

Assurance Argument

Dakota College at Bottineau - ND

Review date: 3/11/2024

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

Response to 1.A.1

The Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB) Mission Statement was recently updated and developed through a process suited to the context of the institution.

During the 2022-2023 academic year, the DCB Campus Dean lead a [Strategic Planning Committee](#) comprised of DCB faculty and staff representative of DCB's academic offerings and support services. This Committee was tasked with updating the Campus Mission ([approved](#) by the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) on April 3, 2008), as well as the Vision and Values, to reflect DCB in 2022 (and beyond). The Committee sought [feedback](#) from faculty and staff, and used this feedback to develop potential mission, vision, and value statements. These statements were [revised over the course of several months](#), integrating feedback from the Faculty and Staff Senates. The Committee made a motion to approve the newly developed Mission, Vision, and Value statements during [February 2023](#), with Administrative Council approving the statements during [March 2023](#), and final approval from the SBHE during its [April 2023](#) meeting. The Dakota College at Bottineau Mission, Vision, and Values are as follows:

Mission: Dakota College at Bottineau provides a quality education in a caring environment.

Vision: Dakota College at Bottineau adapts to the changing educational landscape to empower students and impact communities.

Values: Dakota College at Bottineau is student-focused and community centered. We value:

Integrity, Engagement, Inclusion, and Passion.

Response to 1.A.2 and 1.A.3

DCB's mission documents are current, align with the Mission, and identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the programs and services provided.

DCB Strategic Plan

DCB's strategic planning efforts have recently been impacted by two factors: the COVID-19 pandemic and the resignation of the former Campus Dean. As evidenced in the 2015-2020 [DCB Strategic Plan](#), strategic planning at DCB has traditionally utilized [North Dakota University System \(NDUS\) strategic goals](#) to organize DCB-specific goals and objectives. The NDUS did not finalize its most recent strategic plan until [June 2022](#), and DCB administrators, led by the Campus Dean, did not move forward with planning until the NDUS plan was in place. During Spring 2022, when the NDUS strategic plan was nearing final stages, the DCB Campus Dean announced his plan to resign. With a new Campus Dean forthcoming, the former Campus Dean did not wish to develop a DCB Strategic Plan that may or may not fit with the plan of the new Campus leader.

As mentioned in 1.A.1, a DCB Strategic Planning Committee was developed during Fall 2022 and was led by the new Campus Dean. The Committee gave priority to revitalizing the Campus Mission, Vision, and Values, with work on establishing DCB Strategic Planning priorities occurring during Spring 2023. Several members of the Strategic Planning Committee attended a [strategic planning workshop](#) during May 2023, and four of these leaders now serve on the newly developed [Strategic Planning and Institutional Council for Effectiveness \(SPICE\)](#). With priorities in place, but the completion of a new DCB Strategic Plan still in progress, a strategic Implementation Plan was put forward to guide planning for the 2023-2024 academic year. This Implementation Plan received [feedback](#) from SPICE, was sent to both [Faculty](#) and [Staff](#) Senates for comment and endorsement, and was approved by [College Council](#).

The [2023-2024 Implementation Plan](#) identifies items for completion that will occur throughout the 2023-2024 academic year. These items fit under DCB's three priorities: Student Success, Community Commitment, and Institutional Improvement. At the heart of these three priorities is the Campus Mission of *providing a quality education in a caring environment*. Strategic planning goals were adopted through [Faculty](#) and [Staff](#) Senates during Fall 2023, with College Council offering final approval of the goals during [December 2023](#). The 2024-2029 Dakota College at Bottineau Strategic Plan, [Strategies for Success](#), will go to the SBHE for endorsement Spring 2024.

DCB Academic Catalog

An updated version of the [DCB Academic Catalog](#) is released in hard copy every two years, however, updates are made to the online version of the Catalog regularly. The current version of the Catalog covers academic years 2022 through 2024, and "[presents in outline the organization, its history and scope, members of the faculty for the current year, and descriptions of the various courses of study to be offered during the subsequent biennium.](#)" Specifically, the Catalog addresses the [Campus Mission](#), various aspects of student services and [Campus life](#), as well as information about DCB's affiliate programs at [Minot State University](#) and [Valley City State University](#).

DCB Student Handbook

The [Student Handbook](#) is updated regularly (online) to reflect changes in policy, procedure, as well as faculty and staff contact information. Additionally, the [Student Senate reviews the Student Handbook](#) for accuracy each year, offering support for the current version each fall. Although intended for current DCB students, the Student Handbook is a valuable resource for faculty and staff, as well as potential students. One key charge of the Student Handbook is to outline [student services](#), including counseling services and financial aid.

DCB Master Plan

The current [DCB Master Plan](#) was submitted to the SBHE in 2022 and governs facility updates through 2028. Campus administrators, faculty, and staff contributed to the [Master Plan](#), identifying key facility and physical infrastructure priority goals. These priorities align with the Campus Mission and include:

- [Completion of the Career and Technical Education \(CTE\) Center](#) located in Minot, North Dakota. This property, formerly owned by Trinity Health, is a mostly federally funded project to establish a postsecondary facility at which DCB can provide CTE education to Minot and surrounding communities.
- Renovation of the College's [Old Main](#) building. DCB's Nursing Program is slated to move into this state-of-the-art facility Fall 2024. The renovated space will allow the Nursing Program to triple its current Campus enrollment and will make three labs, one classroom, and three offices available for repurposing in the College's main academic building, Thatcher Hall.
- Upgrading workstations and laboratory equipment in [Nelson Science Center](#) (NSC). Constructed in 1972, NSC received \$1.7 million for updates to the building's mechanical and HVAC systems, but needs several classroom updates to continue to provide quality education and training.
- Improvements to DCB's [Student Services](#) facilities. Prior to January 2024, Student Services, including recruiting, admissions, housing, financial aid, and the registrar, were located in space which includes offices and several small reception areas, a configuration which does not always allow for confidentiality. Additionally, several student support services (e.g., advising, counseling) were located in other areas around Campus. As identified in the 2022 Master Plan, DCB needed a mix of private offices, larger meeting areas, and a larger commons area all in one location to provide a one-stop service center for DCB's students. DCB began addressing this during the 2023-2024 winter break, switching the Student Services and Business Office spaces. Financial aid staff were moved into the Business Office to maintain private offices. Recruiting, admissions, housing, and counseling staff are now in a more student-focused location and are closer to advising staff. The registrar was relocated to Academic Affairs.

