies (23-0271) to improve engagement in online courses.

Due to the demands of ensuring a healthy academic environment during the pandemic, the skilled trades programs diversified their instruction delivery methods to include online and hybrid formats to teach the theoretical aspects of each field. Students and instructors received information and training to assist them in the shift to the online learning environment. Methods used to assist students in accessing instructional materials included the increased use of D2L, where materials in the form of presentations, slide shows, videos and printed materials were posted in a timely manner for students to review and use as study guides. Students and faculty also engaged in online streaming lectures, during which instructors were able to share visuals with the class and respond to questions in real time. In addition, lectures were recorded and posted in D2L. In-person laboratory sessions continued to be offered when social distancing standards could be followed, such as the wearing of approved surgical masks and working at safe distances from peers. Faculty who needed additional assistance in creating online materials, or help posting materials online, were offered training to become competent in ensuring all materials met format requirements and were available to all class members.

M State ensures learning goals are consistent across all forms of dual credit offerings. Dual credit offerings at the College include concurrent enrollment, eCampus in the High School (eCHS) and traditional Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) (23-0241). In eCHS offerings, high school students take online M State courses from College faculty with other regular admission M State students and with all the supports listed in previous paragraphs; however, M State has a specific contract with the high school and the students have designated time to work on coursework during their regular school day. The eCHS contract language also places notable responsibility on a designated high school official to provide ongoing support and assistance to bolster student persistence and success. In the traditional PSEO option, high school students take M State courses with regular admission students either on campus or online.

The College's Concurrent Enrollment Program has a long history of collaborating and building partnerships with school districts in rural west central Minnesota. Founded in 1985 on the Fergus Falls campus, the program has evolved to serve more than 35 school districts and over 1,800 students. In concurrent courses, students are enrolled in courses taught by qualified high school instructors mentored by M State faculty. Mentoring is the primary control M State has with the concurrent program; mentors meet with high school instructors to ensure they understand learning outcomes and collaborate on content and assessment of student learning. The mentoring process includes class observations, meetings to discuss assessments and ad hoc meetings to collaborate on approaches to teaching M State's curriculum (23-0247, 23-0437). M State was one of the first colleges in Minnesota to voluntarily pursue National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships programmatic accreditation and continues to remain in good standing with the organization.

Sources

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- 23-0049 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 3.30 Program Advisory Committee - FY23
- 23-0050 - Procedure - Minnesota State Procedure 3.30.1 Program Advisory Committees - FY23
- 23-0052 - Policy - M State Program Advisory Committees Policy - FY23
- 23-0065 - Resource - Minnesota Transfer Curriculum - FY23

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- 23-0087 - Resource - Faculty In-Service Agendas - FY20-23
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- 23-0170 - Website - Accreditation - FY23
- 23-0198 - Resource - Course Survey - FY23
- 23-0208 - Resource - CTLT Restructure - FY23
- 23-0226 - Website - CTLT Commons Homepage - FY23
- 23-0227 - Statute - Minnesota Statute 136F.32 Degrees Diplomas Certificates - FY23
- 23-0228 - Procedure - Minnesota State Procedure 3.36.1 Academic Programs - FY23
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- 23-0229 - Resource - Minnesota State Operating Instructions 3.21.1.1 MnTC Instructions - FY23
- 23-0230 - Resource - AASC Bylaws - FY23
- 23-0231 - Policy - M State Definition of a Credit Hour Policy - FY23
- 23-0232 - Procedure - M State Definition of a Credit Hour Procedure - FY23
- 23-0233 - Resource - Curriculum Design and Management Homepage - FY23
- 23-0234 - Resource - Dental Advisory Committee Outcome Examples - FY23
- 23-0235 - Resource - Minnesota State Transfer Pathway program Review - FY20
- 23-0236 - Resource - Psychology Transfer Pathway Agenda - FY21
- 23-0237 - Resource - Pilot Transfer Pathway Program Review Recommendations - FY21
- 23-0238 - Resource - Pilot Transfer Pathway Memo - FY23
- 23-0239 - Resource - Pilot Transfer Pathway Community of Practice Recommendations - FY22
- 23-0240 - Policy - M State Course Syllabi and Course Outlines Policy - FY23
- 23-0241 - Resource - K12 Collaborations Programs - FY23
- 23-0242 - Resource - CDM Course Example - FY23
- 23-0243 - Resource - CDM Program Example - FY23
- 23-0244 - Resource - CDM Course Map Example - FY23
- 23-0245 - Website - Program Outcome Webpage Example - FY23
- 23-0246 - Website - Course Competency Example - FY23
- 23-0247 - Website - CEP Mentor Responsibilities - FY23
- 23-0255 - Resource - Advisory Committee Meeting Minute Examples_Compiled - FY20-23
- 23-0270 - Resource - Engagement Online - FY23
- 23-0271 - Resource - Zoom Class Information - FY23
- 23-0276 - Resource - CTLT Newsletter Examples - FY22
- 23-0301 - Presentation - RSI CTLT Presentation - FY23
- 23-0334 - Data - Course Success by Modality - FY23
- 23-0437 - Resource - CEP Mentor Report Examples - FY23

3.B - Core Component 3.B

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

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

Argument

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

M State's general education program is based on Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC) goal areas and indicators (23-0065). As codified in Minnesota State Board Policy 3.21 (23-0089), the MnTC is "a collaborative effort among all Minnesota two- and four-year public colleges and universities to help students transfer their work in general education." The state defines the broad rules assigned to the MnTC in Operating Instructions 3.21.1.1 (23-0088); the College defines specific requirements for programs in M State's General Education Policy (23-0090).

Completion of goal areas is required for a Liberal Arts and Sciences Associate of Arts degree, while a subset of courses and goal areas is required for other programs, according to the General Education Policy and as approved by the Academic Affairs and Standards Council (AASC).

Each goal area includes a description and indicators of what students will be able to do. Course content must address more than half of the indicators by mapping course competencies to the goal area indicators. Goal areas assignments to courses is approved during the curriculum approval process. Courses generally claim only one goal area, but may claim more than one at the discretion of AASC.

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

every college-educated person should possess.

The MnTC general education program is grounded in a framework adopted by the Board of Trustees in 1998. This framework was established to align general education coursework throughout the state and includes 10 primary domains appropriate to the credential level as outlined in the General Education Policy. As this is a statewide general education program, it is explained on several public websites, including the M State website, the Minnesota State website, and the Minnesota Transfer website (23-0092).

Goal areas 1-6 include the core topics of communication, critical thinking, natural sciences, mathematical/logical reasoning, history and the social and behavioral sciences, and humanities and fine arts. Goal areas 7-10 are defined as themes and include human diversity, global perspectives, ethical and civic responsibility, and people and the environment. The College's revised Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), adopted in fall 2022, synthesize the contribution of the goal areas and indicators to four outcomes based on communication, information awareness, scientific enquiry and mathematical reasoning, and equity and inclusion (23-0064).

All degree programs focus their general education studies on developing the "well rounded" individual. General education requirements for all credentials adhere to the General Education Policy, with a goal of helping students achieve a greater view of not only their own careers, but also the societal benefits of having an effectively trained workforce.

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

M State recognizes the need for growth in understanding about the role human and cultural diversity play in developing lifelong skills for living and working in a multicultural world. This understanding is formalized in our mission statement ("We welcome all students"), vision ("A success story for every student") and value of inclusion ("We welcome, respect and accept people for who they are and celebrate the power of our collective differences in creating and shaping more robust, energized communities").

From a curricular perspective, MnTC Goal Area 7 (23-0065) addresses human diversity with a goal "to increase students' understanding of individual and group differences and their knowledge of the traditions and values of various groups in the United States." The M State Assessment Team, in the review of past ILOs, determined that a more direct statement was required and adopted the Equity and Inclusion ILO with the outcome, "Graduates will leave M State understanding the importance of the variety of world views, lifestyles, identities, occupations and commitments that contribute to meaningful lives." While this ILO is substantively covered in Goal Area 7 courses (23-0159), the College is investing in additional opportunities to understand the importance of cultural diversity.

In February 2023, the Minnesota State chancellor sent a memo to system college and university presidents regarding revisions to Goal Area 7: Human Diversity (23-0142), which were recommended by the Minnesota State Taskforce on Law Enforcement Education Reform. Listening sessions with faculty informed the decision to update the goal title to MnTC Goal 7: Human Diversity, Race, Power and Justice in the United States. The goal area is also being restructured to include two options to meet transfer requirements: 1) provide rigorous inclusion of anti-racism and

racial equity issues as primary objectives, and; 2) address marginalized groups through rigorous inclusion of equity issues as objectives of the goal area. System institutions will begin curriculum revisions in fall 2023, with full implementation planned for FY26 ([23-0143](#)).

In operation, we review qualitative and quantitative data to explore and remedy disparate student outcomes and disparate impacts of policy. Additionally, M State has invested in developing an impactful Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) and recently revised ILOs to increase focus on equity and inclusion. Through the strategic planning process and in alignment with the Minnesota State system goal of equitable student outcomes for all populations ([23-0044](#)), M State has devoted resources to disaggregating all data by specific student populations ([23-0041](#)) and implementing programs to decrease equity gaps. The Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Council, established in 2018, has reviewed data on the policy impact to different students ([23-0093](#)). A review of the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy, for example, increased staff awareness of how policies affect students differently (see 4.C.3).

Using Perkins funding, M State evaluated the experiences of underrepresented students in applied technology programs to understand the student experience better ([23-0157](#)). Focus group recommendations led to the College securing grants for intensive and purposeful relationship-based coaching and redesigning student support outreach ([23-0158](#)). A greater emphasis has also been made to use Perkins funds for career-exploration activities, outreach events and professional development opportunities that address technological innovations and new methodologies through an OEI lens. For example, Perkins will fund CTE career exploration activities in rural area high schools as well as registration fees for M State nursing faculty to attend the Health Educators Conference in spring 2023. Agenda topics for the conference include culturally responsive pedagogy, unlocking student engagement through practical active learning tools, and supporting diverse nursing students. Furthermore, M State has secured external resources to support increased diversity in healthcare programs and improve student success ([23-0091](#)).

Over the past several years, M State has increased the resources and voice of the OEI. When the previous director of equity and inclusion left in early 2021, the College elevated the position and secured a dean of equity and inclusion (Cabinet level position) and expanded positions within the office ([23-0266](#)). With these changes, the College has expanded growth opportunities for students and staff. This includes presentations on homelessness, experiences of LGBTQ individuals in the region and experiences of Indigenous peoples in Minnesota ([23-0081](#)). Approximately 300 students, faculty, staff and administrators have already participated in OEI opportunities (in-person, virtually or by watching a recorded session) in FY23.

In addition to providing professional development programs to increase cultural awareness and knowledge, the OEI has engaged in equity work by examining practices within the department of Accessibility Resources to ensure equity and accessibility for students with diverse abilities. The department is practicing caseload management and tracked participation of 211 students needing accommodations at the end of fall semester 2022, or 4% of the student population (including dual enrollment). Accessibility Resources also engages in activities such as student orientations, graduation, campus tours and visiting with prospective students at area high schools to share information and support students' success.

M State has struggled with diverse enrollment in several programs within the School of Applied Technology. As a result, emphasis is being put on attracting underrepresented populations, such as women, people of color, and older populations who would benefit from ongoing training or wish to make a career change. Programming such as summer camps, short courses, campus visits and events

at local public schools is inclusive to all those who desire to explore careers in technical fields. In addition, retraining programs are offered for both credit and non-credit.

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

Faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge appropriate to the M State mission and relevant to a community and technical college setting.

Faculty and students persevered through pandemic-era restrictions and hosted many performances of creative works in music, art and theatre (23-0094).

Faculty also contribute to general scholarly work in teaching and learning as well as discipline-specific scholarship and performative work. Automotive faculty recently secured a National Science Foundation grant for innovative curriculum development and teaching to initiate a servicing program for hybrid and electric vehicles and establish an electric vehicle charging station on the Moorhead campus (23-0034, 23-0084).

Although there is not a concerted college-wide effort to embed service learning or practical experiences into programs, students often partake in these experiences outside of the classroom. For example, students in the Cybersecurity program can participate in the Cyber Defense Competition (23-0102), and students in the Management and Marketing program partner with a local nonprofit to create a marketing plan (23-0101). Humanities and sociology courses collaborate on an Indigenous Nibi Walk of the Pelican River (23-0086), a marketing capstone course includes a mentorship program, nursing students hold blood drives, dental students take part in a "Give Kids a Smile" events (23-0103), and some students participate in camps such as the Herdina Construction Academy, Scrubs Camps, Heart Camp and Seeds for Hope (23-0036).

Faculty often share their research with other faculty at college-wide in-services. Examples of this include Chat GPT, figurative expressions in American English, and methods to increase student engagement with recorded lectures, online discussions and simulation classroom experiences (23-0087).

Sources

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- 23-0034 - Resource - M State Federal Grants Summary - FY23 (page number 2)
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- 23-0065 - Resource - Minnesota Transfer Curriculum - FY23
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- 23-0086 - Resource - Pelican River Nibi Walk - FY23
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- 23-0090 - Policy - M State General Education Policy - FY23
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- 23-0093 - Minutes - Institutional Effectiveness Council SAP Policy Review - FY23
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- 23-0094 - Resource - Fine Arts Performances - FY19-23
- 23-0101 - Resource - Management and Marketing Service Learning Examples - FY23
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- 23-0142 - Resource - Final Revision MnTC Goal 7_Chancellor Memo - FY23
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- 23-0157 - Resource - Cultural Shifts and Challenges to Persist_Data Collection and Analysis - FY21
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- 23-0266 - Resource - Organizational Charts - FY23
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3.C - Core Component 3.C

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

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

Argument

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

As described in 1.C.3, M State's commitment to Equity 2030 and inclusive hiring and retention practices is one of the College's annual strategic priorities (23-0054). M State is committed to equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in employment and education per Minnesota State Board Policy 1B.1 (23-0107) and fully supports the State of Minnesota's affirmative action efforts. The College does not tolerate discrimination on the basis of protected class categories in accordance with all state and federal equal opportunity/affirmative action laws, directives, orders and regulations.

M State's Affirmative Action Plan (23-0177) meets the requirements as set forth in statute, in administrative rule, and by Minnesota Management and Budget. The plan outlines affirmative action goals, timetables, and reasonable and assertive hiring and retention methods to achieve goals to eliminate internal barriers to equal opportunity and remedy the historical underrepresentation of the employment, retention and promotion of qualified persons of color, veterans, persons with disabilities and women.

Inclusive hiring practices (23-0202) have increased the College's percentage of employees of color from 3.2% in FY15 to a high of 6.3% in FY20 (23-0180). The College experienced a slight decrease over the pandemic, being at or near 5% in the last two fiscal years. The Minnesota State system's Equity Scorecard provides key performance indicator data on compositional diversity of faculty and staff compared to students of color, to foster discussions and assist with data-informed decision-making (23-0078). Additionally, system institutions use the Minnesota State Climate Assessment

Framework. The next assessment is planned for FY24 (23-0059).

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

The Minnesota State College Faculty (MSCF) contract clearly specifies contractual release for faculty participation in specific roles as well as minimum ratios of full-time faculty to part-time/adjunct faculty. Additionally, unlimited full-time faculty have an average of 17 years of service. As per Article 20, Section 7 of the contract (23-0045), M State must employ no less than 60% of the total full-time faculty. The percentage of unlimited faculty for the last five fiscal years is:

Unlimited Faculty Fiscal Year Percentages

FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
70.06%	68.39%	70.03%	69.77%	71.51%

MSCF contract Article 11, Section 2 (23-0045) articulates the agreement for faculty teaching in the former Minnesota Community College Faculty Association (MCCFA) Bargaining Unit and MSCF contract Article 11, Section 3 (23-0045) for faculty teaching in the former United Technical Educators (UTCE) bargaining unit.

Contractual Release

The College engages faculty in various non-instructional assignments to provide an opportunity for faculty to have a voice in various facets of the institution. The Academic Affairs and Standards Council (AASC) and Shared Governance Council are contractual and comprised of faculty and administration. For other release credits, the functional administrator identifies the project scope and necessary skill set and then faculty are chosen by an informal application process or special assignment. If faculty do not have the capacity for non-instructional work, they may be re-assigned to a non-instructional project instead of teaching a course, or a secondary faculty member may be selected based on the project scope and skill set required.

Examples of various non-instructional work includes:

- Assessment Team (23-0220)
- Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology (23-0215)
- Chemical Hygiene Officers (23-0214)
- Department/Program Coordinators (23-0218)
- English Language Learner Student Support (23-0221)
- Faculty Tutoring (23-0219)
- Fine Arts Coordinators (23-0216)
- Grant Work Release Time (23-0223)
- Research Projects for Course Improvement (23-0217)

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

consortial offerings.

M State adheres to minimum credentialing requirements and uses an appropriate evaluation process per Minnesota State Board Policy 3.32 Faculty Qualifications (23-0181) and Procedure 3.32.1 (23-0182). These required credentials align with HLC's Assumed Practices regarding faculty roles and qualifications. Final credentialing evaluations are completed by M State's academic human resources division in coordination with the supervising academic dean. For adjunct and part-time faculty, the determination may include assignment of exception criteria. See the Faculty Roster for a list of M State faculty and credentials. After new faculty are hired, their supervising dean completes the New Faculty Onboarding Checklist (23-0178) and the new hires are given the M State Faculty Resource Guide, which includes the College's mission, strategic plan and an overview of important processes.

For concurrent enrollment instructor credentialing, the College falls under the Minnesota State system's deadline extension application approval from HLC. Institutions and corresponding faculty have until September 1, 2025 to meet minimum qualifications of a master's degree in-field, or a master's degree with 18 graduate credits in-field. The College's process for monitoring concurrent enrollment instructor credentials includes a formal review of official college transcripts for credential field minimum qualification determination. Concurrent enrollment instructors who do not meet the minimum qualifications must have a professional development plan in place between the instructor, their respective high school and the College to bring the instructor into full compliance on or before September 1, 2025. An analysis of concurrent enrollment instructor progress toward meeting this deadline can be found in the CEP Credentialing Report (23-0267).

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

M State regularly evaluates faculty according to Minnesota Statute 43A.20 (23-0185), Minnesota State system Board Policy 4.9 Employee Evaluation (23-0183), M State's Employee Evaluation Policy (23-0184) and faculty evaluation process (23-0179), and the faculty contract.