Response to 1.A.4

DCB's academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with the Campus Mission.

Academic Programs

DCB divides its academic programs into two overarching categories: [transfer programs and career and technical education \(CTE\) programs](#). Transfer programs include the Associate of Arts (AA) degree, Associate of Science (AS) degree, and certificate in College Studies. [Sub-plans for the AA and AS degree programs](#) allow DCB students to focus on a specific field of study or maintain a more general breadth of knowledge with the AA or AS in Liberal Arts. The certificate in College Studies

is a 24-credit certificate heavily rooted in general education coursework and marketed as a one-year transfer degree, as well as a goal for dual credit (early entry) students, known as the [LEAP \(Leading to Education and Advanced Preparation\) Program](#). CTE programs (focusing on agriculture, business, computer technology, education and human relations, health professions, natural resources, horticulture, and photography) include the Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree, as well as industry-specific certificate and certificate of completion options. Academic programs speak directly to the DCB Mission of *providing a quality education*.

All academic programs at DCB utilize technology, a key element of the Campus Vision of *adapting to the changing educational landscape*. One of the primary ways in which technology is utilized in academic programming is through the sending and receiving of courses via Interactive Video Network (IVN) and Pexip. DCB offered [42 courses](#) via IVN or Pexip during Fall 2023. Thirty-two of those courses had enrollment. As technology allows DCB academic programming to grow, DCB also fulfills its Value statement of being *student focused*. Dual credit students desire more class options and DCB continues to respond. In [Fall 2016](#), DCB offered 25 North Dakota high schools 57 sections of DCB courses. During [Fall 2022](#), DCB offered 51 area high schools 75 sections of DCB courses, serving 531 dual credit students.

The [Passport](#) and [Bridges](#) Programs, offered at Minot State University (MSU) and Valley City State University (VCSU) respectively, aim to provide a *quality education* to students who are academically underprepared for a four-year institution. Both Programs offer students who do not meet MSU or VCSU admission requirements the opportunity to start their collegiate career at these universities as DCB students. Upon successful completion of the Passport or Bridges Program (24 transferable credits), these students can then transfer to MSU or VCSU as fully admitted students. From Spring 2020 through Spring 2023, [13 Passport students](#) successfully completed the 24-credit Program and transferred to a four-year university. From Spring 2020 through Spring 2023, three [Bridges students successfully completed 24 transferable credits through the Program](#), transferring to VCSU, the Dakota Nursing Program offered through DCB, or to another university.

To further support the Campus Mission of providing a *quality education*, DCB's [2011 Strategic Plan](#) sought to provide students with additional opportunities to showcase educational success and rigor through the development of an [Honors Program](#). The Honors Program began during Fall 2012, and expanded into an [Honors Symposium](#) at the culmination of each semester beginning Fall 2013. From Fall 2020 through Spring 2023, 34 students presented a total of 23 presentations at the Honors Symposium.

As part of the Dakota Nursing Program, the DCB Nursing Department has been immensely successful in providing *quality education* and training to its students. For the past three years, DCB nursing cohorts have exceeded the target on almost all metrics for those in both the [Associate Degree Nursing \(ADN\)](#) and certificate in [Practical Nursing \(PN\)](#) programs (only falling short on the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX)-RN first time pass rate for ADN students during the 2021-2022 academic year). Job placement rates range from 90% to 100% for both the ADN and PN students. The DCB Nursing Department recently received external accreditation through the [National League of Nurses Commission for Nursing Education Accreditation](#) for its ADN program.

Student Support Services

Student support services at DCB are offered through the Student Services Department, which includes the Academic Atrium.

The Student Services Department provides support services via [admissions](#), [mental health counseling](#), [housing](#), [health services](#), [student clubs and organizations](#), as well as through First Year Experience. Many of these services are addressed in 3.D.1, and all services help to provide DCB students opportunities for individual growth and success and demonstrate the College's commitment to a *caring environment* and a supportive community. An area not addressed in 3.D.1 is First Year Experience (UNIV 105). [First Year Experience](#) is a one-credit course required of all new fall semester freshman designed to connect DCB students with support services and prepare students for collegiate success. This preparation includes informational sessions, community networking, and team-building activities.

Academic support services offered through the [Academic Atrium](#) include advising, academic and career counseling, disability services, tutoring, Math Lab, and test proctoring. These services are consistent with the Campus Mission to *provide a caring environment* through which to support the academic needs of DCB students. The mission of the [Academic Support Services Department](#) is to *provide students with academic and supportive services to help them achieve their academic goals for a quality education in a caring environment*. This support is most commonly provided by the College's [Advising Specialists](#), [Student Success Specialist](#), and the [Director of Student Success](#). Additionally, the [Disability Support Services Coordinator](#) provides extra support for students with documented disabilities. The effectiveness and utilization of these services is addressed in 3.D.1.

Enrollment Profile

The profile of DCB students remains relatively consistent. During [2023](#), the top majors of newly enrolled freshman included AS and AA Liberal Arts, Small Business Management, Advertising and Marketing, Wildlife and Fisheries Tech, Practical Nursing, and Information Technology. The top five majors of all enrolled students include Liberal Arts, Small Business Management, Practical Nursing (PN), Associate Degree Nursing (ADN), and Advertising and Marketing. Liberal Arts and Small Business Management are consistently the top majors at DCB for new freshmen, as indicated on the [2022](#) and [2021](#) DCB Student Profiles, and Liberal Arts, Small Business Management, and both ADN and PN, are the top majors for all enrolled students. [Enrollment reports](#) for Spring 2023 show that of the 1007 students enrolled at DCB, 183 were enrolled in a transfer program and 208 are enrolled in a CTE program.

Offering robust distance delivery of courses supports DCB's Value Statement of being *student-focused and community centered*, as well as the Vision of *adapting to the changing educational landscape*. Online enrollment continues to grow at DCB. From [Fall 2016 to Fall 2023](#), the percentage of DCB students taking at least one online class jumped 27 percent from 315 students to 776 students. DCB responded to this increase in online students by offering more course options, offering 126 online courses Fall 2023 compared to 107 during Fall 2016. Dual credit course offerings allows DCB the opportunity to serve high school students throughout the state. During Fall 2023, [618 dual credit students](#) enrolled in at least one DCB course. Many of these dual credit students took these classes online or over IVN.

Inclusion is one of DCB's Core Values, and the enrollment profile of DCB students reflects this value. [Bottineau](#) is a relatively homogeneous community, but DCB contributes ethnic, geographical, and cultural diversity to the community. [Twenty percent](#) of 2023 DCB students self-identified as an ethnicity other than White, with six percent identifying as two or more races, four percent identifying as Hispanic, and almost three percent identifying as Black. Aside from North Dakota, the highest percentage of DCB students come from Wyoming, Colorado, Minnesota, and Montana. Top five states of enrollment have also included Nevada, South Dakota, Florida, Texas, and Wisconsin in

[2022](#). *Inclusion* is further supported through the ASPIRE Program (1.B.1), curricular and cocurricular offerings (1.C.1), and various state and College policies and procedures (1.C.2).

Response to 1.A.5

DCB's Mission is clearly articulated through multiple public documents. The College Mission, Vision, and Values appear in the [Academic Catalog](#), [Student Handbook](#), and on the [DCB website](#). As indicated in 1.A.2-3, the Campus Mission is driving the College's strategic planning efforts. Additionally, a comparison between the Mission published in the first Institutional Academic Catalog and the 2008 Mission is available in the [DCB Master Plan](#). It should be noted that the current DCB Master Plan was developed in 2022, prior to the updated Campus Mission. Although the current Mission is notably shorter, the heart of the DCB Mission since 2008 has been *a quality education in a caring environment*.

Many Campus committees are directly charged with addressing aspects of the Campus Mission, Values, and Focus, as identified in the [DCB Standing Campus Committees](#) list. Specifically, the [Academic and Cocurricular Assessment Committee](#) facilitates a process to assess student learning in academic disciplines and cocurriculars, and uses this assessment to advance the Campus Mission. The [General Education Committee](#) ensures the alignment of general education academic courses with the mission, goals, and objectives of general education, which directly tie into the Campus Focus. Promotion of DCB's *Nature, Technology, and Beyond* Focus is a large part of the work performed by the [Earth Day Committee](#) which helps translate this Campus Focus into action. *Inclusion* promotion and awareness is spearheaded by the [Diversity Committee](#), which works to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion at DCB. Finally, the [Distance Education Committee](#) works to connect all students, regardless of location, with quality DCB courses and services.

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1.B - Core Component 1.B

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

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

Argument

Response to 1.B.1

Dakota College at Bottineau's (DCB) actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the College is privileged to serve not only DCB students, faculty, and staff, but the public as well. This commitment to the public good is evidenced by several practices.

Implementation Plan

As highlighted in the [2023-2024 Implementation Plan](#), Community Commitment is a top priority at the College. DCB displays its commitment to the public good through several items on the Plan. Renovating DCB's new CTE Center in Minot, ND (Item 2.1), and establishing a Minot programming advisory board (Item 2.9) aim to provide career and technical education (CTE) to north central North Dakota, a location that does not have an abundance of CTE available. Delivering dental programming at the CTE Center demonstrates DCB's educational role to serve the public by addressing a need specifically identified by [area dentists](#). By establishing an advisory board for programming within Minot, DCB will be able to serve a larger geographic area and provide educational programming in response to public demand.

Grants

Grant funding for educational and research purposes associated with the College is pursued by both faculty and staff at DCB. During Fall 2023, DCB faculty and staff were working on 14 different grants, providing a total of [\\$3,120,302](#) in funding. These grants range from nursing grants through a local healthcare facility (Trinity Health) to National Institute of Food and Agriculture grants for hemp production and drones. DCB faculty received a total of \$19,364 from the North Dakota University System (NDUS) to implement the use of open educational resources (OERs) in DCB courses. Two DCB faculty received funds to support the North Dakota Science Olympiad, a science competition for ND high school students held on DCB's Campus each spring. The Minot Programs Director secured funding through the North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities to begin the [ASPIRE](#) (Action and Support to Promote Inclusive Readiness Experiences) program at the College. ASPIRE is an inclusive college program for students with intellectual disabilities, allowing these students the opportunity to earn a credential in a supportive collegiate environment. Not only do these examples of grant-funded programs and activities support the community, but they also

support the *Nature, Technology, and Beyond* Campus Focus.

Faculty Service

Administrators at DCB value the educational contributions that faculty make to DCB students, as well as to the public. [Full-time faculty contracts](#) clearly state that service to the community is a key area of responsibility for faculty and ten percent of faculty effort should be dedicated to this responsibility. Faculty fulfill this responsibility in a variety of ways articulated on [Annual Summary of Activities](#) forms. Examples of faculty service to community include hosting events such as the [Water Festival](#) on DCB's Campus, serving on community boards such as the [Bottineau Community Pool Board](#), [Figure Skating Club](#), and [PTO](#), volunteering at [soup kitchens](#), the [volunteer fire department](#), serving as a [youth sports coach](#), and providing [outreach talks](#) to area schools.

DCB Facilities Usage

DCB's commitment to the public good entails providing area groups and organizations [meeting space](#) for a variety of events and trainings. Peace Garden Special Services regularly rents DCB meeting rooms to provide training to area educators regarding skills and best practices in special education. Rental fees are purposefully low at DCB to encourage community groups to utilize the resources available at the College.