Evaluations of instructors are classified according to the following types: unlimited full-time (UFT), unlimited part-time, fixed-term full-time, fixed-term part-time, temporary part-time, and adjunct (23-0045). Faculty hired under the UFT designation have a three-year probationary term (23-0045). Based on the appointment type, faculty are evaluated according to the M State process (23-0179). Further explanation of the components of the evaluation in the referenced process are as follows:

- Classroom observations of all faculty use a form specific to the modality of the course (23-0186, 23-0187). Non-probationary UFT faculty may select a peer to complete the observation and all other faculty are observed by the dean or the dean's designee.
- All UFT (non-probationary and probationary) complete a self-evaluation (23-0188) and professional development plan (23-0189).
- Course surveys (23-0198) are administered to students as specified in the M State evaluation process (23-0179). The course survey and process are currently being revised to improve response rates and streamline the process (23-0191).
- To conclude the evaluation process, faculty complete a final meeting with their supervising administrator (23-0190).

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

Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology

M State's Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology (CTLT) promotes high-quality instruction by offering cohort-based faculty peer-to-peer support that functions like an evidence-based learning community. The CTLT fosters a culture of creativity, collaborative mentoring, and continuous improvement by providing the knowledge, tools and support that faculty need to reach their fullest potential. The CTLT is committed to principles of diversity, accessibility, academic integrity and instructional development. The CTLT supports all College faculty by:

- Regularly hosting sessions at faculty in-services on topics such as technical skills and strategies for online learning, classroom delivery techniques, student engagement, video production, use of discussion boards, proctoring exams, open education resources and teaching circles (23-0087).
- Mentoring peers to support practice and professional development, training, pedagogical growth opportunities and the acquisition of knowledge and skills to improve teaching, student engagement and instructional adaptability (23-0445).
- Reaching out to new faculty to connect them to CTLT resources and information (23-0444).
- Developing local expertise to undertake projects or series of planned activities to address issues of departmental/programmatic relevance.
- Offering training sessions on focus areas identified by faculty input, such as challenges English language learners face in traditional classrooms.
- Helping faculty apply principles of good course design within a Learning Management System through the "Build a Better Course" program, which includes a faculty peer review of course structure (23-0269).
- Producing monthly newsletters and blogs on challenges and ideas for teaching and learning in traditional and virtual classrooms (23-0276).
- Developing and maintaining resources in a repository hosted by the College's Learning Management System (LMS) (23-0226, 23-0155, 23-0222).

Basic LMS support has recently shifted to the IT department so the CTLT can focus more on pedagogical issues and implementing a mentoring curriculum (23-0208).

Duty Days

All M State faculty are required to attend Administrative Duty Days as part of their contractual agreement with the College (23-0087). Full-time faculty usually need to attend five Duty Days in an academic year; the required number of days for part-time faculty is pro-rated. These professional development events are held in-person or virtually to provide leadership an opportunity to give general College updates and a status report on the strategic plan. A wide range of relevant topics are covered, such as assessment, how to best support student success and meet students' needs inside and outside the classroom, equity and inclusion strategies, open educational resources, tips for teaching English language learners, and how to engage students using technology. Time is also provided for faculty to break out by academic school to collaborate with peers and receive updates from their deans.

Sabbaticals

Minnesota State Board Policy 4.7 Sabbatical Leaves (23-0192) states sabbaticals are provided in order to maintain the high level of academic excellence necessary to meet institutions' missions. Sabbaticals are awarded for various reasons related to scholarly or professional growth, development or renewal, including creative endeavors that promise to enhance the professional effectiveness of the applicant (23-0336).

MSCF Professional Development

MSCF contract, Article 17, Section 1 (23-0045) states:

Each college will allocate faculty development funds at the rate of $250 per each full-time equivalent faculty position at the college during the preceding academic year. The MSCF Chapter shall determine an equitable procedure for the distribution of faculty development funds. These funds are to be used to support the professional development of the faculty, the development needs of the academic departments or areas, and the planned instructional priorities of the college.

Each M State campus has a Faculty Professional Development Committee and process to review funding requests. See 23-0200 for examples of ways M State faculty utilize contractually allocated professional development funds to stay current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles. To supplement these funds, faculty may submit an application to academic affairs leadership to use the faculty travel budget ($17,000 for FY23).

Concurrent Enrollment Mentoring

M State faculty mentors offer ongoing collegial interaction to concurrent enrollment instructors to address discipline-specific course content, course delivery, assessment, evaluation and research and development. In addition, the College hosts an annual professional development day during which concurrent instructors and faculty mentors participate in professional development experiences, including program updates, instructional best practices, discipline-specific mentor meetings, collegial networking, education regarding any new program materials and resources, breakout sessions and panel discussions (23-0036).

The concurrent enrollment faculty mentoring process provides support and guidance to concurrent instructors to ensure quality and college-level rigor in the classroom. When a concurrent enrollment instructor teaches a course for the first time, the mentor will do one pre-class meeting, two classroom observations and three other meetings which may be done in person or using technology. If a concurrent instructor is new to teaching for the program, faculty mentors must also complete an orientation checklist during the pre-class meeting. The orientation covers program expectations, mentor and instructor roles, course curriculum, assessment criteria, pedagogy, and other College and course expectations (23-0194). If a concurrent enrollment instructor previously taught a course, the mentor conducts at least one on-site visit to observe the class and two other meetings that may be done in person or using technology. Virtual visits have been allowed to accommodate for restrictions due to the pandemic.

At the end of each term, faculty mentors submit a report with their observations and meetings to the director of dual enrollment and academic success. If a concurrent instructor is teaching a course for the first time, the faculty mentor also uploads a copy of the course syllabus and orientation checklist through the online report form. If mentors indicate any questions or concerns about a course that require follow-up, the director of dual enrollment and academic success receives an email flagged as being of high importance and then appropriate follow-up is conducted to address the questions or

concerns.

Tuition Waiver at Minnesota State Colleges

MSCF contract, Article 24, Section 3 (23-0045), provides the opportunity for faculty to enroll on a space available basis in courses at any Minnesota State college without payment of tuition. Unlimited full-time, unlimited part-time, and temporary full-time faculty can enroll in up to 24 credits per year, and if the faculty member does not use this option, their spouse or dependents are eligible to take up to 16 tuition-free credits per year. Temporary part-time faculty can also be eligible for waiver benefits; that determination is based on semester-by-semester assignments within the Minnesota State system. See Faculty Tuition Waivers FY19-23 (23-0203) for more details on the number of faculty using the tuition waiver and approved credit totals per FY.

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

MSCF contract Article 11, Section 2 states that each instructor shall post and maintain one office hour or one hour of student availability in some other campus location per week for each three credits taught, to a maximum of 15 credits (23-0045). Additional office hours or student availability may be scheduled at the instructor's option. If a faculty member's entire assignment is online, office hours can be held entirely online. If the entire assignment is on-site, office hours are held entirely on-site. If the assignment is mixed, office hour locations are mixed in reasonable proportions to allow for faculty availability to students. Faculty are encouraged to use M State's Syllabus Checklist, which helps ensure essential information, such as office hours and contact information, is included on the syllabus (23-0155). Additionally, faculty post their office hours in the College's learning management system and/or on their office doors.

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

Staff Qualifications

Staff must meet required qualifications to be considered for a position with the College. Qualifications vary based on the position, and are listed on position descriptions along with preferred credentials and/or experience. Supervisors and employees with a working knowledge of the position provide input on position requirements. The Minnesota State system's staffing division reviews, determines appropriate classification, and approves new position descriptions for staff members, unless the College has delegated authority to do so.

Staff Onboarding

New staff go over onboarding checklists with human resources and their supervisors (23-0205, 23-0204) and complete orientation training in the Enterprise Learning Management system (23-0201), mandatory Minnesota State Compliance Training and department-specific safety training.

Staff Professional Development

M State's Staff Professional Development Policy (23-0196) and Procedure (23-0197) were revised in FY21 to raise the funding limit from $250 to $500 per year, per employee (with additional funding available to support travel expenses), and to make improvements to streamline the process to encourage increased usage of funds. Staff engage in many professional development experiences throughout the year; see 23-0199 for examples. Other training and professional development events include:

- All Employee Annual Compliance Training (23-0201)
- Equity and Inclusion Professional Development (see 1.C)
- Annual Student Affairs Retreats (23-0352)
- Military and Veteran Resources Training (23-0303)
- Prospective Student Outreach Training (23-0302)
- All Staff Development Days and Annual Employee Recognition Celebrations (23-0207)
- Minnesota State Tuition Waivers (23-0337)

Advising Summit

A recent professional development highlight, M State's Advising Summit and Lunch and Learn Sessions, advanced the College's work on Equity 2030 and guided learning pathways. Lunch and Learn topics included advisor technical training and reviewing how advising contributes to students' education, persistence and retention. These sessions culminated in the Advising Summit to identify next steps for drafting an advising model and continuity plan. See the project charter (23-0193) and 5.C.6 for more details regarding ongoing activities and initiatives that resulted from the summit.

Sources

- 23-0036 - Resource - K12 Collaboration Events - FY23
- 23-0036 - Resource - K12 Collaboration Events - FY23 (page number 11)
- 23-0045 - Contract - MSCF Union Master Contract 2021-2023 - FY23
- 23-0045 - Contract - MSCF Union Master Contract 2021-2023 - FY23 (page number 41)
- 23-0045 - Contract - MSCF Union Master Contract 2021-2023 - FY23 (page number 43)
- 23-0045 - Contract - MSCF Union Master Contract 2021-2023 - FY23 (page number 99)
- 23-0045 - Contract - MSCF Union Master Contract 2021-2023 - FY23 (page number 132)
- 23-0045 - Contract - MSCF Union Master Contract 2021-2023 - FY23 (page number 133)
- 23-0045 - Contract - MSCF Union Master Contract 2021-2023 - FY23 (page number 138)
- 23-0045 - Contract - MSCF Union Master Contract 2021-2023 - FY23 (page number 158)
- 23-0054 - Strategic Plan - M State Annual Strategic Plan - FY23
- 23-0059 - Resource - Minnesota State Campus Climate Assessment Framework and Process_Chancellor Memo - FY22
- 23-0078 - Data - Equity Scorecard - FY23
- 23-0087 - Resource - Faculty In-Service Agendas - FY20-23
- 23-0107 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 1B.1 Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination - FY23
- 23-0155 - Resource - Syllabus Checklist - FY23
- 23-0177 - Resource - Affirmative Action Plan - FY23
- 23-0178 - Resource - New Faculty Onboarding Checklist - FY23
- 23-0179 - Resource - Faculty Evaluation Process - FY23
- 23-0179 - Resource - Faculty Evaluation Process - FY23 (page number 2)

- 23-0180 - Data - M State BIPOC Employees - FY23
- 23-0181 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 3.32 Faculty Qualifications - FY23
- 23-0182 - Procedure - Minnesota State Procedure 3.32.1 College Faculty Qualifications - FY23
- 23-0183 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 4.9 Employee Evaluation - FY23
- 23-0184 - Policy - M State Employee Evaluation Policy - FY23
- 23-0185 - Statute - Minnesota Statute 43A.20 Performance Appraisal and Pay - FY23
- 23-0186 - Resource - Classroom Observation Form - FY23
- 23-0187 - Resource - Online Blended Course Review Form - FY23
- 23-0188 - Resource - Faculty Self-Evaluation Form - FY23
- 23-0189 - Resource - Faculty Annual Professional Development Plan Form - FY23
- 23-0190 - Resource - Faculty Administrative Meeting Form - FY23
- 23-0191 - Resource - End of Course Student Surveys Project Charter - FY23
- 23-0192 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 4.7 Sabbatical Leaves - FY23
- 23-0193 - Website - Advising Project Charter - FY23
- 23-0194 - Resource - Concurrent Instructor Orientation and Training Checklist - FY23
- 23-0196 - Policy - M State Staff Professional Development Policy - FY23
- 23-0197 - Procedure - M State Staff Professional Development Procedure - FY23
- 23-0198 - Resource - Course Survey - FY23
- 23-0199 - Resource - Staff Professional Development Examples - FY23
- 23-0200 - Resource - Faculty Professional Development Examples - FY18-23
- 23-0201 - Resource - Annual Compliance Training - FY23
- 23-0202 - Resource - Inclusive Hiring Practices - FY23
- 23-0203 - Resource - Faculty Tuition Waivers - FY19-23
- 23-0204 - Resource - New Employee Onboarding Checklist for Supervisors - FY23
- 23-0205 - Resource - New Employee HR Checklist - FY23
- 23-0207 - Resource - Staff Professional Development Day Agenda Examples - FY20
- 23-0208 - Resource - CTLT Restructure - FY23
- 23-0214 - Resource - Chemical Hygiene Officer RCE Examples - FY23
- 23-0215 - Resource - CTLT RCE Examples - FY23
- 23-0216 - Resource - Fine Arts RCE Examples - FY23
- 23-0217 - Resource - Research Project RCE Example - FY23
- 23-0218 - Resource - Program Coordinator RCE Examples - FY23
- 23-0219 - Resource - Tutoring RCE Examples - FY23
- 23-0220 - Resource - Assessment Team RCE Examples - FY23
- 23-0221 - Resource - English Language Learners Support RCE Example - FY23
- 23-0222 - Resource - Syllabi Statements - FY23
- 23-0223 - Resource - Grant RCE Examples - FY23
- 23-0226 - Website - CTLT Commons Homepage - FY23
- 23-0267 - Resource - CEP Instructor Credentialing Report - FY23
- 23-0269 - Resource - Online Course Peer Review Form - FY23
- 23-0276 - Resource - CTLT Newsletter Examples - FY22
- 23-0302 - Presentation - Prospective Student Outreach - FY23
- 23-0303 - Presentation - Enrollment Manager Training - Military and Veteran Resources - FY23
- 23-0336 - Resource - Faculty Sabbaticals - FY18-23
- 23-0337 - Resource - Staff Tuition Waivers - FY19-23
- 23-0352 - Resource - Student Affairs Retreat Agenda Examples - FY23
- 23-0444 - Resource - CTLT New Faculty Onboarding - FY23
- 23-0445 - Resource - CTLT Mentoring Syllabus - FY23

3.D - Core Component 3.D

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

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

Argument

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

Intake Form

The College deployed a Student Intake Form in spring 2022 to support students on the front end of their M State enrollment (23-0298, 23-0297). Early results indicated 90% of students had at least one need or area about which they wanted additional information. As the spring and summer progressed, completion of the forms slowed, and in review, the College discovered gaps in outreach due to staff attrition, staff not on contract during summer and lack of outreach procedure. Therefore, the College will hold stakeholder meetings to review the Student Intake Form and outreach process; the goal is to improve the process by transitioning to a student success hub customer relationship management system.

Welcome Days

Pre-pandemic, the College and the local Student Government Associations (SGAs) collaborated to create campus-based social events during the first week of the term. During summer 2020, the College branded these events as Spartan Welcome Days and created a series of both real-time and passive virtual events for students. Spartan Welcome Days continues to evolve into a combination of social events, functional services (parking permit distribution, student IDs), and connecting students with the campus and services. Virtual events include a "Town Hall" where students can ask questions prior to the semester and hear from various staff across the College, as well as view informational videos (study skills, support services, academic tips and technology assistance). Live campus events include picnics and social/entertainment experiences. Participation is optional and all students are invited.

Online Orientation

During spring 2022, it was identified that an online orientation for incoming students was needed (23-0261) as part of the student onboarding process, whether the students took courses in-person,

online or a combination of both. The previous online orientation product was discontinued in spring 2021 due to Minnesota State University Mankato ending support for the system. A soft launch of the new online orientation is planned for March 2023, with the goal of full implementation in April 2023. Students will complete the online orientation upon acceptance, prior to class registration.

Student Life

M State has an array of student life programming (23-0077) and conducts semesterly surveys to collect feedback on experiences and inform future programming. The pandemic significantly impacted student engagement and programming, as in-person events and meetings were not allowed. As a result, SGAs collaborated to offer virtual programming, Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) was merged into a single chapter and the first college-wide club was formed.

Student Mental Health and Well-being Support

M State employs three counselors who provide confidential counseling to students to discuss personal, academic and career concerns. Counselors hold individual appointments, conduct crisis intervention, provide workshops and make referrals to off-campus agencies and services.

Counselor/Student Interactions

Note: The number of interactions includes personal,
academic and career counseling.

Calendar Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Number of Interactions	1,280	701	788	712	632

M State surveyed students in fall 2020 to assess the impact of COVID-19 (23-0265). Fifty percent of students responded that mental health was a likely barrier to their success in college. The College's findings were further supported by national trends indicating college students' mental health as being of increasing concern due to the pandemic. As a result, the following systems are now in place to support students' well-being and persistence toward their educational goals:

- Counseling Services – M State used Minnesota State system grant funds FY20-22 to contract with Lutheran Social Services to provide a licensed counselor to augment mental health counseling on the Detroit Lakes and Wadena campuses. Due to the grant ending, the College is maintaining this service with existing College counseling staff.
- CARE Team (23-0256) – In fall 2020, M State enhanced holistic support for students' mental, emotional and physical well-being with the Coordination, Assessment, Response and Education (CARE) Team. Creation of the CARE Team was a response to employee concerns that the situations of students are often complex, and they weren't always sure who could best help a student. A college-wide team approach was developed as a broader support network comprised of counseling, equity and inclusion, housing/student life, social workers and the dean of students. Anyone who has a concern (employee, student, staff, parent, etc.) about a student can submit an online referral to the CARE Team. The referral is assessed by the team to develop an action plan that best serves the student's individual circumstances, and an expert from the team reaches out to the student within 24 hours. The CARE Team has responded to 197 referrals since fall 2020.

- TalkCampus ([23-0258](#)) – CARE Team referrals were reviewed, and the data was coupled with information from student listening sessions and surveys to inform the decision to contract with TalkCampus to complement on-campus mental health support. TalkCampus was launched in fall 2021 to give M State students 24/7 free access to a safe and moderated mobile app platform. This provides real time crisis interventions and escalation services for mental health situations, peer social connection opportunities and a support system to increase students' ability to cope.