Additionally, [two organizations lease land or office space](#) on DCB's Campus. The Bottineau Economic Development Corporation (EDC) began leasing a portion of land on Campus during 2012. The Bottineau community has long struggled with meeting the childcare demands of its residents. DCB offered the EDC a portion of land on which to construct a daycare center, named Building Blocks Learning Center, to meet the demands of community residents, as well as faculty and staff at the College. Since opening in 2014, [Building Blocks Learning Center](#) has cared for 731 children from newborn through school aged, and each year graduated an average of 23 children through its preschool program. Additionally, the North Dakota Forest Service leases office facilities in the Molberg Center on DCB's Campus. Through November 2018, the State Forester's home office was located in the Molberg Center. Not only does this lease serve the larger community, but it also echoes DCB's origins as the North Dakota School of Forestry and ties into the *Nature* aspect of the Campus Focus.

Response to 1.B.2

DCB's Mission-driven educational responsibilities, namely to provide *a quality education in a caring environment*, take primacy over other purposes. During [fiscal year 2022](#), 32.8% of DCB's total budget was allocated to instruction and 7.8% to academic support.

DCB does not generate financial returns for investors and has clear [Code of Conduct policies](#), including policies on conflicts of interest, outside activities and employment, and relationships with clients and suppliers. Each year [all DCB employees complete fraud and theft training](#) provided through the NDUS. This training provides information about NDUS policies and requires employees to apply concepts learned in the course to case studies representing fraud, theft, and other code of conduct issues. The Associate Dean for Business and Finance receives the training completion report from the NDUS and ensures all employees are in compliance.

Response to 1.B.3

Part of DCB's commitment to the public good involves engaging with external constituencies and communities of interest. This engagement occurs to ensure quality educational and learning experiences for DCB students, as well as to ensure the community engages with members of the College community and vice versa.

All CTE programs have [advisory committees](#) comprised of DCB faculty and community members identified as experts within the discipline, and most of these advisory committees [meet regularly](#). These committees help to ensure the appropriateness of curriculum and demonstrate the engaged and supportive community in which DCB is located.

DCB's participation in the [Dakota Nursing Program](#) (DNP), Northern Information Technology Consortium (NITC), and North Dakota Ag Consortium (NDAC) also demonstrates the institution's engagement with external constituencies. The DNP is a consortium of four community college nursing programs which work together through the Interactive Video Network (IVN) system to send and receive courses from different colleges/instructors within the DNP. Each of the colleges within the DNP has [satellite sites](#) to [oversee and manage appropriately](#). The DNP addresses the nursing shortage, especially within rural communities, by providing nursing education where needed. The [NITC](#) began in 2010 as a collaboration of four community colleges exchanging and delivering information technology (IT) courses and degrees in an effort to maintain IT program viability. [Minot State University](#) was later added to the Consortium to allow NITC students access to Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Applied Science degrees. Each campus offers one to seven [cross-listed courses](#) each semester (over the IVN system and online), and keeps its own students' headcount, FTE, and tuition/fees. The [NDAC](#) consists of DCB and two other community colleges within the NDUS: Lake Region State College and Williston State College. Through the NDAC, DCB is able to offer its Agriculture Management and Technology Program. Similar to the NITC, each campus offers unique courses to Consortium students while maintaining its own students' headcount, FTE, and tuition/fees.

Many DCB cocurricular groups engage with the College and Bottineau communities through volunteer work and fundraising. The [DCB Men's Hockey Team](#) participates in a Day of Caring each fall, volunteering throughout the Bottineau community. The [Student Nurse Organization \(SNO\)](#) regularly participates in volunteer and fundraising activities, including donating to children placed in foster care. Members of [Leaderjacks](#), DCB's service learning student organization, gain leadership skills through [community service activities](#). DCB's chapter of [Phi Theta Kappa](#) engages in a number of service activities, including [school supply drives](#). These examples support the College's Vision of *empowering students and impacting communities*. The College furthers this Vision through its Community Education Program, offering roughly ten [community education events](#) each year.

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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

Response to 1.C.1

Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB) encourages curricular and cocurricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success.

Curricular Activities

As highlighted in 3.B, general education is present in all degree programs at the College. The [General Education Philosophy](#) states that "general education exists on the Dakota College campus to provide students with an opportunity to develop knowledge and skills to become life-long learners in a dynamic, global community." Within the context of academic work, students at DCB are engaged in a framework of courses to help them:

- Identify the interrelationships between humans and their environment,
- Demonstrate technological literacy,
- Demonstrate the ability to solve a variety of mathematical problems,
- Communicate effectively,
- Employ the principles of wellness,
- Demonstrate knowledge of social structures, and
- Evaluate principles of Arts and Humanities.

Additionally, DCB's career and technical education (CTE) programs go beyond this foundation of general education and provide students with skills related to workplace success. This is reflected in the [department competencies and learning outcomes](#), as well as through assessment reports (see 4.B).

Lastly, DCB's [Honors Program](#) encourages students to dive deeper into curricular material, and to present findings at the [Honors Symposium](#). The projects students present on often relate to the student's chosen field of study, contributing to a foundation for workplace success. The Honors Symposium is open to the public, allowing students to engage with the larger community.