Food, Housing and Homelessness Insecurities

M State participated in a fall 2021 Institutional Capacity Building Cohort and administered a Hope Center student basic needs survey ([23-0176](#)). Sixty-five percent of students who responded to the survey reported experiencing at least one form of basic needs insecurity in the last year. Students aged 25 or older reported higher rates of housing financial insecurities (e.g. borrowing money to pay bills, not being able to pay for utilities or rent) and receiving public assistance (e.g. Medicaid, food stamps, WIC, etc.).

The College has collaborated with community partners and provided the following to address student insecurities:

- Food Pantries ([23-0098](#)) – The Hope Center survey showed 44% of students responded that, within the prior 30 days, it was 'often true' or 'sometimes true' they worried about food running out before getting money to buy more (92% of SOC), and 51% indicated cutting the size of their meals or skipping meals because there wasn't enough money for food (62% SOC). Although the College had food shelves, it became a priority to expand and dedicate space to distribute food to students on each campus to alleviate stress associated with food insecurity, reduce hunger and support educational success. The student advocacy group Lead MN recognizes M State as a Hunger Free Campus for the College's commitment to ensure students' food needs are addressed ([23-0099](#)).
- Social Workers – M State employs two social workers to support students on all campuses by working with a variety of community agencies and making referrals to help students connect to resources and programs for housing, food, transportation, etc.

Social Worker/Student Interactions

Calendar Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Number of Interactions	262	305	332	446	222

- Ruby's Pantry – Two of the four M State campuses partnered with Ruby's Pantry, a nonprofit organization that gathers food overages for distribution through pop-up pantries open to students and the community. A total of 21,424 shares over 78 monthly events were distributed. (see 1.C.1 for more information)
- Jeremiah Program – This program serves Fargo-Moorhead to provide opportunities and tools for young mothers to be successful in a supportive and educational environment and disrupt the cycle of poverty. Since 2018, there have been 38 women of which six have graduated from the Jeremiah program.
- Menstrual Equity (Aunt Flow) – All M State campuses provide free menstrual products using

Aunt Flow. Menstrual products are not covered by food stamps or WIC and research shows no-cost menstrual products positively impact student retention. In October 2021, the Awesome Foundation awarded a $1,000 grant to support this program. The College has purchased 13,500 products (7,500 tampons/6,000 pads) for distribution across the four campuses (23-0257).

- Basic Needs Webpage – In fall 2021, a webpage was created with information on M State and community resources to assist with removal of non-academic barriers (23-0264). Information is provided regarding a collaboration between the United Way, Minnesota State and M State that features a '211' number students can call to receive assistance and connect to resources.
- Continuous Improvement – In fall 2022, M State surveyed students on current basic needs supports, how they access services, and awareness about available services. See page 2 of the Student Support Survey Summary for opportunities the College plans to explore (23-0272).

Housing

M State's Fergus Falls campus has college-owned residential housing consisting of four buildings that make up Williams Hillside Village and a single building named College Manor. On-campus housing has seen a steady increase in occupancy over the past few years (23-0260). Current occupancy is 121 beds. Each bedroom is single occupancy and each apartment has a shared kitchen, common space and bathroom. During AY22 the Office of Campus Life and Housing implemented a survey for on-campus residents (23-0263). Survey results indicated satisfaction with apartments, but dissatisfaction with furniture and response times to requests. The College responded by investing in reducing deferred maintenance and improving housing units. The survey will be re-administered in spring 2023 to see if these changes have been effective in improving student experiences.

For over a decade, there has been an agreement between M State and Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM) to provide students of the M State-Moorhead campus the option to live in residence halls at MSUM. MSUM manages the contractual relationships with students.

PDEV 1101 Campus Life - Active Living

Campus Life - Active Living helps M State students strengthen and develop college-level critical and creative thinking skills, make social adaptations to a new environment and connect with faculty, staff and resources (23-0274). Student athletes living in campus housing are especially encouraged to take the course to ease with the transition and develop tools to be successful; 78% of students living in campus housing are student athletes.

Laptop Loaner Program, Wi-Fi Hotspots and Emergency Aid Grants

The pandemic caused many courses to be held online and/or as a hybrid, and some students did not have access to the technology necessary to continue their academic pursuits. Therefore, $175,000 in Cares Act funding was used to purchase 500 laptops to expand the College's loaner laptop program to support students with a demonstrated technology need (23-0299, 23-0095). Another 85 laptops were added to the program and M State also established 'Park-and-Learn' Wi-Fi hot spots in the parking lots of each campus to address technology insecurities. In addition, through emergency aid grants, $5,743,624 was given to students through direct deposit and $661,565 through application (23-0259).

Other Notable Improvements

- Dissolution of Access Codes – Access codes are no longer needed for continuing students to register for courses. The decision was made after identifying access codes as a barrier when students couldn't connect with their advisor and were unable to register, which limited their course options. Access codes are still needed for new students to ensure they meet with an advisor about their academic plans.
- Return to Good Academic Standing Letters – In fall 2020, the office of the dean of students began mailing letters to students who return to Good Academic Standing after being on Academic Warning or Academic Probation. Since then, 340 students on Academic Probation and 250 students on Academic Warning have received letters to congratulate them on their hard work and perseverance.
- Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Webpage Development (23-0262) – The SAP appeal review team learned students sitting out on suspension were at a disadvantage because the SAP appeal deadline was not published in an easily accessible place on the College's website. The dean of students and interim director of financial aid and records made the decision to create SAP-specific webpages with the SAP appeal deadlines, Maximum Time Frame information, meaning of SAP, appeal resources and a link to the SAP Appeal preparation guide. The goal is to have all webpages created prior to the next SAP measuring period in May 2023. (See 4.C.3 for more information about SAP policy and process improvements)

Future Direction

- Student Health Survey – In spring 2023, the College plans to administer the Boynton Student Health survey and use food insecurity responses to inform future actions concerning food insecurity.
- Student Engagement Survey – In fall 2023, the College plans to administer a Student Engagement Survey to assess how students want to be involved and how the College can create more meaningful student activities that enhance the student experience.
- Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System – In preparation for the development of a new student success hub CRM system, the College plans to hold meetings with stakeholders to revamp the Student Intake Form. This will include reviewing questions on the form, developing an outreach process, and creating resource and information lists for student need areas.

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

Developmental Education

Assessment for Course Placement and Multiple Measures – M State follows Minnesota State Procedure 3.3.1 Assessment for Course Placement (23-0315) and the M State Assessment for Course Placement Policy (23-0314) when entering students into courses. Students' course placement may be determined by:

- Scores from ACT, SAT and/or the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA)
- Accuplacer assessment
- High school GPA for students who have graduated from high school within the last 10 years (transcript or self-reported)
- Completion of college-level coursework from an accredited college or university
- Guided self-placement (23-0313)

English and Math Coursework – The College has been involved in Minnesota State system-wide work to improve student completion of developmental education and entry into college-level courses by focusing on accelerating curriculum (23-0321). M State general education faculty in English and mathematics engaged in a data-informed redesign of developmental education curriculum. See 4.C.3 for more information.

- Math faculty created a sequence of eight-week courses that resulted in improved success rates by more than 15%, reduction in course withdrawal rates by more than 10%, and year-over-year improvements in persistence.
- English faculty created a corequisite Accelerated English course to prepare students for college-level reading and writing tasks across all disciplines (23-0338). Pairing developmental and college-level English courses has yielded only marginal improvements in student success.

English Language Learner (ELL) Curriculum

The College also supported the development of online versions of the ELL sequence, including the creation of customized multimedia content, to deliver language support to all students. In addition, M State has developed and offered English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses that focus on academic language and vocabulary, allowing students with conversational fluency to pair EAP with key gateway courses, giving students access to the mainstream college classroom in their first semester, with personalized support (23-0035). M State's ELL program also extends into the community; the director visits high schools and provides on-site language placement and coaching to students.

Accessibility Resources (AR)

The College is committed to removing disability-related barriers to provide equal access to students with disabilities (23-0316). The AR office is positioned under the Office of Equity and Inclusion to put a greater focus on equal access (23-0266). The AR office determines accommodations, provides assistive technology (screen readers, listening devices, smart pens, audio books, etc.), and various resources to meet students' needs in accordance with Minnesota State Board Policy 1B.4 Access and Accommodation for Individuals with Disabilities (23-0138) and American with Disabilities Act of 1990**.** college-wide, 211 students, or 4% of the student population (including dual enrollment), were receiving AR services at the end of fall semester 2022.

Tutoring on campus and online

Students at M State are provided academic support by professional staff, faculty, peer tutors and an online tutoring service. Academic Specialists are located on each of the campus' libraries, providing both in-person and online tutoring. Peer tutoring is available by appointment through bookings.com (23-0320), with course offerings and locations varying each semester, while Tutor.com is an online tutoring service students can access 24/7 (23-0317). Through the FY19 administration of the Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI), academic services had a low performance gap of 0.43 and tutoring services a gap of 0.50, indicating satisfaction with M State services (23-0388).

In FY23, more than 1,650 individual and group tutoring sessions have been conducted since the beginning of the academic year with academic support staff. The top three areas of tutoring needs are: student success (30%), math (27%), and writing (14%).

Of the students using Tutor.com, 97% reported they were glad the College offers the service; 92% felt it helped with their grades and 93% were more confident in their school work. The top subjects so far in FY23 are math (110 hours), science (63) and writing (29.28).

Tutor.com Usage Data
August - February 2023

Number of New Accounts	Sessions	Ave. Session Length	Essay Reviews
385	499	29.19 minutes	77

Future Improvements

- Accessibility Resources – Future focus will be on improving the process to gather caseload data and using the data to support decision-making, streamline services and enhance education of services (developing faculty resources and providing professional development opportunities, etc.).
- Developmental Education – The College will continue to actively participate in the Minnesota State system's Developmental Education Corequisite Model implementation for English and math (23-0321). The vice president of academic affairs will serve on the state steering committee in spring 2023 to help develop the system-wide implementation plan for fall 2026.

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

Advising Model

M State uses a Shared Supplemental Advising model. There are 10 professional advisors located across the four campuses who are responsible for advising students in transfer and selective admission programs. Career and technical faculty are responsible for advising students in their programs. Professional advisors liaison with program faculty advisors to ensure sharing of information to better support career and technical program students, especially when faculty are off contract. A recent change has been to better align advisors within the five 'schools of' model. The day-to-day practice of professional advisors is guided by the advising syllabus, which was recently revised and is routinely updated to ensure information and processes are accurate. Advisors are available to meet with students in person, via phone or online using an individual or College advising Zoom room. Overall, based on results from the SSI, students are satisfied with advising, with an overall gap of 0.47 compared to a national average of 0.75 (23-0388).

Prospective Students

Enrollment managers on each campus work with prospective students to explain program options and ensure alignment with the students' interests and goals. Employees working with prospective students are trained during onboarding and regularly thereafter depending on the staff's position (23-0350, 23-0302).

Accepted Students

Before they register for their first semester, new students meet with an academic advisor at either an enrollment event or individual new student appointment, to ensure they are in an appropriate major. It is mandatory for new students to meet with an advisor before registering for first-semester courses; at this meeting, advisors provide the access code needed to register. At this meeting, or at a new student registration, students also receive information and resources about financial aid, student clubs and involvement, social work, counseling, accessibility resources, academic support services (such as tutoring), how to access and navigate their student e-services account, etc. Students also receive timely emails with information as they prepare to start their first semester.

First Semester Check-In (FSCI)

New liberal arts and transfer pathway students have an FSCI with a professional academic advisor to develop an academic plan (23-0322). To increase understanding and engagement and help student achieve academic success, degree requirements and planning tools are discussed (Degree Audit [23-0324], Academic Advising Syllabus [23-0323] and program plan [23-0325]). The goal is to meet with students in the first half of the semester to gauge how they are adjusting and catch any concerns early. Many topics such as study habits, family support, previous coursework and identifying strengths/areas of opportunity are reviewed to assist students with creating a holistic plan through graduation.

Advisors may refer students to other departments at the FSCI if additional support is needed, such as:

- Financial Aid (FA) – FA questions or completion of FA process
- Tutoring Services – Current or past academic struggles
- Career Counseling – Undecided or unsure of current career path
- Social Workers and CARE Team – basic needs assistance
- Career Services – Employment or internship opportunities

Students leave the FSCI with a plan for upcoming semesters (23-0326) and are invited to visit with an academic advisor throughout the semester if they have questions or concerns (23-0331). See 4.C.3 for more information.

Academic Performance Alert system

An Academic Performance Alert system is deployed each semester to identify students at risk of not persisting toward their academic goals (23-0327). There are two types of entries that can be submitted – scheduled academic progress checks (23-0328) and general concerns (23-0329). Staff are organized hierarchically to ensure all students across campuses receive the same level of support for outreach to occur within 48 hours, while connecting staff with students they may have already built relationships with

After the first year of implementation, the team surveyed (23-0332, 23-0333) faculty and staff to identify areas of improvement and assist in exposure to the new system. Ongoing feedback and suggestions are encouraged through reminder emails and the workgroup has implemented many improvements based on input (23-0275). Each semester the workgroup analyzes the data of faculty participation, responding staff progress, and closures of alerts (23-0330). See 4.C.3 for more information about how this system has evolved to better serve students.

Career Life Planning

Students who are undecided about a major are advised to enroll in M State's Career Life Planning course to further explore interests and develop career goals (23-0273). This two-credit class can be taken in-person on M State's Moorhead campus or online. It's designed to assist students with career exploration skills and strategies through self-exploration, cultural perceptions and career and major identification.

Students can also meet with counselors individually. During in-person or online appointments, counselors utilize the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and the Strong Interest Inventory (SII) to help students learn about themselves and how their personality, interests and skills relate to the world of work. Counselors guide students in career exploration from survey results and assist with clarifying educational goals, identifying program options, making decisions about degrees and selecting courses.

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

Labs, Equipment and Clinical Sites

M State has well-equipped laboratory spaces conducive to effective teaching and learning on each campus for biology, chemistry, physics, applied technology programs and health sciences programs (23-0312). An array of hands-on learning equipment is available in labs to give students opportunities to practice skills, such as the X-ray phantoms in Radiologic Technology's X-ray labs, equipment in the state-of-the-art Nursing Simulation Center and equipment in the Transportation Center (23-0339, 23-0340). Most recently, in 2023, a new dental simulation lab was created and equipped on the Moorhead campus.

In addition to labs located on our campuses, health sciences programs require clinical practice/internship/field experiences at area healthcare sites, most of which have additional lab spaces. M State benefits from excellent working relationships with healthcare providers in the region.

Specialized Learning Spaces

- Electrical Lineworker Training Site - A 90-acre training site adjacent to the Wadena campus allows students to practice pole climbing, line construction and bucket-truck operation (23-0318).
- Transportation Center - Nearly 46,000 square feet of lab and classroom space on the Moorhead campus is designated to hands-on learning for transportation programs. Students prepare for high-tech jobs by working with state-of-the-art equipment, not simulators. Eighteen hoists and five dedicated alignment machines are available for Automotive Technology students and 12 overheads hoists are available for Diesel Technology students during overhaul classes. In fall 2020, M State's Diesel Technology program became the first program in the region to supply needed tools for second-year students.

Libraries

Each M State campus has its own library with staff that strive to welcome students and provide an inclusive environment committed to embracing, nurturing and developing independent learners. The libraries offer a variety of services, such as research assistance, tutoring and proctoring, along with

resources like database collections of articles, videos, eBooks, online resources for courses and open educational resources (23-0319). The libraries offer over 17,900 square feet of combined space (Detroit Lakes 2,856, Fergus Falls 4,560, Moorhead 6,909, Wadena 3,518), including designated study room areas and computer labs.

Fine Arts Spaces

The Fergus Falls campus supports fine arts classes and experiences with a 253-seat Waage Theater, 800-square-foot Waage Lobby and Fine Art Gallery, 1,594-square-foot Ceramics classroom and studio, 1,040-square-foot painting and drawing classroom and 1,950-square-foot music rehearsal room. Additionally, the campus has 4,917 square feet of special events space, Legacy Hall, used for performances (23-0094).

Athletic and Fitness Spaces

For physical education courses and to support athletic teams, the Fergus Falls campus maintains a 9,350-square-foot gymnasium, 815-square-foot weight room, 540-square-foot fitness room, golf simulation room and football, baseball and softball athletic fields.

The Moorhead campus has a 2,058-square-foot fitness center, funded and operated by student fees. It includes an array of exercise equipment (treadmills, ellipticals, stationary bikes), freestanding machines, free weights, and studio space for specialized classes.

Technological Infrastructure

The College has built its computer network and infrastructure on a solid foundation, with a budget sufficient to upgrade and replace equipment as it reaches end-of-life to ensure staff, faculty and students can continue to rely on the resources in place. The vice president of institutional effectiveness and technology, director of computer help centers and director of applications and infrastructure, along with three functional leads, provide direction for and oversee operations related to the College's technological infrastructure. Remote access to this infrastructure is available to all students, faculty and staff from any location through the internet via a Virtual Private Network (VPN) connection, allowing full access to all locations, systems and data. Students and employees securely access the College's web portals to connect to the same resources available on-campus.

As a part of the Minnesota State system, M State utilizes Microsoft 365 (including Teams and Office), D2L Brightspace as a learning management system, and Zoom as a video conferencing platform. Email, calendars, contacts, tasks, emergency alert systems and other management systems remain accessible using Cloud-based services such as Microsoft Office 365 and Blackboard Connect. In addition, the College provides standard classroom equipment, such as projectors and audio equipment, and some rooms are also equipped with document cameras. Other classrooms employ devices capable of synchronous Zoom courses or recording. Implementation and use of these classrooms is in coordination with the Learning Network of Minnesota (see 5.B.1). On each campus, certain curricular offerings have program-specific computer labs, and each campus has computers available for student use in the library as well as in general computer labs. As described in 5.B.1., each campus has a modern Wi-Fi network.

Availability of services is a high priority for the College. The information technology team virtualizes most campus servers and systems. This improves availability, lowers maintenance, eases backup management and decreases power and cooling needs for the College's data centers. The College uses

Cloud-based services to house some of these systems, in addition to the College's website as warranted to further improve reliability for students and employees.

The College follows a computer and information technology equipment standards and refresh process to ensure the regular upgrade of information technology equipment and systems. This process ensures computers and devices in labs, libraries, classrooms and offices stay up to date with current operating systems, software and security. The College places a high priority on the security of its technological infrastructure and uses various policies and processes to ensure the devices are kept updated and secure. Telecom and telecommunications systems remain available on all campuses. A Cisco phone system allows calls between campuses to be toll-free and clear using our internal Internet Protocol network. This network also allows use of a computer softphone/chat/voicemail application to improve communications.