Cocurricular Activities

Opportunities afforded through participation in cocurricular activities at DCB prepare students for

both informed citizenship and workplace success. For example,

- Leaderjacks, DCB's service organization, engages students in once a month meetings where service projects are selected and [speakers present](#) on a variety of topics, including teamwork, leadership, and the importance of volunteering. [Service projects](#) focus on engaging with the larger community and helping those in need.
- DCB's [Student Nurse Organization](#) (SNO) chooses engagement activities each year that relate to nursing and fostering an ethic of concern for those in need. Over the past several years, SNO donated supplies to children in foster care.
- [Phi Theta Kappa](#) (PTK) honor society actively engages in volunteering within the Bottineau community and sponsors a number of activities on DCB's Campus. PTK regularly volunteers with the Bottineau Family Crisis Center and began offering weekly drop-in tutoring sessions during Fall 2023. Many of DCB's cocurricular groups engage within the larger Bottineau community, but PTK's engagement serving DCB's own student population is a wonderful reflection of DCB's commitment to engage both the Campus and outside communities.
- [DCB athletic teams](#), guided by the DCB Athletic Department Strategic Plan, frequently volunteer throughout the Bottineau community. The DCB Women's Basketball team regularly volunteers at the local food pantry and the DCB Men's Hockey Team dedicates one day each fall to its annual [Day of Caring](#). Additionally, DCB athletic teams offer athletic skills camps to area youth, providing a valuable service to the community. During the 2022-2023 academic year, DCB Athletics offered six camps and served over 200 area youth.

Response to 1.C.2

DCB's processes and activities demonstrate inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations. The North Dakota State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) has several policies that speak to the inclusive and equitable treatment of all people, including policies [100.5](#), [308.3](#), [503.1](#), [520](#), and [1202.1](#). Additionally, [SBHE Procedure 302.4](#) encourages all campuses to form a diversity committee.

DCB adheres to this procedural recommendation. DCB has its own [Diversity Committee](#), as well as two representatives on the [North Dakota University System \(NDUS\) Diversity Council](#). The DCB Diversity Committee meets [regularly](#) and sponsors [events](#) throughout the Bottineau community, ranging from showing [diversity-related films](#) to hosting [guest speakers](#). DCB's Diversity Committee Chair recently extended these diversity and inclusion efforts beyond the Bottineau community, presenting a talk titled [Working Towards Promoting Anti-Bias Education Curriculums: Responsibility and Accountability in Higher Education](#) at a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Conference at the University of North Dakota.

[Title IX training](#) is provided by the NDUS to DCB faculty and staff each year through an online platform. All employees are required to participate in the training. In addition to this training, the Title IX Coordinator provides additional training during [in-service](#). The Title IX Committee is representative of faculty and staff, and the [Title IX Coordinator's information](#) is readily available on the DCB website.

The DCB Athletic Department helps to ensure equitable treatment of its men's and women's teams through the submission of its [Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act Report](#). The 2023 Report shows equity in total expenses for teams, with men's teams at \$447,307 and women's teams at \$447,878. The [DCB Athletic Department Strategic Plan](#) Objective 2.1 calls for DCB to ensure Title IX adherence by documenting the number of male and female athletes and number of sporting

opportunities.

Another process that demonstrates inclusive treatment of diverse populations is through the use of Cultural Diversity Tuition Waivers. These tuition waivers are intended to encourage enrollment of a culturally diverse student body for the benefit of all DCB students and the academic community. During Fall 2023, DCB offered 17 students [Cultural Diversity Tuition Waivers](#) for a total of \$23,242.12 of tuition waived.

As stated in the [Student Handbook](#), [Employee Handbook](#), [Academic Catalog](#), and [website](#), DCB works to ensure equal opportunities for all by abiding by the requirements of Title IX, the Rehabilitation Act, the Civil Rights Act, the Age Discrimination Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Both the [Student](#) and [Employee](#) Handbooks, as well as the [Academic Catalog](#), contain statements of non-discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital status, disability, or veterans' status.

Response to 1.C.3

DCB fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff and administrators from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives. One of the main ways this is done is through active [Faculty](#), [Staff](#), and [Student](#) Senates. These groups meet once per month to address topics such as new policy, curriculum changes, activities on Campus, and any concerns that the group may have. The presidents of Faculty and Staff Senate serve on DCB's [College Council](#), as does the Student Senate Advisor. As outlined in the [Employee Handbook](#), "the College Council facilitates the general flow of information throughout the organization. Members serve as liaisons for their representative groups."

The climate of respect at DCB is furthered through monthly [Open Forums](#) and the dissemination of the [Weekly Log](#). Both of these are meant to keep the Campus informed and encourage questions.

Finally, DCB hosts an annual [Student Recognition Awards](#) celebration and an [Employee Appreciation Luncheon](#). Both events celebrate the accomplishments of the DCB community. Students are recognized in a variety of areas, including excellence in specific academic disciplines and recipients of memorial scholarships. During the Employee Appreciation Luncheon, DCB employees are recognized for their service to the College, and Excellence Award recipients are acknowledged.

Overall, DCB works to provide opportunities for civic engagement through its curricular and cocurricular programming, trainings, policies, and procedures. With the help of active Faculty, Staff, and Student Senates, the College fosters a climate of respect for all constituents.

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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

The Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB) Mission is clear, articulated publicly, and guides the institution's operations. Developed through a collaborative process, the DCB Mission, Vision, and Values highlight the Campus-wide drive to provide quality educational programming, as well as the charge of the College to serve the greater community. In a rather homogeneous community, DCB strives to integrate diversity into its programming, courses, student population, and activities.

The College Mission is published in the Student Handbook, Academic Catalog, Master Plan, Strategic Plan, and on the DCB website. Many of these documents also include the Campus Vision and Values. In addition to the Mission being articulated in these documents, it also guides such elements as the types of student services available, academic programs offered, infrastructure improvements and additions, and the overarching goals and plans for the future of DCB.

DCB's Mission, Strategic Plan, and Implementation Plan drive internal operations and demonstrates the College's commitment to the public good. As shown in the Argument, *providing a quality education in a caring environment* is a call to action that DCB students, faculty, and staff answer with pride.

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

Response to 2.A.1

As described in 1.A.1, Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB) recently updated its Campus Mission. The Mission was developed at the institutional-level, with guidance provided by the Strategic Planning Committee. This Committee was comprised of DCB faculty, staff, and administrators. With support and [input](#) from DCB faculty and staff, an updated Campus Mission was approved by the DCB [Strategic Planning Committee](#) and [Administrative Council](#), and sent to the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) for approval. The SBHE adopted DCB's updated Mission [April 2023](#).