For more information on the future direction of M State technology and security, see 5.B.1. and 5.C.5.

Sources

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- 23-0077 - Resource - M State Student Organizations and Clubs - FY23
- 23-0094 - Resource - Fine Arts Performances - FY19-23
- 23-0095 - Resource - M State News_Free Laptops_CARES Act - FY21
- 23-0098 - Website - Food Pantry Project Charter - FY23
- 23-0099 - Resource - M State News_Hunger Free Campus - FY22
- 23-0138 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 1B.4 Access and Accommodation - FY23
- 23-0176 - Data - Hope Center ICBC Survey Results - FY22
- 23-0256 - Website - CARE Team Project Charter_Postcard_Referral Form_Website - FY20-23
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- 23-0258 - Website - TalkCampus Project Charter - FY22
- 23-0259 - Resource - COVID-19 Emergency Aid Grants - FY20-23
- 23-0260 - Resource - Housing - FY23
- 23-0261 - Website - Online Orientation Project Charter - FY23
- 23-0262 - Website - Help Article - Appealing a Suspension - FY23
- 23-0263 - Data - Campus Life and Housing Survey - FY22
- 23-0264 - Website - Basic Needs Support Website - FY23
- 23-0265 - Data - COVID Student Impact Survey - FY21
- 23-0266 - Resource - Organizational Charts - FY23
- 23-0266 - Resource - Organizational Charts - FY23 (page number 9)
- 23-0272 - Data - Student Support Survey Summary - FY23
- 23-0273 - Resource - PDEV 1113 Career Life Planning Course Description - FY23
- 23-0274 - Resource - PDEV 1101 Campus Life Active Living Course Description - FY23
- 23-0275 - Resource - Early Alert Workgroup Improvements - FY23
- 23-0297 - Website - New Student Intake Form - FY23
- 23-0298 - Website - New Student Intake Form Project Charter - FY23
- 23-0299 - Website - Laptop Loaner Program Project Charter - FY23
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- 23-0314 - Policy - M State Assessment for Course Placement Policy - FY23
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- 23-0316 - Resource - Accessibility Resources Student Handbook - FY23
- 23-0317 - Data - Tutor.com Report Examples - FY23
- 23-0318 - Website - Electrical Technology Program Page - FY23
- 23-0319 - Website - Library Homepage - FY23
- 23-0320 - Website - Bookings.com - FY23
- 23-0321 - Resource - Developmental Education Corequisite Model Implementation Plan - FY22
- 23-0322 - Resource - FSCI Advisor Appointment Guide - FY23
- 23-0323 - Resource - Academic Advising Syllabus - FY23
- 23-0324 - Resource - Degree Audit Examples - FY23
- 23-0325 - Resource - FSCI Program Plan Notes - FY23
- 23-0326 - Resource - Academic Planning Guide - FY23
- 23-0327 - Presentation - Early Alert Overview - FY21
- 23-0328 - Resource - Early Alert Progress Check Instructions - FY23
- 23-0329 - Resource - Early Alert Progress Concerns Instructions - FY23
- 23-0330 - Data - Early Alert Dashboard Data - FY23
- 23-0331 - Email - Example FSCI Follow-up Email - FY23
- 23-0332 - Data - Early Alert Faculty Survey Results - FY21
- 23-0333 - Data - Early Alert Staff Survey Results - FY21
- 23-0338 - Resource - ENGL 0098 Accelerated English Course Description - FY23
- 23-0339 - Resource - M State Equipment List - FY23
- 23-0340 - Website - Transportation Center - FY23
- 23-0350 - Policy - M State Recruitment of Students Policy - FY23
- 23-0388 - Data - Student Satisfaction Inventory Results - FY19
- 23-0388 - Data - Student Satisfaction Inventory Results - FY19 (page number 15)
- 23-0388 - Data - Student Satisfaction Inventory Results - FY19 (page number 16)

3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Summary

The curriculum at M State is governed by Minnesota State board policy and system procedures, as well as through the faculty collective bargaining agreement. The state system's Academic Affairs and Standards Council approves courses and programs for implementation in all modes of delivery and across all locations. Learning goals are determined during the approval process and are differentiated based on the level of credential.

The general education curriculum at M State is a part of the system-wide Minnesota Transfer Curriculum. Covering 10 primary domains, this curriculum imparts broad knowledge and concepts to students, with one component devoted specifically to human diversity and understanding group differences. This general education curriculum is supplemented by offerings from the Office of Equity and Inclusion that are available to all students and staff. Furthermore, M State seeks many operational improvements to enhance program diversity and equitable outcomes for all students.

The College has a high percentage of full-time faculty and follows stipulations in the collective bargaining agreement, including appropriate levels of faculty release to accomplish non-classroom roles. Faculty are credentialed through a statewide process and evaluated regularly in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement. Through several contractual and non-contractual programs, M State ensures that faculty have the necessary resources to stay current in their disciplines and teaching roles.

M State further ensures the quality of the education it provides by evaluating student needs and using institutional resources to support student learning and effective teaching. The implementation of both internal and external surveys have prompted additional investments in the support of students' basic needs. In addition, the College has improved preparatory instruction for students through evaluation of its course placement processes and developmental education model. Academic advising is shared among professional advisors and faculty advisors. Several initiatives have improved student success, including implementing drop-in academic support via Zoom, the use of early alerts, and a First Semester Check-In process. Students are also supported through appropriate learning spaces, academic resources, equipment, physical spaces and IT infrastructure.

Sources

There are no sources.

4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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

4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

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

Argument

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

M State ensures the quality of educational offerings using policy and procedure to guide institutional action. The College adheres to Minnesota State system policy for the transcription of prior learning or transfer credit, and maintains authority over courses, student learning, learning resources, and faculty qualifications. The College also evaluates the success of its graduates.

M State excels with specialized accreditors in several program areas (23-0170). Adhering to a program review schedule has been a challenge for several years, but the College is making significant strides in demonstrating the importance of the process, utilizing direct and indirect measures of student learning, and evaluating performance of different student populations.

The College has long struggled with completion and follow-through of academic program review. Adherence to the schedule improved in the past five years but progress was slowed by the pandemic. During prior reviews, reviewers noted a lack of program review in general education programming

that does not lead to a degree (subsequently denoted as disciplines). During the pandemic, M State faculty and staff modified the program review forms to address nuances of general education disciplines.

Programs are scheduled for program review every three years (23-0277). The process includes an analysis of enrollment trends, student demographics, student success metrics and a self-study. The Institutional Research office completes a data book for each program with preliminary analysis of indirect measures of student success as applicable to the program or discipline (23-0278). The self-study document addresses the program's statement of purpose, advising approaches, analysis of enrollment and indirect student success measures, accuracy of website content, curriculum, advisory committees, assessment of student learning, and strategic directions for the program or discipline (23-0279, 23-0280).

Each program review is completed by faculty in coordination with the dean of the program. A review committee, composed of M State faculty and staff, reviews the self-study, participates in a program review presentation by faculty, and provides feedback to the dean on future direction. At the end of the program review, the dean and faculty agree on an action plan to be implemented over the next 2-3 years. Program reviews can identify key gaps in student learning, so action plans often address these gaps. See below for program review examples:

- Accounting (23-0354)
- Biology (23-0353)
- Business (23-0357)
- Communication (23-0436)
- Electrical Technology (23-0438)
- Psychology (23-0356)
- Radiologic Technology (23-0355)

Continuous Improvement

There are two main improvements to the program review process that the College is currently implementing. The first is continuous improvement in the quality of program review documentation and depth of self-study. The second improvement stemmed from an analysis of the program review process during fall 2022, when the Office of Institutional Effectiveness noted that completion of the documentation often stalled near the end of the process. To address both issues, the Vice President of Academic Affairs is preparing an end of term report on the status of all program reviews, providing completed program reviews to the President's Cabinet for final approval, including all action items and resource requests, as well as an executive summary of all requested changes.

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

M State evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.

The College uses its Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) Policy (23-0281) and Minnesota State system Board Policy 3.35 Credit for Prior Learning (23-0292) to allow students to demonstrate their learning

of course-specific outcomes through alternative pathways. CPL assessment recognizes that skills and knowledge gained through life, work, military and community-based experiences may allow them to earn academic credit for knowledge and skills they already possess. Through CPL assessment, learning gained outside the traditional classroom is evaluated by faculty in the discipline.

Students may earn academic credit in certain courses if an instructor determines that a student's learning can be assessed to the level and equivalence of an M State course. While instructors may evaluate student portfolios to determine CPL, most of the College's awarding of CPL credits occurs through credit by examination, in which a student must successfully complete an instructor-developed assessment or submit a standardized assessment result, such as a College Level Examination Program or DANTES Subject Standardized Test. After an evaluation by a faculty member, the College's CPL process awards the student a mark of CR for credit earned or NC for credit attempted and not earned.

Continuous Improvement

M State understands the importance of CPL to help fulfill the College's mission, positively affect retention and persistence rates, strengthen external partnerships, reduce equity gaps and serve the adult student. Therefore, the College's FY23 strategic plan includes hiring a CPL director to coordinate, direct and oversee all CPL activities, including strategy and policy, support for students, faculty and staff training, internal and external relationship management, and program evaluation (23-0054). The initial duties of the director will include identifying resource needs and appropriate institutional investment, creating a steering committee to guide and accomplish implementation of CPL activities, and develop or revise policy, procedures and guidelines for CPL implementation.

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

The College follows its Transfer of Credit Policy (23-0282), Transfer of Credit Procedure (23-0283) and corresponding Minnesota State system policies and procedures to facilitate student transfer (23-0089, 23-0291, 23-0285). Students submit official transcripts to the transfer specialist, who reviews the transcripts and awards transfer credits according to College and system-level policies. Upon completion, students are notified via email to view their interactive Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS) audit to see how the College has awarded transfer credits and are encouraged to ask questions. Courses may transfer as equivalent courses to a program requirement, as transfer curriculum courses through the statewide Minnesota Transfer Curriculum, or as elective courses.

If a student disagrees with a transfer decision, a Transfer Review and Appeal tool is accessible in the student's eServices account. Transfer Review is a guided, step-by-step process that allows students to view their DARS audit, select courses for further review, and upload documentation such as a course outline. Students can save their progress and return to the tool if additional time is needed to gather information. If the decision made via the Transfer Review tool is not to their satisfaction, students are invited to return to the tool to add additional documentation and their rationale for an appeal to the College's Vice President of Student Success, and to follow the next steps for a system-level appeal if needed.

The College publishes information about course transfer on its website (23-0284), including the online transfer references made available through the Minnesota State system. These online resources contain relevant policies, course equivalency information and degree planning information.

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

M State 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. M State also ensures that its dual credit courses and programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.

The Academic Affairs and Standards Council (AASC) "provides direction for the College president in all academic matters" as explained in the council bylaws (23-0230). The existence of AASC is codified into the Minnesota State College Faculty (MSCF) contract, Article 8, Section 2 (23-0045). In practice, AASC, composed of nine faculty and four administrators, approves all courses and programs, including but not limited to course prerequisites and course outcomes (and thereby course rigor and expectations for student learning). For each course, departments develop outlines approved by AASC (Article 23, Section 4, Subd. 4 (23-0045)) and include a course description, pre- or co-requisites and course competencies (23-0293). All course offerings, regardless of modality, adhere to the same course competencies, according to the Course Syllabi and Course Outlines Policy (23-0240), and are approved by the AASC as outlined in the MSCF contract, Article 8, Section 2 (23-0045).

M State faculty are appointed and credentialed through the process outlined in the MSCF contract, Article 20 (23-0045). Additional information on faculty credentialing, including the board policy, board procedure and credential fields, can be found on Minnesota State's College Faculty Credentialing website (23-0294). According to System Procedure 3.32.1 (23-0182), adjunct and part-time faculty are evaluated by M State while full-time faculty are evaluated at both the college and system levels.

Dual Credit Programming

M State offers three types of dual credit offerings (23-0241). In the first two types, eCollege in the High School (eCHS) and Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO), high school students participate in course sections with post-secondary students. In eCHS offerings, courses are delivered through distance learning; however, the high school students have dedicated class periods at their high school to work on the courses. In PSEO, students attend courses on campus.

The third type of dual credit offering is the Concurrent Enrollment Program (CEP), in which M State courses are taught at a high school by a qualified high school instructor. The College takes pride in developing collaborative relationships with high schools to provide eligible students with rigorous college course work. M State faculty collaborate with high school instructors on content, delivery and assessment (see 3.C.3 for details about CEP instructor qualifications and 3.A.3 for faculty mentoring). In AY23, the College is partnering with 38 high schools, 91 concurrent enrollment instructors and 35 M State faculty mentors in 15 different disciplines. In AY22, the program had a total headcount of 1,836 students taking 14,259 credits over 303 course sections.

The College uses an extensive process to ensure the academic quality of its CEP. The program earned

national accreditation in April 2016 by demonstrating or exceeding the programmatic accreditation standards set forth by the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) for curriculum, instructors, students, assessment and program evaluation. Adhering to the NACEP standards supports the assurance of quality and rigor in the program. The College's program also adheres to all Minnesota State system policies and procedures for concurrent enrollment programs. The program has a comprehensive website and a Concurrent Enrollment Handbook that clearly outlines and communicates the program's processes, requirements and expectations for students, instructors and faculty mentors (23-0358, 23-0286).

The College uses the Minnesota State system Postsecondary Enrollment Options Policy (23-0122) to determine student eligibility for the CEP. Specifically, seniors in high school must show a 2.8 grade point average, and juniors must show a 3.2 grade point average to meet program eligibility criteria. Students may appeal eligibility decisions by submitting a formal appeal with a statement of support from a high school counselor, teacher or school administrator.

The College follows the same curriculum review and processes for all college course work, regardless of delivery location or modality. Concurrent enrollment courses are the same courses and include the same course descriptions, course outlines and course outcomes as determined by the College's Academic Affairs and Standards Council. Program staff members use an established process to compile course information from all partner high schools to ensure that concurrent enrollment courses comply with the College's Definition of a Credit Hour Policy (23-0231).

The College evaluates concurrent enrollment courses by conducting electronic end-of-course student surveys, compliant with NACEP's evaluation standards. The College shares survey results from the course evaluations with concurrent instructors each semester to review and use for continuous improvement. The College's Office of Institutional Research aggregates data from the surveys to give the program an opportunity to celebrate successes and find areas of improvement to set new goals.

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

M State maintains specialized accreditation for 15 programs and publishes the information on the College's website (23-0170). Internally, M State tracks each of the programs, the last review, anticipated year of next review, and additional notes, including the location of the last self-study, any annual reporting requirements, and any changes to the schedule made during the pandemic.

By Part 4, Subpart B of Board Policy 3.43 – Accreditation (23-0288), the College is required to maintain accreditation in programs "for which people working in that field must be licensed or certified for employment."

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

M State evaluates the success of its graduates and ensures that the credentials it represents as

preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. Every year, the College completes a graduate follow-up survey. In the survey, students are asked if they are working in a related field, whether they are working full-time or part-time, if they are continuing their education, if they are working in an unrelated field, if they are seeking employment in the field, or if they are not available for work. When M State does not receive a response, the student is labeled as "status unknown." Each year, M State surpasses an 85% response rate. Related employment rates are calculated with students employed in a related field (either full-time or part-time) as the numerator, and students available for work (students with a status unknown, continuing education, or not available for employment are excluded) as the denominator. Results are disaggregated by major as well as several different factors and analyzed with other Minnesota State system colleges using the process and definitions. Since academic year 2016-2017, M State has surpassed a 90% related employment rate as compared to the system average of 89.4% (23-0290).

In alignment with Equity 2030, the College disaggregates results by different student groups. Through that analysis, little difference exists between student groups; however, the lack of representation of diverse races/ethnicities in the graduate population indicates why the College has a strong focus on first-term success rates, fall-to-fall graduation or retention rates, and completion rates.

Evaluation of transfer students has been more challenging for the College. M State has conducted a preliminary review of students earning Minnesota State system designated transfer pathway degrees as well as the engineering Associate of Science degree. With the transfer pathways being relatively new, there was limited data available from the Minnesota State system office about student performance after transfer; however, there is preliminary data on transfer within state institutions (23-0289). For the engineering degree, M State worked with the top engineering transfer school, North Dakota State University (NDSU), to assess the performance of transfer students as compared to NDSU freshman. In most cohorts, transfer students who first attend M State perform like NDSU freshman (23-0287).

As the transfer pathways mature, M State will continue to investigate transfer rates to partner institutions and investigate student success after transfer. This is in collaboration with the Minnesota State system office, with access to all system data, and with other partner institutions such as NDSU.

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- 23-0355 - Resource - Radiologic Technology Program Review - FY22
- 23-0356 - Resource - Psychology Program Review - FY23
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- 23-0358 - Website - Concurrent Enrollment Program Webpage Examples - FY23
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- 23-0438 - Resource - Electrical Technology Program Review - FY23

4.B - Core Component 4.B

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

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

Argument

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

In the last peer review, reviewers noted issues with assessment at M State. Over the past five years, the College worked diligently to improve and invest in assessment processes. Prior to the last review, the pandemic would have halted all formal assessment; however, with the newly established practices, the College was able to progress.

Over the past two years, a faculty-led Assessment Team has made substantial progress by assisting faculty with assessment, reviewing policy and procedure (23-0349, 23-0348), creating a SharePoint Assessment site for resources and information (23-0360), updating the Institutional Learning Outcomes (23-0064), presenting at faculty in-services and determining the next steps to improve assessment at the College (23-0347). While M State has improved assessment processes, additional improvements are needed.

M State has clearly stated goals for student learning. At the program level, learning goals are student program outcomes. At the course level, the College states learning goals as course competencies and they are mapped to outcomes at the program level for credential-based programs or the Minnesota State Transfer Curriculum (MnTC) Goal Areas (23-0092). Program outcomes, MnTC Goal Areas and course competencies are included in the catalog (23-0211) and clearly visible on the website (23-0296).