Response to 2.A.2

DCB operates with integrity and transparency in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions. It establishes and follows policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior on behalf of the North Dakota SBHE, administration, faculty, and staff.

Financial

The North Dakota University System (NDUS) conducts an annual audit of all NDUS colleges and universities. These annual reports are reviewed and audited by the [Office of the State Auditor](#). In addition to comprehensive information regarding the finances of the entire NDUS, the audit provides a [combining statement of net position](#), a [combining statement of revenues, expenses and changes in net position](#), and a [combining statement of cash flows](#) for each campus, including DCB. Financial audits for the years [FY 2021](#), [FY 2020](#), and [FY 2019](#) provide further documentation of DCB's overall finances.

Monthly budget reports are provided to each of DCB's departments or budget units. These reports include a [summary of budgeted versus actual expenses to date](#), as well as a [spreadsheet that identifies each expenditure](#) for the month. The College's Business Office has provided [on-going training](#) during the past several years to individuals, departments, and groups to assist them with analyzing and interpreting their budget information.

Additionally, targeted audits by the SBHE's Internal Audit department and also the Office of the State Auditor are conducted at DCB and other NDUS colleges and universities for selected areas related to finance. Recent examples of audits involving financial processes at DCB and the NDUS (including DCB) were for [Improper Verification for Veteran Dependent Tuition Waivers](#), [Not Following State Procurement Rules](#), and [Inadequate Journal Entry Approval](#). DCB takes all audit findings and recommendations very seriously. As noted on the audit reports, Dakota College has [responded](#) with actions and timelines to correct any concerns or deficiencies. DCB entered into a consulting arrangement with NDUS Audit Services to ensure proper verification for veteran dependent tuition waivers. To address the audit finding related to procurement, DCB representatives now attend a monthly procurement meeting run by the NDUS Procurement Team. These meetings provide procurement-related assistance to all colleges and universities within the NDUS. Finally, DCB closed the audit finding related to journal entries by hiring additional staff within the DCB Business Office. Hiring additional staff ensures that two people are checking journal entries to verify information is correct (rather than the review and approval performed by the same person). Overall, the audits reflect strong adherence to NDUS and state policies.

Financial integrity is further assured by the availability of a fraud reporting hotline established by the NDUS. The [Fraud Hotline](#) is administered by Syntrio Lighthouse Services and has the capability of taking reports by phone or online.

Academic

Dakota College operates with integrity in its academic operations and services. The College has institutional policies and procedures to determine and document [faculty meet required qualifications](#). As stated in the College's [Employee Handbook](#), "the academic community is operated on the basis of honesty, integrity, and fair play." The College has established [procedures](#) in place to address issues of academic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism or other academic improprieties. All course syllabi include references to the importance of [academic honesty and the consequences of academic dishonesty](#). The Student Handbook also provides information concerning expectations for [academic honesty](#).

DCB faculty members have protections regarding various aspects of [academic freedom](#), which help ensure integrity in the expression of ideas and diverse points of view. These provisions are documented in [SBHE Policy 401.1](#).

The College's academic operations comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations as described in the [Student Handbook](#) and the [Employee Handbook](#) to ensure the privacy of all students is protected in any communications with parents, family members, or others.

Human Resources

The College demonstrates integrity in its human resources policies and procedures by following the requirements and guidelines provided in the [NDUS Human Resource Policy Manual](#), as well as all SBHE policies and procedures related to personnel and human resources. The College is an Equal Opportunity employer and complies with the various federal legislative requirements described in the College's [Equal Opportunity](#) statement. Support for faculty and staff employment searches and other personnel issues is provided by the DCB Human Resources Office with additional support from the [Human Resources Director at Minot State University](#). To ensure consistency and appropriate

standards of work behavior, DCB employees participate in a wide variety of training throughout the year on topics such as Title IX, safety, code of conduct, and IT security. Additionally, DCB has identified several items on its [2023-2024 Implementation Plan](#) designed to ensure fair and ethical treatment of all employees. These include overhauling the process for employee evaluations, restructuring the compensation model for course-pay related to online, adjunct, and overload pay, improving transparency in the budget process, and continuing to review faculty and staff salary levels.

All DCB employees are expected to comply with the DCB and NDUS code of conduct policies which are documented in faculty and staff policy [303.1](#) and in [SBHE Policy 308.1](#). On an annual basis, all benefited DCB employees complete [NDUS Theft and Fraud](#) training, which includes information about code of conduct. As per SBHE [Policy 308.4, Conflict of Interest](#), only college presidents need conflict of interest statements on file. The president of Minot State University, who also serves as president of Dakota College, has a signed conflict of interest statement in his personnel file.

Data Integrity

The NDUS and DCB's IT Department continuously monitor the College's computer servers to maintain the confidentiality of all stored data. Due to the confidentiality of the data, the results of these monitoring reports are not available for public review unless an open records request is made to the NDUS. All DCB employees are expected to comply with SBHE policies [1202.1](#), [1202.3](#), [1203.1](#), and [1206.1](#), to ensure the appropriate and ethical use of information technology resources, as well as maintaining data integrity and confidentiality.

Auxiliary Functions

The College's auxiliary operations include the bookstore, housing and food service. The bookstore and housing (Gross, Mead, and Milligan Halls) operations are funded and operated by the College. Both units are financially strong and have had [positive cash balances](#) at year end for the past three years. The finances of these units are included in the College's annual audit conducted by the NDUS.

The College contracts with Sodexo for its food service operation. DCB solicited [requests for proposals](#) during Spring 2019 for its food service operation, which was awarded to Sodexo for a period of eight years, subject to an annual review during this time period. The food service operation is fiscally sustainable and has had positive cash balances at year end for the past five years.