Academic Program Assessment

The Assessment Team encourages faculty to contribute to improving student learning at the program level rather than course level. Courses have become the vehicle for assessment of a student's mastery of program outcomes, so the College promotes collaboration at the front end of the process, in planning criteria, and expecting collaboration at the back end, when analyzing gaps between expectations and findings. This allows findings to be better used to build meaningful action plans. Data gathering, which once occupied the larger part of assessment, is now an exercise left to individual faculty so more focus can be on meaningful conversations and a more organic planning process to improve student learning.

General Education Assessment

General education has always been a challenge because it doesn't seem to lend itself to specific outcomes. But using the indicators under the MnTC as program outcomes directs academic disciplines to one or possibly two goal areas where the discipline is likely to exercise the most influence. Disciplines, generally defined by course prefixes and faculty assigned fields, are considered programs for the purpose of assessment. The corollary benefit of this approach is that faculty collaboration in assessment on narrower outcomes provides a forum for discussion on larger curriculum issues that go beyond assessment of student learning to a discussion on student success and the role of specific general education disciplines in other programs.

Curricular Assessment Process

Faculty engage in a series of conversations with their colleagues that make up the framework for assessment at M State. Two of these conversations happen on faculty in-service days set aside for assessment – one in the fall and one in the spring. Of course, the process is designed to encourage regular, and less formal, conversations all year long (23-0087).

It's important to note that only the data entry step happens individually. This encourages collaboration throughout the process, which is both scalable to any size group as well as sustainable over time and in the event of faculty turnover. As noted in the interim report on assessment (23-0300), this was a challenge as well as onboarding new faculty; in this adaptation of the process, new faculty require very little training in assessment. It becomes a part of their regular conversation with colleagues.

First, faculty meet as a program or, in the case of general education, as a discipline, to identify potential areas of improvement. These may come from classroom observations, advisory committees, past assessment data or changes in the workplaces that students are likely to encounter. Often, the areas faculty have identified are competencies taught in a course, but not always. There may be co-curricular activities or external accrediting requirements that include outcomes that reflect these areas of concern best.

Many measures that faculty will use in assessment already exist in their courses (23-0087). They may only find it necessary to set criteria they can use to assess student learning and determine a target that, if reached, would suggest outcomes have been successfully taught (23-0087). Exactly how these intended results are determined is a major part of this conversation (23-0087).

Over the course of a semester, or a year, individual faculty will gather and enter data from their students that indicates the level of success those students have experienced in meeting the outcome (23-0087).

When all the data has been entered, faculty will meet again to discuss the findings. Ideally, faculty will find they have correctly identified an area that needs improvement and can then begin the process of determining a plan of action to address the issue and improve the students' mastery of the assessed outcome (23-0087). In that case, the assessment plan for the next year will include reevaluating student performance of that measure.

Depending on the number of outcomes a program or discipline has promised to meet, all the outcomes of a given program might be assessed every three years.

Co-curricular Assessment

Formal co-curricular assessment was initiated in 2018 and included in the interim report on assessment. During the 2021 virtual HLC conference, conflicting information was received on the HLC definition of co-curricular assessment that specifically required the activity to complement the formal curriculum or curricular goals and to be linked to the curriculum. With this change in the middle of the pandemic, and lack of student participation in co-curricular activities since the onset of the pandemic, co-curricular activities assessment continues to be a challenge.

M State has since revised the definition of co-curricular learning and added, for comparative purposes, a definition of extracurricular:

Co-curricular experiences enhance curricular learning by providing opportunities for further engagement, exploration and application of content or outcomes from academic programming. Examples of co-curricular activities may include experiences such as internships, clinicals, student clubs and organizations (if they are intended to enhance curricular learning), and programmatic skills competitions.

Extra-curricular experiences are defined by M State as being primarily social in nature and foster a sense of belonging at the college, within specific academic programs or amongst students with a common interest.

The Assessment Committee, in cooperation with the College's Academic Affairs and Standards Council, is working on establishing college-wide outcomes for co-curricular activities that can be used in formal assessment process; this way, all co-curricular events can be assessed for their value to the College at large as well as to student learning outcomes. The best examples of co-curricular assessment post-pandemic is the Cyber Defense Competition and through the career services department in cooperation with program faculty. The competition continued in a virtual format and faculty were able to sustain student participation. The data and action plans are recorded in the College's assessment software similar to how it is done for curricular assessment (23-0295). Career Services provides several events throughout the year both independently and in conjunction with academic programs (23-0342). Evaluations of Career Services events are ongoing, but has not yet been integrated into the College's assessment software (23-0343, 23-0344, 23-0345, 23-0346).

Using the Data

The data itself is only part of the story. After gathering all the data, the actual results are compared to the intended result and the gap between the two is analyzed. The discussion as to how these results can be used gives rise to an action plan that details what changes might be made to content, delivery, modality, or any number of other factors that have been identified as having the potential to improve student learning (23-0087).

These results summaries are written in the form of a narrative that encourages faculty to go beyond the data and record experiences and engagements with students and colleagues the assessment process has produced over the assessment cycle (23-0393).

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

Curricular Assessment

As explained in 4.B.1, the assessment process includes time for reflection and crafting action plans during faculty in-services. Over the past several years, many improvements have been noted in curricular programming in addition to those reported in the interim report on assessment. At a recent in-service, faculty in attendance were asked to complete a survey on assessment and list improvements made in the past three years (23-0341). Results span the depth and breadth of institutional offerings.

In the assessment process (4.B.1), the Assessment Team identified how to utilize the Strategic Planning Online (SPOL) software to close the loop on action plans. As the College continues to mature in the use of SPOL and increase the depth of assessment conversations, the Assessment Team expects improved documentation of "closing the loop."

For distance courses, a random sample (20%) of all full-time faculty, along with all adjunct and temporary part-time faculty, are evaluated in at least one distance course per year. Deans request access to one of the faculty's courses and evaluates faculty-student interaction according to a minimum baseline of regular and substantive interaction as published in the code of federal regulations (23-0395). Faculty who do not meet the minimum standard work with the supervising dean and the Center for Teaching and Learning Technology (CTLT) (see 3.C.5), to mitigate any deficiencies for the current term and improve courses for subsequent terms. These faculty are reevaluated within the same term.

Continuous Improvement

Curricular assessment will continue to be a focus of the institution through the work and guidance of the Assessment Team. College administration recognizes the value of assessment and is committed to allocating time during in-services to improve student learning and use of the results. With many programs at the College, faculty understandably have different levels of maturity with the assessment process. The Assessment Team is addressing this by working to increase the rigor, depth and impact of assessment processes with programs in early stages of assessment while enhancing curricular assessment in programs that have more mature processes. These latter enhancements include the integration of additional indirect measures to target assessment efforts and improved analysis of learning differences across modalities.

Co-curricular assessment needs additional improvements to improve compliance and the assessment process. As noted in 4.B.1., the Assessment Team is working with the Academic Affairs and Standards Council to develop a process to enhance co-curricular activities and the assessment of those activities. This academic year, administration changed the funding structure of co-curricular activities to support the development, assessment and resource allocation process to improve co-curricular programming. Prior to this decision, most co-curricular programs were funded through student organizations and approved by the Student Government Association. The College has committed to allocating funds for co-curricular programming that groups may apply for to receive funding. A requirement of the application includes completion of an assessment plan in SPOL as well as mapping to current program outcomes, Institutional Learning Outcomes or co-curricular outcomes. Future funding will be contingent on completing these assessment plans.

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

Assessment of student learning at M State reflects good practice. As outlined in 4.B.1., it includes substantial participation of faculty. Improvements in faculty participation largely stem from investment in a faculty-led Assessment Team.

The Assessment Team provides faculty guidance and oversight on the processes for assessing student learning outcomes at the course, program and institutional levels and provides input on college-wide assessment policies and best practices. The College leverages this peer-to-peer resource to:

- Build the capacity for assessment
- Identify data-driven improvements
- Provide guidance, training and support to faculty in the development and integration of assessment activities
- Provide input on institutional data and findings from research and assessment to support institutional planning processes and decision-making
- Oversee the repository for assessment data, analysis and reporting
- Synthesize assessment activities
- Provide an institutional review regarding quality of service and mission fulfillment

While the team is still working to improve the quality of assessment plans, faculty participation has improved dramatically since the last HLC visit.

While co-curricular assessment is not as developed as the College would like, progress is being made to mirror effective practices. As described in 4.B.1 and 4.B.2, the College is investing resources in co-curricular programming and co-curricular assessment. Additionally, co-curricular assessment has been brought within the auspices of the assessment team, a group that has made progress with curricular assessment. With these changes, College administration is confident in the College's capacity to increase co-curricular programming and expand assessment of co-curricular activities.

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- 23-0395 - Resource - RSI Evaluation Form - FY23

4.C - Core Component 4.C

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

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

Argument

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

Based on M State's vision, "A success story for every student," the College's strategic plan focuses on three primary pillars: student success, equity and inclusion, and financial sustainability. Additionally, the College has recently updated its Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan with the assistance of a Lumina Foundation Grant (23-0305, 23-0304)). Beyond M State planning processes, the Minnesota State system launched Equity 2030, a goal of equitable student outcomes for all student populations by 2030 (23-0044).

Using the system goal and College planning processes, M State set goals for student enrollment, percent of students completing the first fall term in good standing, and fall-to-fall retention and graduation rates. Additionally, the College monitors metrics including second-to-third fall retention or graduation and 3-year completion rates (23-0040). Through monitoring these metrics, the College implements strategies to improve student retention and completion rates. M State also incorporated goal setting into the program review process (see 4.A). Goals were developed through evaluation of student success metrics, an environmental scan, comparative analysis from the system and voluntary framework for accountability (23-0389) and need to increase adult populations. These goals incorporate strategic elements of the overarching goal of Equity 2030.

Strategies to improve student success are developed at various levels of the College, including the program, department, and institutional levels and through several processes including program- or department-level reviews, the annual planning process, and the SEM planning process. Equity 2030 and Guided Learning Pathways (GLP) are two themes that carry across planning processes and student success goals. M State began the journey toward GLP by joining the Community College Research Center (CCRC) Institution on Guided Pathways at Rural Colleges (23-0307).

The next section highlights the collection of student success information, evolution of the process, and how information was used. Prior to adoption of Equity 2030 and beginning work on GLP, initiatives to improve student success largely relied on evaluation of student success in various programs, and initiatives were based on those datasets.

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

The College collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence and completion of its programs. The Institutional Effectiveness (IE) office is responsible for collecting and analyzing the data. Primary metrics were discussed in 4.C.1; aligned with Equity 2030, these metrics are disaggregated by student factors such as race/ethnicity, Pell eligibility, first-generation status, gender, credit status, and age.

A critical point in the evolution of M State's data collection and use occurred in fall 2020, when M State adopted PowerBI as a data visualization tool. Prior to that, M State did not use a visualization tool other than Microsoft Excel. Employees had access to an abundance of data through a reporting system. Upon review of the system, it was clear that a few individuals had used the system extensively while the majority didn't use the information at all.

Prior to 2020, the College investigated student success primarily on the investigation of fall-to-fall retention rates. These investigations aimed to identify which student populations struggled with enrollment. Most improvement efforts were aimed at students in the Liberal Arts and Sciences AA program, an unstructured, transfer-oriented degree (see 4.C.3 First Semester Check-in).

When PowerBI was adopted in 2020, IE created standard reports for use by the deans, College leadership and Institutional Research. This adoption created uniform reports to constituents using standard data definitions and provided a single source for the College.

Integrated across initiatives, the PowerBI platform allows the College to analyze student success (see metrics in 4.C.1) at the instructional school, meta-major (principle of GLP) and individual program levels. Additionally, metrics are natively disaggregated by different student populations in alignment with the goals of Equity 2030 (23-0041). This information is integrated into the program review process (23-0278). When the program review process (4.A.1) was reviewed in 2019-2020, the College added clear goal setting for student success measures along with alignment to HLC's criteria for accreditation.

Continuous Improvement

PowerBI is a promising tool that helps the College understand current data; however, licensing under the Cloud version of the software is difficult. As a result, the College began implementation of a PowerBI reporting server that will grant access to all employees. Content for this system is under development.

Beyond the structure for communicating data, on an annual basis IE reviews College data to identify emerging student groups. For the past two years, the department tracked success rates of Asian-American students after noticing a two-year decrease in success rates and is considering adding the population to a targeted BIPOC population. Additionally, the College has reviewed changes in

student ages and set defined targets for adult student enrollment, a population that decreased during the pandemic. This identification of emerging populations is ongoing and will continue into the future.

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

M State uses the quantitative data collected on student success combined with qualitative data to make improvements. Some of the most important strategies implemented that have contributed to stronger completion and persistence rates are summarized below (23-0308).

Developmental Education

A specific area targeted for improvement has been developmental education that disparately affects the progress of underrepresented student populations. In mathematics during AY15, the department reorganized the curriculum into eight-week courses. This change resulted in a significant reduction of course withdrawal rates and increased success rates (23-0362). The department has also been testing co-requisite courses to support students while taking a college-level course (see 3.D.2). In fall 2021, M State started working with the Dana Center on math pathways to align students directly entering relevant mathematics pathways with their program and/or meta-major, continue testing co-requisite math courses, reduce disparities in Pell-eligible and students of color placement rates into developmental coursework and reduce disparities in completion of college-level mathematics courses.

During AY15, the English department planned for implementation of a corequisite model and phaseout of a six-credit developmental course with low success rates. The project was not as successful as hoped (23-0363) but an interesting trend emerged in that the modality for the taking developmental English coursework didn't matter however the modality in which developmental education students took college level composition did (note 2019 and 2023) (23-0364). Since the changes in 2015, the department reduced class sizes for developmental English courses from 22 to 15 to allow for more personalized instruction. As part of the department's current program and efficiency review, faculty are reviewing data related to the successes of these programs.

After the initial implementation of the reforms, IE conducted a focus group in 2018 with two purposes: contextualize the student onboarding process and determine satisfaction with the course placement process (23-0311). From those focus groups, the College revamped communication regarding course placement and began working with multiple measures according to Minnesota State Board policy. Since this time, the College and the system have modified course placement based on national trends and to accommodate challenges during the pandemic (see 3.D.2).

Further, faculty have developed co-requisite options in both mathematics and English to allow students to complete their developmental courses in an immersive and timely fashion. M State's co-requisite model is integrated with students in college-level courses. M State is also participating in a grant-funded project with the Minnesota State system, as described in 3.D.2. All of M State's developmental coursework allows a student to arrive at the College at the lowest level in mathematics or English and complete a college-level course within the span of one academic year.

First Semester Check-in (FSCI)

One analysis of student retention rates discovered that fall-to-fall persistence rates were near 45% (23-0390). Student Affairs leadership and the advising team designed the First Semester Check-In (FSCI), an intrusive advising model, to actively target new liberal arts students each term to develop an academic plan, take a readiness assessment and engage in planning conversations. The initiative was actively tracked for the first three years beginning in 2016 (23-0391). When the initiative proved successful, most components were institutionalized. In review of additional data, the initiative was effective in the fall term but had limited improvements in spring or summer starts. As a result, advising resources during spring semesters were reallocated to the Satisfactory Academic Progress project (see below).

Academic Performance Alert

A workgroup comprised of advisors, counselors and faculty was created after survey results showed gaps with a homegrown early alert system used as a proactive measure to identify and connect at-risk students with resources. Issues identified for improvement included limitations with follow-up communications and lack of faculty buy-in. In spring 2020, the College's IT department developed a new alert system mirroring that of a neighboring university. Analysis of withdrawal rates determines the best weeks for scheduled outreach. An average of 1,348 students had concerns submitted after system improvements, compared to an average of 613 in previous fall terms. In fall 2021, 50% of students receiving a concern in week three did not receive a concern in week seven. Faculty participation rates increased from 25% to 49%, while reach-out rates increased from 74% to 99%. Responding team members meet with the Early Alert Workgroup each semester to review feedback and implement improvements (23-0275). See 3.D.3 for more details.

Policy Review

The Institutional Effectiveness Council reviewed two policies where there was anecdotal evidence of issues: the Drop for Non-payment Policy and the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy. The review of the Drop for Non-payment Policy indicated there were issues with students understanding how to pay for college. As a result, M State secured American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) Consulting to review and provide recommendations for enrollment planning and effective student onboarding (see Financial Aid).

When reviewing data from the SAP policy, there were several issues noted in the analysis impacting future attendance and success of BIPOC and first-generation students (23-0367, 23-0365). This led to a multi-stage process of reviewing policies, procedures and processes (see below).

Financial Aid

In response to enrollment stresses and concerns with student onboarding, including student success in the first term and student understanding of how to pay for college, M State invested in advice from AACRAO Consultants (23-0304). M State's financial aid process previously relied on a state system-generated email, which could not be edited and was challenging for some students to comprehend. As recommended by AACRAO Consultants in spring 2019, M State created a customized financial aid estimate letter with personalized information, graphics, text, a glossary of terms and a cover letter to outline next steps (23-0448, 23-0366). As a result of these changes, 88% of the 1,373 students who received an estimate letter in spring 2020 enrolled at M State in fall 2020. The number of students that completed their financial aid and were ready for disbursement by the first day of the term increased by 7% (when comparing first three years sending estimate letters to previous three years). This example not only benefits new students but also current students.

Financial Aid Estimate Award Letter
Percent Ready for Disbursement

No Estimate Letters	%	Estimate Letters	%
2018	62%	2021	65%
2019	60%	2022	72%
2020	63%	2023	72%
3 Year Average	**62%**	**3 Year Average**	**69%**

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Actions

The IE Council, in the process of identifying policies with a large and potentially disparate impact on different populations, discovered several issues when investigating the SAP Policy (23-0144). The first was the high rate of students not maintaining a 2.0 GPA or completing 2/3 of their credits in the first term. This led to the College tracking the percent of students completing the first term in good standing.

The analysis also concluded that students of color and first-generation students appeal adverse academic progress decisions at lower rates than their white or non-first-generation counterparts. This analysis led to changes in the SAP Policy and Procedure, including re-writing all SAP communications, altering the process for students to appeal decisions, and consolidating appeal decisions from a campus-based appeals committee to a single college-wide committee.

The other telling data point in the analysis was the percentage of students not making academic progress during their second semester in college. As a result, and in conjunction with a review on the First Semester Check-in, advisors launched an initiative to improve support for students on Academic Warning. Due to minimal effect of the First Semester Check-In Initiative for liberal arts students beginning in the spring term, advising resources were reallocated to support students on Academic Warning (23-0434).

Recent improvements to M State's SAP Procedure have also strengthened processes to support consistency and student success. Prior to summer 2020, each campus had its own SAP Appeal Committee, and approval rates ranged from a high of 93% to a low of 54%. Now the college-wide SAP Appeal Committee meets on a weekly basis to ensure consistent and prompt decisions. The committee developed a rubric to determine where the appeal needs to be in review and the information that is still needed. College approval rates were 89% in FY21 and 93% in FY22.

From the feedback of appeals committees, many appeals were denied due to missing information, so a step was added for a staff member to review appeals to ensure all required documentation is provided and contact students if additional documentation is needed. The new process changed the outcomes for 44 students, whose appeal was held and later approved due to the outreach for documentation.

Academic advisors have continued an Academic Warning initiative as part of the multi-year program addressing equity in academic progress monitoring. The advising team personally reaches out to each student on Academic Warning prior to the start of spring term to offer support and revise their upcoming semester academic plans. The team also completes two check-in appointments throughout the semester to encourage a sense of belonging. Over FY21 to FY22, 66% of students on warning met with an advisor with 44% persisting to subsequent fall semester. Due to a 15% drop in students

meeting with an advisor, the initiative was put on hold for FY23 to reevaluate to increase student participation.

Plans to assess SAP procedural changes were interrupted by COVID-19 but are in place to begin in spring 2023 and each subsequent semester. See 4.C.4 for SAP policy reform details.

Guided Learning Pathways

Degrees and Academic Schools

Many of M State's technical programs have well-developed curriculum maps creating clear pathways to completion. In general, transfer programs have had clear requirements, but the pathways have been less developed. Research by many organizations, including the Community College Research Center (CCRC), indicated the potential of Guided Learning Pathways (GLPs) to improve retention and graduation rates in the report, "How to Achieve More Equitable Community College Student Outcomes" (23-0306). From previous work with the First Semester Check-In initiative, M State students in unstructured liberal arts programs are particularly at risk of transferring or withdrawing prior to graduation.

In 2020, the Board of Trustees approved a GLP framework, and M State adopted a plan to implement evidence- and data-informed pathways. To bolster transition efforts, M State participated in the CCRC Guided Learning Pathways at Rural Colleges, summer 2021 institute. M State was one of 27 colleges accepted, and a team of employees learned how to communicate data to key constituents with the goals of engaging employees in the co-creation of pathways and implementing the Ask, Connect, Inspire and Plan framework developed by the CCRC.

Through this planning, M State disaggregated student data by meta-major as well as developed and implemented a business program pathway. In the development of the business program pathway, the College utilized the program review process to collaborate on an implementation framework for a GLP. This included faculty co-developing curriculum for an Introduction to Business course (23-0309). The aim of the course is to help onboard students to the various majors, provide information on different careers, and expose students to professionals in the field through a "CareerX" event (23-0433).

To further develop GLP, M State is currently designing an information technology pathway and identifying how to structure pathways within the unstructured liberal arts degree, including key course sequencing guides. The new plans will incorporate elements of first year experience that will guide students to a successful path within a meta-major and incorporate student success data, student characteristics and key gateway courses. Furthermore, M State used the framework to inform a 2021 strategy to redesign the structure of more than 80 programs into five major areas, or schools. See the Guided Learning Pathways - Programs by School evidence for more detail (23-0368).

Equity 2030

M State recognizes eliminating inequities in educational attainment by race and ethnicity will require deliberate and explicit effort. The College has adopted processes that equip leaders to address educational disparities and move beyond policy and planning to institutional equity-minded practices. This reform strategy begins with leadership support for the use of disaggregated data and analysis to drive conversations about inequitable outcomes among different student groups. The process looks at systematic institutional barriers that increase inequities, with a particular focus on students of color

and socio-cultural environments. Overall, accountability occurs through data-informed analysis of equity gaps at the institutional, program and course levels, understanding the disparate impact of policies and practices, and moving to address disparity to determine campus-based solutions to academic equity gaps.

The College aligns the identified student achievement and equity gaps with support resources and programs to establish plans to eliminate barriers. M State identified an equity gap among Black/LatinX/Indigenous healthcare students, with fall-to-fall success rates dropping from 54% four years ago to 44% in fall 2020. This is compared to white students, who have had consistent success rates of over 60%. As a result, the College secured funding from a regional foundation to create programming and services to improve student engagement, academic support and career exploration. Currently, in the preliminary stages of planning implementation, accountability to student success is a top priority.

Continuous Improvement Efforts

M State is initiative-driven and uses data and high-impact practices, but reforms are not always consistently monitored for progress. To address this weakness, IE implemented revisions to the planning process to include project charters to clearly define scope, required resources and assessments, as well as a problem-solving framework to guide goal setting, consultations with key constituents (especially students) and outcome analysis. See 5.C.3 for more details.

4.C.4 The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs reflect good practice.

M State uses a combination of internal (see 4.C.1), state and national metrics for collecting and analyzing student success. Internal metrics are generally used for internal goal setting, tracking effectiveness of initiatives and tracking progress on a smaller scale. While internal metrics are sometimes adjusted due to the mission and student composition, the College adopts standard definitions when benchmarking against other institutions within Minnesota State and nationally.

Benchmarking against other colleges in the state is aided by an annual report from the state system on several metrics (23-0310). M State reviews this data annually in President's Cabinet and annual planning day presentations (see criterion 5). Additionally, the College uses PowerBI to compare M State to other colleges in the state. Data is used to identify opportunities for improvement and the basis for annual planning and strategic conversations between the M State President and the chancellor of the Minnesota State system.

Before the pandemic, M State participated in the National Community College Benchmarking Project (NCCBP) but didn't have a strategy to use the data to inform practice. After further research of the NCCBP and the Voluntary Framework for Accountability (VFA), M State registered to participate in the VFA. Through VFA, the College can integrate non-credit training in benchmarking discussion. To date, the Institutional Research office has created a report addressing specific successes and challenges (see 4.C.1) when M State is compared to other participating colleges in aggregate and with comparison groups. As M State often performs better than its Minnesota peers when using Minnesota State system metrics, the College has used the VFA to identify areas for improvement (23-0392) that support M State's continued work toward the goal of Equity 2030 and demonstrate a need to further investigate the relative success rates of transfer

students. Additionally, through analyzing 6-year outcome data within the region, it was clear that Iowa significantly impacted the results in M State's comparison group (23-0392) compared to including other neighboring states (23-0392). From these results, M State will begin outreach to Iowa schools on practices that lead to improved outcomes.

Sources

- 23-0040 - Data - Strategic Enrollment Management Goals - FY23
- 23-0041 - Data - PowerBI Enrollment Profile - FY23
- 23-0044 - Website - Minnesota State Equity 2030 Website - FY23
- 23-0144 - Website - Satisfactory Academic Appeal Project Charter - FY22
- 23-0275 - Resource - Early Alert Workgroup Improvements - FY23
- 23-0278 - Data - PSYC Program Review Dataset - FY23
- 23-0304 - Report - AACRAO Consulting Strategic Enrollment Management Review - FY20
- 23-0305 - Resource - M State Strategic Enrollment Management Plan - FY20
- 23-0306 - Report - CCRC Research on Guided Pathways - FY22
- 23-0307 - Website - CCRC Guided Pathways - FY23
- 23-0308 - Data - Fall to Fall Graduation or Retention - FY18-23
- 23-0309 - Resource - BUS 1141 Introduction to Business Course Description - FY23
- 23-0310 - Data - Minnesota State Benchmark Template - FY23
- 23-0311 - Resource - Developmental Education Focus Group - FY19
- 23-0362 - Data - Math Developmental Education Data - FY15-17
- 23-0363 - Data - English Developmental Education Data - FY15-17
- 23-0364 - Data - English Developmental Education Modality Data - FY19-23
- 23-0365 - Data - Satisfactory Academic Progress Data - FY19
- 23-0366 - Resource - Financial Aid Estimate Letter Example - FY22
- 23-0367 - Data - Equity Data Reviewed by IE Council - FY23
- 23-0368 - Resource - Guided Learning Pathways - Programs by Academic School - FY22
- 23-0389 - Presentation - Voluntary Framework of Accountability Overview - FY23
- 23-0390 - Data - First Semester Check-in Preliminary Data - FY14
- 23-0391 - Data - First Semester Check-in Results - FY15-17
- 23-0392 - Data - Voluntary Framework of Accountability Data - FY23
- 23-0392 - Data - Voluntary Framework of Accountability Data - FY23 (page number 11)
- 23-0392 - Data - Voluntary Framework of Accountability Data - FY23 (page number 13)
- 23-0433 - Resource - CareerX Example - FY23
- 23-0434 - Minutes - Academic Advisor Meeting - FSCI Data Review - FY20
- 23-0448 - Website - Financial Aid Estimate Award Letter Project Charter - FY20

4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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

Summary

M State demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services with regular reviews and assessments that follow well-developed policies and procedures established by the College, the Minnesota State system, and applicable accrediting agencies. M State's goals for student learning are clearly communicated and are appropriate to the College's mission, student populations and educational offerings. The College ensures faculty and instructor qualifications and evaluates student success measures such as retention, persistence and graduation rates. Assessments and reviews of programs are faculty-led and held systematically at the program and institutional levels.

M State's commitment to educational achievement and continuous improvement is demonstrated by the College's ongoing efforts to better its assessment processes and realize its vision, "A success story for every student." Over the past five years, the College has:

- Launched a new academic performance alert system to identify and connect at-risk students with resources.
- Reviewed policies and procedures impacting the success of first-generation and BIPOC students.
- Adopted PowerBI to analyze student success data at the school, major and program levels.
- Added clear goal setting for student success measures aligned with criteria for accreditation.

Focus areas for continuous improvement include:

- Implementing the guided learning pathways framework to improve retention and graduation rates.
- Continuing to enhance the program review process to better identify and address gaps in student learning.
- Further developing the Credit for Prior Learning program to be consistent with Equity 2030 goals and provide students with more options for success.
- Continuing to evaluate and address the root causes of educational disparities.

Sources

There are no sources.

5 - Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

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

5.A - Core Component 5.A

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

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

Argument

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

M State is committed to collaborative planning, policies and procedures to fulfill the College mission. The Minnesota State system's governing board, chancellor, and policies and procedures shape key priorities and general operational decisions for all Minnesota State colleges and universities, including M State ([23-0011](#), [23-00083](#)). Minnesota State Procedure 1A.2.2 Delegation of Authority for Board Policy ([23-0009](#)) describes situations in which it is appropriate for the chancellor to delegate authority to college presidents. At M State, recent such situations have included the Equity 2030 initiative ([23-0044](#)) and the implementation of guided learning pathways ([23-0380](#)).

Contractually, employee bargaining units are engaged in planning, policy and procedure. The faculty contract (CBA) includes provisions for system-wide input ([23-0045](#)) as well as input at the College level through a Faculty Shared Governance Council ([23-0045](#)). The CBA also includes the Academic Affairs and Standards Council (AASC) ([23-0045](#)) for academic matters. Similar provisions exist in the Minnesota Association of Professional Employees (MAPE) contract, Article 32 ([23-0376](#)) and American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSME) contract ([23-0377](#)). M State's vice presidents provide written divisional updates at each of the Faculty Shared Governance Council and meet and confer meetings. See the evidence for examples of meeting minutes, which are taken at every meeting ([23-0381](#), [23-0385](#), [23-0382](#), [23-0383](#)).

Students are afforded many of the same rights as faculty and staff, per Minnesota State Board Policy 2.3 Student Involvement in Decision-Making ([23-0378](#)) and Procedure 2.3.1 ([23-0379](#)), including

the right to meet at the system level (subpart 1B) and/or hold campus meetings to discuss, consult, review and make recommendations to administrators on tuition, budget, tuition and fee consultation, basic needs and other matters (23-0384).

Although ample opportunities for input of faculty, staff and students are published in policy and procedure, M State strives to be more inclusive. In 2021, M State overhauled its planning processes to engage a broader audience in determining tactical actions to meet the College's strategic plan (see 5.C.3).

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

Providing access to actionable data has been a priority for M State's Institutional Effectiveness (IE) department. Key improvements have been incorporated into operations over the past several years, including a focus on disaggregated institutional data, qualitative and survey-based research projects, using comparative data from the Voluntary Framework for Accountability, implementation of project charters, as well as continuing regular reviews of the campus at the system level.

Disaggregated Institutional and System Data

As described in 4.C.2., the College has implemented PowerBI as the primary visualization software for institutional data. Academic deans and managers throughout the institution may access data, disaggregated by academic school and meta-major as well as student demographic characteristics, to understand where certain student groups have inequitable outcomes (23-0041). Additionally, this data is shared at annual planning sessions attended by nearly 100 employees from all levels of the College (see 5.C.3). The switch to PowerBI created a framework to have consistent definitions and reproducible results.

To expand college-wide understanding of student success data, including disaggregation by student demographics, the first day of a planning retreat in 2021 involved approximately 70 employees engaged in viewing student success data at the college, school and meta-major level. This included both Minnesota State system data and institutionally curated data (23-0386).

As a part of a system, M State is reviewed annually on system data (student success metrics 23-0374, institution performance measures 23-0375, and a report that cannot be shared due to small cell sizes) including related employment rates, completion rates, fall-to-fall persistence and developmental education completion rates; each of these is disaggregated by race/ethnicity, Pell eligibility, first generation status, gender, age group and student admission type. At the institutional level, IE uses metrics with less lagging indicators, including course completion rates and completion of fall terms in good academic standing. IE is beginning to introduce leading student success indicators using predictive modeling.

Qualitative and Survey Projects

In addition to quantitative measures, Institutional Research completes qualitative studies each year. In 2021, the College examined student engagement using a mixed-method framework that collected survey results and contextualized the results using focus groups (23-0387). The aim was to understand the student experience for students in different age, socioeconomic and race/ethnicity

groups. Results and analysis of the research were shared widely with the College community and considered in the planning process. While the ongoing pandemic has limited action based on the results, planning is underway to revise orientations and provide college-wide experiences on all four campuses. Other examples from recent years include internal research on student engagement and student experiences in developmental education (23-0311).

Another formal collection technique is to contract with an outside research organization. A recent example of this at M State included interviews on racial/ethnic minorities in cohort-based technical programs (23-0157). Other examples include College participation in Ruffalo Noel Levitz Surveys (student satisfaction inventory, priority survey for online learners). These surveys were last implemented in FY19 with the intention of repeating the survey in 2020; however, M State elected to delay the survey due to the pandemic and will be implementing the survey in spring 2023 with course modalities mostly returning to normal. These surveys have spawned additional research (23-0056).

In addition to the college-wide planning meeting, the president and Cabinet members also meet with the Student Government Association every year to consult on several matters, including textbook costs, use of student fees, tuition levels and, recently, use of federal relief dollars to subsidize lost revenue and provide emergency grant aid (23-0384).

Actionable Data to College-wide Tactics

- First Semester Check-In (FSCI) – Low student retention in an unstructured AA program led to development of FSCI meetings with first-generation college liberal arts students (see 3.D.3). This was later adapted when data indicated that the program had limited benefit during the spring term; resources were reallocated to instead advise students placed on academic warning (see 4.C.3).
- Satisfactory Academic Progress – Investigation of disaggregated data on the disparate effects of Satisfactory Academic Progress determinations and appeals committee decisions led to a prioritized list of changes in both policy and procedure (4.C.3).
- Financial Aid Estimate Letters – In response to falling enrollment, M State invested in American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) consultants, who recommended improving financial aid estimate letters (4.C.3).
- Academic School Structure – Using the Minnesota State system Guided Learning Pathways Framework and participating in the Community College Research Center's Guided Pathways at Rural Colleges Institute informed a strategy to redesign the structure of more than 80 programs into five major areas, or academic schools (4.C.3).
- Developmental Education Improvements – M State's developmental education coursework was a barrier for many students. Incorporating the Minnesota State system's efforts to enhance developmental education, M State's strategies include reorganizing curriculum to eight-week courses, which resulted in decreased withdrawal rates, and reducing the course cap for more personalized instruction (4.C.3).
- Equity 2030 – Aligning collective efforts within the Minnesota State system to eliminate equity gaps by 2030 (4.C.1) including:
  - Recruiting and retaining talented employees by investing in search firms to find a diverse and qualified applicant pool for senior leadership (3.C.1) and supporting professional development opportunities for employees.
  - Desegregating data by student demographics and academic schools to make data-informed decisions (see above).
- Technological Improvements – Reallocating resources to invest in technological improvements

such as a CRM solution (5.C.6) and Strategic Planning Online (SPOL) (4.B.2).

- Process Improvements – Applying Value Stream Mapping (VSM) to analyze the admissions process, from prospect to M State student (5.C.2)

Continuous Improvement

While M State has made great progress in using data to inform decisions, the College has identified several growth opportunities. Currently, the College has an active request for proposals to adopt constituent relationship management software to actively engage current students and expand on the use of student services to effectively reach students. This adoption, combined with already completed VSM work, has led the College to adopt a metric reporting system that is scheduled to be fully implemented on July 1, 2023. Additionally, M State has committed to continued use of project charters to set project goals, scope and key performance indicators.

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

As stated in 5.A.1, the College and Minnesota State system have a policy and procedural basis for including faculty, and when appropriate, staff and students in setting requirements, policy, and processes through collaborative structures.

The faculty CBA establishes the Academic Affairs and Standards Council (AASC) with the purpose of providing "direction for the college president in all matters included in academic affairs, including course outlines, award requirements, academic standards, course and program components, and the inventory of course and program offerings" (23-0045). The composition of the committee includes at least 2/3 membership of faculty and 1/3 administration or staff. Through the CBA, the president retains final decision-making authority (23-0230). Additionally, staff and students also have consultative rights in board policy and through the MAPE and AFSME CBAs.