Revenue generated by auxiliary operations in conjunction with college fees provide the primary financial support of the College's athletic programs. During FY 2022, the College used college fees and funds from its auxiliary enterprises to cover [\\$505,449](#) in expenses for its athletic programs. Of this amount, [24% came from college fees, with the remaining 76% from auxiliary enterprise accounts](#). During FY 2023, athletic teams were required to fund raise to cover a portion of expenses. Athletic programming cost [\\$592,765](#) during FY 2023, with [24% being covered through auxiliary enterprise accounts, 19% from athletic fund raising, and 57% from college fees](#). The College has been able to balance its athletic budgets while still maintaining financially viable auxiliary enterprises and college fee accounts. DCB's athletic programs comply with the ethics and eligibility requirements specified by the [NJCAA](#) and [American Collegiate Hockey Association](#).

Governing Board

The North Dakota SBHE operates with transparency and practices ethical behavior in its activities. The SBHE complies with the State of North Dakota [open meetings laws](#) and publishes its [meeting notifications](#) on the SBHE website in advance of scheduled meetings. Approved meeting minutes are also provided on this website. The SBHE promotes public awareness of its face-to-face meetings by providing live streaming availability. Numerous meetings are conducted via conference call or video-conferencing. These are available for public participation as well. For continuous improvement purposes, monthly board meetings conclude with an agenda item titled "[Assessment of Meeting and Future Agenda Items](#)." The SBHE complies with a set of ethical and professional standards identified in SBHE policy 308.1, [Officer and Employee Code of Conduct](#).

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2.B - Core Component 2.B

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

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

Argument

Response to 2.B.1

Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB) strives to clearly and accurately disclose information to a wide array of stakeholders through its website, printed materials, and other media.

Programs and Requirements

The primary source of information about DCB programs is the College's website. Available on the website is curriculum and degree information for the College's career and technical education and transfer programs. The [webpage for each program](#) has links directly to the DCB [Academic Catalog](#), which helps ensure consistent and accurate information about program requirements. A link is also available for each program's [fact sheet](#), which provides an overview of the program and any special admissions or academic progress requirements. The academic program pages also indicate the [location\(s\)](#) (Bottineau, Minot, Valley City and online) where each program is available. The College has a dedicated webpage for information related to [online courses and programs](#). This page includes the online class schedules, links to each online program, state authorization information, and the tuition rates for online courses.

The College's [Dual Credit/Early Entry](#), [Farm Management](#), and [Community Education](#) Programs each have their own webpage with specific information directly related to the Program.

Faculty and Staff

Contact information for [DCB's faculty and staff](#) is provided on the College's website under the homepage QuickLinks tab. At a minimum, each faculty and staff member has either phone or email contact information, with most having both forms of contact. Contact information for [College Administration](#) is available under the About tab on the College's main webpage. Additionally, the [Faculty Credentials](#) webpage provides information regarding each full-time faculty member's education, curriculum vitae and courses taught at the College. Although many adjunct faculty have their credentialing information posted as well, it is a challenge to maintain up-to-date records for these instructors due to the on-going changes in adjunct employment from semester to semester. Although the credentialing information for adjunct faculty may not be posted, it is ensured and maintained by the Director for Academic Affairs (see 3.C).

Costs to Students

DCB fully discloses its current costs for tuition, fees, and room and board on its Paying for College webpage. The costs for tuition and fees are [categorized by residency factors](#) for students from North Dakota and Canadian provinces, Minnesota, contiguous states, WUE and MSEP states, all other states, and from other countries. Tuition and fee charges are also provided for students enrolled at the DCB locations at [Minot State University and Valley City State University](#). Additional information on College costs is accessible through links on the Paying for College webpage, including a [Net Price Calculator](#) page and a [Cost of Attendance](#) page, which includes breakdown of tuition and fees by credit and specifics on the Distance Education Access Fee. To assist students and stakeholders in more readily finding information about the College, DCB provides a [Consumer Information webpage](#) offering easily accessible links to specific webpages related to College costs, financial assistance and student loans, and student outcome data. Fall [2021](#), [2022](#), and [2023](#) Student Profiles provide additional data regarding student enrollment, retention, graduation rates, and academic degrees conferred.

Control

[SBHE Policy 301.1](#) identifies DCB as one of the 11 colleges and universities, each a [member of the North Dakota University System](#) (NDUS) and governed by the North Dakota [State Board of Higher Education](#) (SBHE). The College's website discloses this information and provides a link to the NDUS website, which also includes information about the [North Dakota SBHE](#) and its [policies](#), [meetings](#), and members.

Accreditation

DCB's [accreditation status with the Higher Learning Commission](#) (HLC) is documented on the College's website under its Accreditation page. This page displays the HLC's Mark of Affiliation, which is in turn linked to the HLC page that notes DCB's status of affiliation with the Commission. The College also provides copies of various [HLC reports](#) dating back to 2009 on its Accreditation webpage, making them accessible for viewing by the public. Most recently, the College added an [HLC 2020](#) tab to the Accreditation page which includes the College's 2020 Assurance Argument, the HLC peer review team's final report, and copies of the three interim reports submitted Fall 2022.

Additionally, the College's [Accreditation webpage](#) documents its program accreditation relationship with the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs for its Paramedic Technology Program and National League for Nursing (NLN) Commission for Nursing Education Accreditation for its Associate Degree Nursing Program.

Response to 2.B.2

DCB is a true *community* college, which is reflected with references to community within the College's Values and Vision statements. Specifically:

- Values: DCB is student-focused and *community* centered. We value: Integrity, Engagement, Inclusion, and Passion.
- Vision: DCB adapts to the changing educational landscape to empower students and impact *communities*.