Minutes are taken at each consultative meeting. Examples of these discussions include:

- AASC review of courses, programs and institutional learning outcomes and program revitalization (23-0385).
- Shared governance faculty consultations on concurrent enrollment faculty credentialing and revitalization plans (23-0381)
- MAPE consultation on campus academic planning, testing and grants (23-0382)
- AFSME discussion on campus academic planning process (23-0383)
- Students reviewing tuition, fees and the budget (23-0384)

M State Policies

M State policies go through a comprehensive review and approval process (23-0369). All College employees have a minimum of 14 days to review and comment on new or revised policies and can view the status of policies going through the review/approval process in the College's Employee Portal (23-0372). If a policy is academic in nature, the draft policy and summary of comments is then reviewed by AASC and SGC; if the policy is non-academic, SGC provides input. After final approval from President's Cabinet, policies are updated on the College's website (23-0373) and policy updates

and summaries are emailed to all employees ([23-0371](#)). The College's president does have the authority to grant immediate approval of a policy if it needs to be updated urgently due to a compliance issue.

Sources

- 23-0008 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 1A.3 System Administration Chancellor - FY23
- 23-0009 - Procedure - Minnesota State Procedure 1A.2.2 Delegation of Authority - FY23
- 23-0011 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 1A.2 Board of Trustees - FY23
- 23-0041 - Data - PowerBI Enrollment Profile - FY23
- 23-0044 - Website - Minnesota State Equity 2030 Website - FY23
- 23-0045 - Contract - MSCF Union Master Contract 2021-2023 - FY23
- 23-0045 - Contract - MSCF Union Master Contract 2021-2023 - FY23 (page number 17)
- 23-0045 - Contract - MSCF Union Master Contract 2021-2023 - FY23 (page number 24)
- 23-0045 - Contract - MSCF Union Master Contract 2021-2023 - FY23 (page number 25)
- 23-0056 - Data - SSI Research proposal Presentation - FY20
- 23-0157 - Resource - Cultural Shifts and Challenges to Persist_Data Collection and Analysis - FY21
- 23-0230 - Resource - AASC Bylaws - FY23
- 23-0311 - Resource - Developmental Education Focus Group - FY19
- 23-0369 - Resource - M State Policy Process - FY23
- 23-0370 - Resource - M State Procedure Process - FY23
- 23-0371 - Resource - Policy and Procedure Year-End Summary Email Example - FY22
- 23-0372 - Website - Policies and Procedures SharePoint Site - FY23
- 23-0373 - Website - M State Policies and Procedures Website - FY23
- 23-0374 - Data - Student Success - Accountability Metrics - FY20
- 23-0375 - Data - Institution Performance Measures - FY21
- 23-0376 - Resource - MAPE Contract - FY21-23
- 23-0376 - Resource - MAPE Contract - FY21-23 (page number 101)
- 23-0377 - Resource - AFSCME Contract - FY23
- 23-0377 - Resource - AFSCME Contract - FY23 (page number 96)
- 23-0378 - Policy - Minnesota State Board Policy 2.3 Student Involvement in Decision-making - FY23
- 23-0379 - Procedure - Minnesota State Procedure 2.3.1 Student Involvement in Decision-making - FY23
- 23-0380 - Website - Minnesota State Guided Learning Pathways - FY23
- 23-0381 - Minutes - Sample Faculty Shared Governance Minutes - FY23
- 23-0382 - Minutes - Sample MAPE Minutes - FY23
- 23-0383 - Minutes - Sample AFSCME Minutes - FY23
- 23-0384 - Minutes - Sample Student Government Association Minutes - Budget Update - FY23
- 23-0385 - Minutes - Sample AASC Minutes - FY23
- 23-0386 - Resource - Planning Retreat - Day 1 Agenda Presentation and Resources - FY21
- 23-0387 - Data - Student Engagement Executive Summary - FY21

5.B - Core Component 5.B

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

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

Argument

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

Financial Resources

M State has the necessary financial resources to support all operations including (23-0398):

- A composite financial index (CFI) ratio excluding Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Pronouncements 68 and 75 of 5.74 with solid fundamentals, including a primary reserve ratio of 1.58 for FY22, indicating sufficient and flexible resources.
- Stable revenue sources including 20% from tuition and fees, 41% from state appropriations and 30% from non-operational federal grants, accounting for 91% of revenue.
- Finances are audited annually at the Minnesota State system office with supplemental financial statements to each college.
- Two foundations with a growing ability to assist college funding.
- Financial reserves, which are 59% of our general fund revenue (23-0399).

Human Resources

As reported in the HLC Institutional Update in 2022, M State has 309 employees to support academic and non-academic operations, including 108 full-time instructional staff, 90 part-time instructional staff, 131 full-time non-instructional staff and 61 part-time non-instructional staff. Additionally, M State monitors ratios of full-year equivalent (FYE) students (credits/30) and student headcount per employee FTE (23-0400) to inform areas where investment or reallocations should occur. The College's recent reorganization of academic affairs into a "school" model (see 4.C.3) and planned case management models (see 5.C.6) within each school enhances the ability of faculty and staff to collaborate. Additionally, the separation of the vice president of academic and student affairs into two positions (vice president of academic affairs and vice president of student success) increases the voice and ability to implement academic quality and student success priorities (23-0266).

Physical Resources

The College maintains a large physical infrastructure across four campuses with a total of nearly 765,000 square feet. The vice president of finance and facilities maintains a master facilities plan (23-0397). M State will begin the process of updating the master facilities plan in summer 2023 to ensure physical resources meet the needs of academic programming as outlined in the current academic planning process (see 5.C.3).

Capital improvements to physical resources are governed by the Minnesota State Higher Education Asset Preservation and Replacement statute (HEAPR) from 1994. In system operating instructions, the state system describes prioritization of funding for these projects in its recommendation to the Minnesota State Legislature for inclusion in state bonding bills. M State submits proposals to the state that are prioritized from a list of deferred projects. Recent projects at M State include:

Completed HEAPR projects:

- Boiler replacement in Detroit Lakes
- Boiler replacement in Wadena
- Fire and emergency alarm systems in Detroit Lakes

Projects currently in front of the legislature:

- HVAC and boiler replacement in Fergus Falls; the project will incorporate a geothermal heating system
- Partial roof replacement in Detroit Lakes
- HVAC renovations in Wadena

The College also used a portion of federal Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) dollars to replace all pneumatic controls with electronic digital controls on the HVAC systems in Moorhead, Detroit Lakes and Wadena to increase efficiency and air quality in the buildings.

M State is committed to a safe campus environment for students and staff. The College has a webpage (23-0401) with crime bulletins and statistics, along with several safety policies and procedures that are easily found through a search (23-0402).

Each campus has a Safety and Facilities Committee that involves labor and management in a cooperative effort to promote safety in the workplace (23-0403). These committees identify potential facility or safety issues and, when appropriate, make recommendations for changes in policy or procedure.

Within the facilities office, the director of safety and emergency preparedness conducts trainings at each campus, such as using the Star Alert notification system (phone, email and text notifications in case of an emergency), emergency procedure training, and hands only CPR and AED training, along with individual program required safety training. The director also coordinates all emergency response plans, weather related procedures, and collaborates with OSHA on consultation visits to each campus.

Technological Resources

M State, through operational review processes, has adopted a cloud-first mindset in implementing new technologies. In this transition, the College is focused on ensuring services and infrastructure are more secure, cost-effective and flexible. M State is a part of the Minnesota State system Microsoft 365 tenant and D2L Brightspace learning management system contract. This system-based approach

affords consistency across all Minnesota State institutions and includes distributed support for these tools.

M State has a long history of using Interactive Television (ITV) classrooms and implemented "telepresence" classrooms in 2015. At the beginning of the pandemic, M State purchased several Zoom carts to allow for flexible delivery modalities. M State is fortunate to work with the Learning Network of Minnesota (LNM) and Minnesota IT Services on a core network infrastructure that supports state organizations and higher education. The LNM specifically supports classroom technology, scheduling technology resources, and enhances the purchasing power of Minnesota institutions. M State is currently planning the replacement of telepresence rooms with a Zoom compatible solution that incorporates faculty feedback.

Recent investments in IT resources include:

- Server switch infrastructure to increase capacity and throughput.
- Modernized Wi-Fi network to increase speed and enhance coverage.
- Implemented a 'Park-and-Learn' infrastructure with increased Wi-Fi coverage into parking lots.
- Added network access to outdoor athletic fields for streaming of athletic events.
- Implemented a laptop loaner program in coordination with M State social workers.
- Upgraded campus digital displays with a cloud-based tool for campus staff to manage messaging.

Upcoming projects for maintaining and enhancing the infrastructure include implementation of a new customer relationship management system, website redesign, improving website accessibility and reducing errors, telephone upgrades, and increased network and environmental monitoring. Additionally, the College uses classroom use reports to determine the allocation and reallocation of classroom technology ([23-0404](#)).

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

The mission and strategic plan of M State encompass several priorities, including impacting the lives of students and communities, improving student success, improving equity and inclusion, and improving financial sustainability ([23-0083](#), [23-0054](#)). To achieve these goals, the College has developed a secure base of resources and processes that help M State move priorities into action. As described in 5.B.1, M State has sufficient and flexible funding as evidenced by the composite financial index (CFI) and the primary reserve ratio. In 5.B.3, the budget process describes how new funds are requested, which requires the requestor to demonstrate alignment with the College's mission, goals and strategic plan. Additionally, in 5.C.3, the overall planning process is described and includes details on M State's collaborative planning processes. The subsequent paragraphs illustrate how the College has prioritized work within the key priorities of the mission and strategic plan.

M State has great opportunities to impact the lives of students and communities through delivering credit and non-credit education to serve our region. Although credit-based headcount has fallen at M State, much like nearly all colleges in the country, M State has expanded non-credit offerings to serve our region. In 2022, non-credit headcount (duplicated) swelled to 8,228 from 6,110 the year prior

(35% increase). This was an 18% increase in total training hours, from 86,318.67 to 101,903.75, with a total revenue of $2,048,321 compared to a previous high of $1,550,039 in 2017 (32% increase).

In credit offerings, M State continues to meet community needs as the college of choice for students in Minnesota's West Central Economic Development Region (23-0405) by delivering programs for in-demand careers such as nursing (largest healthcare meta-major), building trades (largest applied technology meta-major), and business, information technology and transfer programs.

To enhance financial sustainability while maintaining a focus on equitable student success, revenue development to implement strategic projects has been a priority for the College. Over the last few years, M State has secured grants to support diverse students in healthcare program pipelines (23-0091), a federal Title III grant to enhance student support services, regional small business development center grant, an advanced technological education grant from the National Science Foundation, Perkins V grant, and most recently, a strengthening community college training grant from the department of labor (23-0034, 23-0435).

Additionally, the College actively pursues increased efficiency in processes to utilize resources more strategically. During the 2022 summer and fall terms, the vice president of institutional effectiveness and the executive dean of workforce development services introduced value stream mapping (VSM), a technique from lean manufacturing, to determine inefficiencies in the admissions pipeline and to redirect resources to alleviate bottlenecks with reallocation of resources and developing key metrics to monitor the process (23-0406). M State is planning to expand the use of VSM to other student support units, including financial aid and employee onboarding.

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

The vice president of finance and facilities begins the budget process in November, confirming organizational structure and existing positions (both filled and vacant) with the Cabinet (23-0407). The confirmed organizational structure is then combined with current non-personnel budgets to develop the starting expenditures for the budget process. Using the starting expenditures, multiple scenarios are developed using assumptions (23-0408, 23-0409). In order to ensure the budget is finalized in time for submission to the system office, a budget calendar is released to the administrative team (23-0410) along with a memo to Cabinet outlining the process and important dates (23-0411), the request for new funding (23-0412), a four-year average of non-personnel spending by area (23-0413) and beginning expenditures (23-0414, note: this is suppressed as it includes private data). The system office generally sends out budget planning reference points based on best estimates from their information to assist with building the scenarios (23-0415) .

Based on the scenarios, the president and vice president of finance set the preliminary budget targets (23-0416) and Cabinet members aggregate and prioritize any new funding requests (this does not include reallocation of resources) using a template (23-0412). Cabinet members approve new funds requests and identify proposed reductions or reallocations, which are discussed and decided by Cabinet. The final budget is submitted to the Board of Trustees in early May.

A perpetual challenge in the process is the timeline associated with the state legislative budget process, Board of Trustees tuition approval, and the labor union negotiation process. The state legislature often approves allocation to the system in late May or during a special summer session. The labor union negotiation process lags the budget development process on a regular basis, with

negotiated increases taking effect retroactively after a budget is finalized. Both issues lead to a general operating budget that has estimated projections in the largest revenue and expenditure sources.

Budget Monitoring

Each month, a detailed report is sent out to each Cabinet member outlining the financial position of each cost center expenses compared to budget for both personnel and non-personnel type expenses (23-0417, 23-0418). The vice president of finance and facilities reviews the reports prior to sending them to Cabinet and identifies issues that will be resolved at the college level and budget shortages that need to be adjusted by the Cabinet level budget manager. This is accompanied by verbal and written monthly financial updates to Cabinet and includes updates on any budget issues and the cash position of the College.

Monthly reports are also compiled, reviewed and distributed to all deans and relevant directors with a similar process (23-0419). The Finance Office requests that deans resolve issues within their fiscal control and offers help as requested.

For any personnel with budget authority, detailed reports are also available upon request from the Finance Office, current balances of individual cost centers are available in the employee portal, and reporting is available through the Minnesota State system accounting application.

Budget Improvement Plans

M State conducted budget employee listening sessions in fall 2022, led by the College's vice president of finance and facilities and vice president of institutional effectiveness, to garner constructive feedback on how to prioritize spending and communicate about the budget. See the project charter for the action plan and timeline to strengthen the process (23-0420).

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

M State's commitment to a quality and affordable education is evident in how the College allocates expenditures, with 77% of funds used for instruction, student services and academic support (see 5.C.1 Core Expenses and Core expense History). As a public higher education college within the Minnesota State system, M State is devoted to affordability while delivering a quality education.

Examples of how M State's resource allocation process meets educational needs include:

1. Academic deans and the Perkins grant coordinator conduct two rounds of academic equipment funding each year. For a leveraged equipment funding process, deans collect and analyze equipment requests while considering institutional priorities and opportunities to use existing sources. For Perkins grant requests, the Perkins grant coordinator manages the request process in collaboration with Career and Technical Education deans.
2. After analyzing program efficiencies, deans and program faculty develop a revitalization plan to improve program metrics. Cabinet and the deans meet to discuss the plans and track progress of plan implementation. During this fiscal year, the process resulted in an evaluation of the College's website, purchasing equipment for the music department to launch a new Hip Hop course, and purchasing $22,000 of equipment for the graphic design program using the leveraged equipment process.
3. After analysis of a student survey and assessment results indicated a lack of student

engagement in online courses, M State allocated resources for Class Technologies (3.A.3), a platform that gives faculty the ability to monitor student engagement during Zoom sessions.

4. Investment in food pantries and mental health services after reviewing student input from several surveys on student basic needs, including the Hope Center Survey (3.D.1).
5. Purchase of a TurnItIn subscription for faculty and students to use due to concerns of students inadequately citing references in ENGL 1101 College Writing (2.E.3).
6. Due to regional demand for federally mandated changes to commercial drivers licensing (CDL) requirements, the Workforce Development Solutions division added staff (full-time coordinator and additional instructor) as well as one additional tractor and two trailers (79 students completed training from 7/1/22 - 2/24/23 with an additional 38 students in progress).

Sources

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- 23-0266 - Resource - Organizational Charts - FY23
- 23-0397 - Resource - M State Facilities Master Plan - FY15
- 23-0398 - Report - M State Audit 2022 - Financial Statements - FY22
- 23-0399 - Report - Financial Health Indicators - FY22
- 23-0400 - Report - FYE to FTE Ratio Trends - FY22
- 23-0401 - Website - Safety Website - FY23
- 23-0402 - Policy - Safety Policies - FY23
- 23-0403 - Minutes - Safety and Facilities Committtee Meeting Minute Examples - FY23
- 23-0404 - Report - Endpoint Usage Stats - FY22
- 23-0405 - Data - SLEDS West Central Economic Development Region - FY23
- 23-0406 - Website - Value Stream Mapping Project Charter - FY23
- 23-0407 - Report - Budget 2024 - Salaries Non-Faculty - FY23
- 23-0408 - Report - Budget 2024 - Budgetary Assumptions - FY23
- 23-0409 - Report - Budget 2024 - Budget Planning Scenarios - FY23
- 23-0410 - Resource - Budget Calendar - FY23
- 23-0411 - Resource - Memo to Cabinet - FY23
- 23-0412 - Resource - New Funds Request Form - FY23
- 23-0413 - Report - Budget 2024 - Non Personnel 4 Year Average - FY19-22
- 23-0414 - Report - Budget 2024 - Starting Expenditures - FY23
- 23-0415 - Report - Budget Planning Reference Points - FY23
- 23-0416 - Resource - Memo to Cabinet - Budget Target - FY23
- 23-0417 - Report - General Fund - FY23
- 23-0418 - Report - Workforce Development Solutions - FY23
- 23-0419 - Report - General Fund ASA Deans and Directors - FY23
- 23-0420 - Website - Budget Improvements Project Charter - FY23
- 23-0435 - Website - M State News_Labor Dept. Grant - FY23

5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

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

Argument

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

M State specializes in affordable and exceptional education, service, and workforce training. We welcome all students and engage them in shaping their futures and their communities.

As the above mission statement indicates, M State allocates resources primarily to educational priorities, service of students and workforce training. In addition, inclusivity and equity are at the heart of the College's mission. Of all expenses, 49% is devoted to instruction, 18% to student services, 15% to institutional support and 10% to academic support (23-0421). Within the expenditures, employee salaries and benefits are 60% of all operating expenses (23-0398).

Supervising administrators work with directors and staff to prioritize and allocate funding within their divisions and have full authority to reallocate funds between cost centers within their oversight. Large projects that require funding in excess of the allocated dollars are submitted to Cabinet. The College began using project charters (see examples below) to record the project purpose, deliverables, alignment to strategic initiatives, and key human and financial resources. Although there has not been strict adherence to completing a project charter, Cabinet has committed to using charters, or alternatively project work plans/requests for proposals, for all future annual plan tactics and large supplemental budget requests.

Examples of allocating resources to the mission and priorities include:

- Implementation of a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software to increase efficiency in communication with prospective and current students as well as to provide a platform to better serve students (23-0394).
- Investment in new faculty positions to bolster student support and program growth on specific

campuses, including business faculty in Fergus Falls, Medical Laboratory Technician faculty in Moorhead, and agribusiness faculty in Moorhead.

- Establishing holistic food pantries (23-0098).
- Developing an online orientation for a more effective student onboarding process (23-0261).
- Allocating funds to expand co-curricular programming that was approved by the President's Cabinet for FY24 (23-0422).
- Approval of a website redesign proposal to increase visibility of M State's academic programs, enhance accessibility for all stakeholders, and form a strategy for maintaining the website over time (23-0423).

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

M State's planning and program review efforts exist to help improve and better serve students and the community. Through strategic planning, program review and operational planning efforts, the College aligns work with strategic goals, engages in cycles of informed improvement and collaborates to ensure the continued vibrancy and health of the institution.

Linking Assessment of Student Learning, Program Review and Revitalization

In the past, M State struggled with a coordinated effort to assess student learning, including operational aspects of where to submit and store reviews and assessments for ongoing faculty and stakeholder use. Late in 2021, the College invested in Strategic Planning Online (SPOL), a Cloud-based solution for submitting and storing assessment plans, assessment data and program reviews. This investment was key in clarifying the process of linking assessment and program reviews to planning and budgeting. This coincided with an update to the College's program review templates to ensure programs are setting relevant targets for student success and clarifying planning for each program and discipline.

During the latest rounds of program revitalization (fall 2022), a process aimed at increasing student enrollment and success, programs requested a concerted effort to redesign the College's website to improve stakeholder accessibility to program information. As a result, the marketing and IT teams co-developed a plan that was approved by the President's Cabinet in early March 2023 (see 5.C.1).

Another example of linking assessment results to budgeting is M State's investment in Yellowdig, a product that supports online student engagement. The product is referenced in faculty responses to assessment evidence in 4.B.2, in both the need to improve student engagement and in the use of Yellowdig to increase engagement. Additional examples of linking assessment to budgeting can be found in 5.B.4.

Linking Evaluation of Operations

While academic programs and disciplines complete a program review process, operational reviews occur in various formats. Some operational reviews use a standard template (23-0424), others are completed using different processes such as an Advising Summit (23-0193), or using tools such as Value Stream Mapping (VSM) (23-0425). These reviews result in specific allocation or re-allocation of resources depending on the findings of the review.

In VSM, two administrators experienced in-process evaluation using lean techniques and conducted VSM events for staff in recruitment, admissions, advising, financial aid and student life. The process includes mapping the current process to identify service gaps and excessive waste (time delays) prior to mapping the future-state process. The team identified several opportunities that were approved by Cabinet and implemented, including:

- Reallocating personnel to assist with redesigning and distributing mailings to applicants and accepted students.
- Reallocating the M State call center to each campus to assist with the enrollment process.
- Redesigning enrollment events to align registration with the College's "school of" model.
- Adding success navigator positions to the College and within the framework of a newly received Title III grant (in progress).
- Identified metrics to monitor the process.

During a review of student needs in relation to M State's social worker position, the College used data points regarding the use of services and general community needs near each of the College's four campuses. This led to an FTE increase from 0.5 to 1.0 FTE for social workers on the Moorhead campus.

During the IT program review, the team determined a prioritization of work, including investing in a Cloud-first mindset, focusing on security and reducing physical hardware. As a result of the program review, the application development team allocated personnel to patching the back ends of several software systems to enhance security and prepare for a migration to the Cloud. Also, Computer Help Centers are leading an effort to utilize the College's Microsoft licensing to improve the employee portal, and the College is directly investing in several security measures, including AuthLite to enhance security in domain admin accounts and Microsoft Defender for advanced threat detection on College servers.

Linking Institutional Planning and Budgeting

The strategic and annual planning processes (see 5.C.3) are closely linked to the College's annual budget. Examples over the past three years include (23-0085):

FY23

- Investment in personnel to open an energy center in partnership with Xcel Energy.
- Investment in a director-level position to strengthen Credit for Prior Learning.
- Implementation of a dental simulation lab.
- Allocation of resources to implement CRM software.
- Creation of food pantries on all four campuses.
- Investment in the non-credit commercial driver's license program, including equipment and personnel.

FY22

- Investment in a CRM software for prospecting.
- Allocated human resources to create a Student Intake Form.
- Continued investment in release credits for faculty on the assessment team.
- Contracted with an agency to provide grant writing support.

FY21

- Transitioned personnel out of Perkins funding to increase support for career and technical education programs.
- Invested in professional development, including Intercultural Development Inventory training expansion to all administrators and managers.
- Added release time for key developmental education faculty to implement the developmental education strategic roadmap.
- Contracted with an outside agency to provide guidance on institutional marketing strategies.

Continuous Improvement

While planning processes and alignment improved over the past several years, additional improvements are needed. As discovered during budget listening sessions (see 5.B), there is a need for greater budget awareness and ensuring employees understand request processes. As described in 5.A, the commitment of College leadership to adhere to a project charter-based request system will clarify the process.

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

Institutional Planning

Over the past three years, M State has overhauled institutional planning processes to increase integration of planning across the institution and to link the budgeting process to those plans. Prior to these changes, strategic planning processes involved broad-based participation, but annual planning was somewhat disconnected from the strategic plan and wasn't completed across the entire institution. The new planning processes directly represent internal constituencies and indirectly represent external constituencies as brought forward by employees who meet with program advisory committees, community advisory committees, college foundations and other stakeholder groups.

M State's strategic planning process is instrumental in prioritizing goals that will have the most impact on advancing the College's mission. Nearly 100 employees attended a three-day planning retreat in 2021 to engage in activities such as reviewing the College's vision for 2025, identifying initiatives in alignment with the Minnesota State system (Equity 2030 and guided learning pathways), reviewing institutional data, conducting an equity gap root cause analysis, and collaborating to develop a process for project charters and a problem-solving framework. To cultivate an "all in" attitude about strategic planning, employees invited to participate in these planning days included a cross-representation of faculty from general education and technical programs, various department staff, members from employee committees and union groups, and administration. Time was also devoted to conducting a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis to better understand how the College can leverage all resources (financial, human, time, energy) to support student success and equity. Input from the retreat was aggregated, refined and approved by Cabinet to produce the annual strategic work plan. See the 2021 Planning Retreat evidence for more detail (23-0386). During the year, a list of potential improvements was created for FY23 (23-0426).

The same process was repeated last year. Adhering to the continuous improvement plan, the

planning sessions were open to all employees, progress reports were completed in each area on a monthly basis and reported to college employees via open forums, additional divisions completed planning meetings, and budget listening sessions were completed. While the 2022 planning retreat incorporated breakouts by academic school, additional work needs to incorporate review of student learning and program review results. Additionally, the College is considering student representation during one or more planning days this year.

Institutional plans are aligned at the division level by each Cabinet administrator. Every year, administrators develop goals that support the annual plan, which are reviewed and approved by the president. Administrators review annual plan progress and next steps during their performance evaluations with the president.

Campus and Academic Planning

The pandemic has drastically changed the landscape of higher education. In response, M State engaged in an academic planning process to adapt, realign with the needs of the region, and support growth and sustainability for the College (23-0439). The process began at the beginning of AY23 with a deep dive into the programs that M State offers and how they match up with projections of community needs. This included a review of student enrollment patterns, facilities, and the status of program revitalization plans. The local communities' economies, population growth, and housing realities were also considered. A variety of input was collected from employees, President's Advisory Council members and community leaders. The College specifically solicited feedback from community leaders who do not have direct ties to the College and who represent a variety of industry fields, including healthcare, construction, transportation and manufacturing. Over 50 community leaders participated in individual meetings with M State's president, 35 leaders attended and gave feedback at advisory council meetings, and more than 150 employees provided input during academic planning sessions.

The academic plan that was developed is reflective of the input received and data reviewed. The decisions made and vision for each campus were shared with employees at an open forum on March 22, 2023 (23-0446) and communicated to the community in press releases (23-0447). The plan will shape the future of the College, including support services, enrollment and marketing strategies, facilities, investments and budgets.

In addition to long-term academic planning, the College conducts an annual internal analysis of program viability and sustainability using student-to-faculty ratios, labor market analyses and data from the Minnesota Employment and Economic Development and the North Dakota Labor Market. A list is then compiled of programs deemed viable but in need of substantial changes to become sustainable. Beginning in fall 2022, this process was improved by requiring programs in need of substantial changes to complete a program revitalization charter with the support of their academic deans (23-0432). The charter includes timelines, benchmarks and accountability measures. Further, benchmarks between the program faculty and dean will be established to move programs from "viable with changes" to "viable." Plans are submitted to the President's Cabinet for final approval. Approved plans are shared with the faculty Shared Governance Council.

Strategic Enrollment and Student Success Steering Committee

The College developed a strategic enrollment and student success steering committee in FY21 charged with analyzing the pandemic-impacted enrollment landscape, enrollment process, M State student lifecycle, financial aid strategies, and retention analysis of disaggregated data. This inclusive

team of educators and higher education practitioners helped develop key priorities to determine long-term needs for new student enrollment and adoption of guided learning pathways. In 2022, this group was modified to include **strategic enrollment management** planning in coordination with American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), the Lumina Foundation and the Minnesota State system office (see 4.C.1).

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

M State's plans are based on an understanding of the College's current capacity, including fluctuations in revenue and enrollment. With a comprehensive planning process open to all employees, the current capacity of employees is inherently included in planning discussions. Additionally, the College incorporates several revenue and enrollment scenarios in planning processes.

As previously stated, revenue is primarily based on state tuition and fees as well as state allocation. In scenario planning for revenue, the vice president of finance develops budget scenarios based on several sources, including the governor's budget, the system office legislative request, and no change in state allocation (23-0409). These scenarios are used to project potential budget shortfalls or surpluses. Enrollment planning ties directly into the budgeting process and projections. In 2020, Institutional Research became more involved with the finance office in developing enrollment projections (see 5.C.5), which have increasingly become more accurate with a FY21 error of +3%, FY22 error of -4%, and a projected FY23 error of -0.5%.

Understanding the realities of higher education in 2023, the annual plan, SEM plan and strategic plan all demonstrate a need to become more efficient with existing resources (example: VSM process improvement), retain a higher percentage of students (see 4.C), or increase service to specific populations (example: Credit for Prior Learning investments, SEM plan targets for adult populations).

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

Planning at M State incorporates many external factors, including population and demographic shifts, changes within the economy, state support and technological advances. A reflection of how the College adapted to the COVID pandemic highlights the College's ability to shift operations during a crisis (23-0427).

Population, Demographic Shifts and Economic Factors

The Institutional Effectiveness office leads efforts in analyzing population and demographic shifts. Using a variety of resources, the College attempts to forecast the impact of changing demographics and economic conditions. Analysis begins with several data sources, including long-term projections by the Minnesota State Demographic Center (23-0428), high school enrollment data (23-0429) and data from the State Longitudinal Data System (SLEDS) (23-0430). As stated in 5.C.4, the data sources and methodologies have been successful over the past three years.

Technology and Security

The Information Technology division anticipates technology advancements by staying current with trends, surveying students and staff and participating in infrastructure comparisons (Educause), and is guided through its strategic goals of: (1) moving to a Cloud-first mentality, and; (2) increasing flexibility of services to support students off-site.

In addition to items in 5.B.1, M State is proactively working to enhance its overall security posture to protect against a constantly evolving threat landscape. The College is continually implementing various security initiatives while ensuring compliance with federal, state and contractual regulations. One of the key initiatives has been to evolve the identity and access management program. This has included enabling multi-factor authentication, account segmentation and privileged account management. This approach helps ensure only authorized personnel can access sensitive data and systems.

IT has been working diligently to deploy physical and electronic security solutions. Electronic security investments include endpoint protection, Lenovo commercial vantage, Lenovo dock manager, security benchmarks, and security information and event management. These solutions enable the College to stay in front of, detect, prevent and respond to cyber threats effectively. Physical security is also critical; the College has implemented security measures, such as enhanced video surveillance systems, across all campuses and has expanded existing door access systems to include the campus and campus housing.

M State has prioritized data protection and backups by implementing on-site and Cloud-based backups and data encryption. These measures help to ensure data is available and can be restored quickly in the event of a cyber attack or disaster.

The College will continue to enhance its security posture by implementing new security initiatives, considering the following:

- Cloud Security – As the College continues to adopt Cloud-based solutions, it will focus on enhancing more readily available security posture leveraging solutions.

- Zero Trust Model – M State is evaluating the adoption of the Zero Trust Model, which assumes that all users, devices and systems are potentially compromised. This approach requires continuous authentication and authorization, network segmentation, and least privilege access to prevent unauthorized access to data and systems.

- Security Automation – The College plans to leverage security automation to enhance security capabilities while reducing the workload of the IT team. This will involve automating security processes, such as vulnerability management, threat detection and incident response, to detect and respond to security threats faster.

- Threat Intelligence – The College will continue to invest in threat intelligence to stay up-to-date with the latest threats and vulnerabilities. This will involve monitoring threat feeds, sharing intelligence within the Minnesota State system, and leveraging analytics to identify and prioritize threats.

- Employee Security Awareness Training – M State will focus on training staff, faculty and students on security awareness to reduce the risk of insider threats. This will involve educating

stakeholders on security best practices, social engineering, and phishing attacks to prevent security incidents caused by human error.

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

Through use of institutional and divisional planning, combined with academic assessment, program reviews, operational reviews and project charters, M State implements its plans to improve operations and student outcomes.

In addition to the projects listed in 5.C.2, other implementations and accomplishments from the past three cycles of annual planning include:

FY21

- Increased employee diversity (1.C.3).
- Innovation funding request system (unfortunately, the structure was unsuccessful).

FY22

- Implemented a business pathway with a common first-year core (4.C.3).
- Created meta-majors in alignment with guided learning pathways to examine data by like majors (4.C.2).
- Developed and launched a Student Intake Form (3.D.1).
- The Assessment Team configured Strategic Planning Online (SPOL) software and prepared for full launch in FY23 (4.B).
- The Assessment Team drafted revisions to institutional learning outcomes with subsequent approval in FY23 (4.B).
- Adopted inclusive hiring practices (1.C.3).
- Began implementing the Bremer Foundation Grant (1.B.2).
- Completed the Hope Center Institutional Capacity-Building Cohort (2.B.2).
- Expanded the PTK chapter to encompass all four campuses (3.D.1).
- Shifted Perkins funds from personnel to innovative uses.
- Completed initial stages of an evaluation of College culture (23-0449, 23-0431).

FY23 (to date)

- Employing a data-informed approach to class scheduling, including implementation and analysis of student surveys and student focus groups (carryover from FY21 plan).
- Used VSM to map admissions process and delineate hand-off from enrollment to advising (carryover from FY22 plan) (5.C.2).
- Currently reviewing the Student Intake Form and discussing a transition of the form to the new CRM to track data more efficiently (carryover from FY22).
- Completed the academic planning process to sustain M State campuses and meet workforce needs.
- Implemented the business guided learning pathway (4.C.3).
- Hired a director of Credit for Prior Learning (4.A.2).
- Established a Health Sciences, Human Services and Nursing leadership team.

- Transitioned enrollment managers into the Salesforce CRM.
- Established a College Inclusion Team (1.C.3).
- Established an inclusion calendar and programs (1.C.3).
- Converted food shelves into food pantries (3.D.1).
- Participated in the statewide 211 project with the Greater Twin Cities United Way (3.D.1).
- Enhanced the Spartans Basic Needs Support webpage (3.D.1).
- Analyzed the student application process from prospect to M State student (5.C.2).
- Updated the College's SEM plan (4.C.1).
- Completed launch of a year-round schedule.
- Obtained multi-year federal grants (1.B.2).

These implementations, along with other projects such as improvements to selective admissions programs, policy review with an equity lens, employing Maxient to facilitate student conduct issues, overall improvements in student fall-to-fall retention or graduation (see 4.C), demonstrate that M State effectively implements its plans to systematically improve operations and student outcomes.

Sources

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- 23-0421 - Report - Core Expenses - FY21
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- 23-0425 - Website - Value Stream Mapping Action Plans - FY23
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- 23-0427 - Report - COVID Impact - FY23
- 23-0428 - Report - Minnesota State Demographic Center - Long-Term Population Projections for MN - FY21
- 23-0429 - Data - K12 Enrollment Data - FY22
- 23-0430 - Data - SLEDS Sample Data Extract - FY23
- 23-0431 - Resource - College Culture - FY23
- 23-0432 - Resource - Program Revitalization Charter - FY23
- 23-0439 - Website - Academic Planning Project Charter - FY23
- 23-0446 - Presentation - M State Academic Plan College Forum Presentation - FY23
- 23-0447 - Resource - M State Academic Plan Press Release Example - FY23
- 23-0449 - Website - College Culture Project Charter - FY23

5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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

Summary

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

Leadership uses the College's administrative structure and collaborative processes to achieve M State's mission, including faculty and staff collective bargaining agreements and a shared governance procedure. Since the last review, M State has improved its use of data to inform decisions: M State has adopted data visualization and report standardization, comprehensive use of system data, and benchmark data from the Voluntary Framework for Accountability. Beyond quantitative data, the College uses qualitative data to understand student, faculty and staff experiences.

M State's financial resources have the depth and flexibility to meet institutional needs, with a CFI of 5.74 and financial reserves that are 59% of the general fund revenue. The College actively monitors trends in staffing ratios to both student FTE and headcount, demonstrating remarkable stability over time. The College uses its resources and Minnesota State system capital improvement processes to ensure deferred maintenance is addressed and the College can achieve its mission.

M State allocates 49% of its resources to instruction, 18% to student services, 15% to institutional support, and 10% to academic support. Allocations follow an annual budgeting process; budget managers closely monitor spending through monthly reports and have the ability to implement projects based on existing funding. When a project requires additional funding, the President's Cabinet receives project proposals and requests, preferably in the form of a project charter (see improvement below), to make a sound, data-informed decision.

The College has demonstrated that it has improved its processes for linking its budget to student learning, program review, operational review, and planning. Additionally, M State uses broad-based "planning days" to develop its annual plan. Administration uses this process to maintain an understanding of current capacity. Furthermore, the College has improved population forecasting and has a well-developed model for reviewing several funding scenarios.

M State recognizes the need for continuous improvement and intends to:

- Adopt a CRM to actively engage students and report additional metrics to track student engagement and student success.
- Expand use of project charters to set project goals and assessment measures.
- Incorporate recommendations from budget listening sessions to improve budget managers' and general employees' understanding of the budgeting and request processes.

Sources

There are no sources.