The College understands the vital role it plays within and around the Bottineau community, and many activities, offices, and groups on Campus serve the community in this capacity. For example,

- Each fall, the DCB Men's Hockey Team participates in a [Day of Caring](#). This day involves the team helping with various tasks throughout the Bottineau community, volunteering an average of 50 (or more) hours of service. Activities range from yard work to reading to children at the Bottineau Elementary School's After School Program.
- DCB [hosts many K12 events](#) on its Campus, providing a central hub for area schools to gather, learn, and grow. During the 2022-2023 academic year, these events included Science Olympiad, Water Festival, STEM Day, spelling bees, College for Kids, and Marketplace for Kids.
- Leaderjacks, a cocurricular group at DCB, gives students the opportunity to meet with and interact with other students from various majors, enhance their leadership skills, and network with business professionals through monthly meetings. Another large facet of the group is service to the community. During the 2022-2023 academic year, [Leaderjacks](#) engaged in 18 volunteer and service activities, as well as helping at the Bottineau food pantry each month. Activities included volunteering at the Family Crisis Center's rummage sale and making blankets for an Animal Need Drive.
- Through DCB's Community Education, the College brings a number of educational classes to the larger community. One of the most popular events is Lego Lab where area children can come to the College and build Lego sets. DCB student-athletes, PTK members, and Leaderjacks commonly volunteer to help at these events. Martial arts classes and craft classes are also well attended. Since Fall 2020, the College has hosted [32 Community Education](#) events.
- DCB's [Phi Theta Kappa](#) honor society chapter engages in service to both the College and Bottineau community. Campus events include drop-in tutoring and hosting a pool party during Welcome Week. Community engagement changes each year, but recent examples include members volunteering at the Bottineau Parent Teacher Organization's annual Santa's Workshop, helping at the Family Crisis Center, and sponsoring a trick-or-treat stop for Building Blocks Learning Center.
- The College provides a valuable community resource by offering [athletic camps](#) to area athletes each year. The most popular camps are those offered by DCB's Men's and Women's Basketball Teams. The camps provide an opportunity to meet and learn from the College's athletes, and it provides the DCB student-athletes the opportunity to get to know members of the surrounding community. DCB's Men's Basketball, Women's Basketball, Baseball, and Women's Hockey Teams all held camps during the 2022-2023 academic year.
- The Financial Aid Office strives to help area high school students, parents, and counselors navigate the FAFSA process through [FAFSA outreach](#). It is not uncommon for staff within the Office to travel 80+ miles to reach high schools seeking these services. During the 2022-2023 academic year, financial aid staff went to six different high schools and hosted four events on DCB's Campus to help with FAFSA applications.
- Each year, DCB faculty prepare classes to offer through Educational Outreach. An [Educational Outreach](#) brochure is sent to K12 schools throughout the state of North Dakota. Some of the most popular classes center on conquering math anxiety, small unmanned aircraft systems, and body dissatisfaction.
- Although many Diversity Committee events are focused on DCB students, the Committee actively engages with the community and encourages community members to participate in [Diversity Committee](#) sponsored events, such as the folklore haunted hallway, as well as a book read and presentation by Miss Teen North Dakota centering on missing and murdered

indigenous women. During Spring 2023, the Committee participated in a Cycle of Giving Campaign to provide feminine hygiene items to community members in need.

- DCB's facilities are available at a purposefully low cost to community members to rent for a number of different events. Through these [rental agreements](#), DCB provides the Bottineau and surrounding areas needed meeting space, and allows community members the opportunity to engage at the College. One group that repeatedly rents space at the College is Peace Garden Special Education (PGSP). PGSP reserves DCB's main conference room for in-service and a variety of trainings each year.

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- North Dakota University System Agendas Minutes and Videos Webpage.pdf

- North Dakota University System Board Members Webpage.pdf
- Nursing Program DCB Website CL.pdf
- Paying for College Tuition and Fees DCB Website.pdf
- Paying for College Tuition and Fees DCB Website.pdf (page number 5)
- Program Fact Sheets 2023 Update.pdf
- PTK 2020-2023 Co curricular Activity Table Evidence.pdf

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

Background Information about the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education

The North Dakota State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) was [established in 1939](#), with seven members appointed by the governor. Prior to 1939, various forms of governance were in place for the state's colleges and universities. In 1990, the SBHE created a university system led by a System Chancellor. With this action, the presidents of the state's 11 public colleges and universities reported to the Chancellor.

As noted on the [SBHE website](#), "The State Board of Higher Education is the policy-setting and advocacy body for the North Dakota University System (NDUS) and the governing body for North Dakota's 11 publicly supported colleges and universities. The SBHE also oversees the North Dakota University System Extension Service and Agricultural Research Stations, Northern Crops Institute, State Forest Service, and the Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute. The SBHE is made up of seven citizen members appointed to four-year terms by the governor and one student appointed by the governor to serve a one-year term. The Council of College Faculties selects the board's non-voting faculty advisor, and the NDUS Staff Senate selects the board's non-voting staff advisor." SBHE Policies [100.1](#), [100.4](#), [100.5](#), [100.6](#), [310.1](#) and [310.2](#) define the roles and responsibilities of the SBHE.

An [organization chart](#) for the NDUS documents the various system-level units that provide support for the colleges and universities that comprise the NDUS. The support that the College receives from system-level units is generally very good. It is the College's experience that NDUS system-level staff are focused on supporting the colleges and universities, and are careful to give the institutions sufficient autonomy in determining how they meet SBHE requirements.

In accordance with its state authorization and its guiding policies, the North Dakota SBHE is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions that are in the best interests of the NDUS, which includes Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB), its students, and stakeholders. The SBHE exercises its authority and responsibility to assure the integrity of institutional operations at DCB and all institutions within

the NDUS.

Response to 2.C.1

The North Dakota SBHE is the [governing board](#) for DCB. The SBHE sets policy and advocates for the NDUS. The SBHE meets monthly, with the general exception of the month of July and occasionally December. The NDUS college and university CEOs attend the regular SBHE meetings, as well as the chancellor and key members of his staff. In addition to the [monthly meetings](#) of the full board, the SBHE has standing Audit, Governance, Budget and Finance, Academic and Student Affairs, and Research committees which typically meet monthly. All meeting agendas and minutes are posted online.

The SBHE delegates NDUS management responsibilities to the System Chancellor and his staff. The college and university presidents report directly to the NDUS Chancellor. Because of DCB's affiliate relationship with Minot State University (MSU), the [DCB Campus Dean reports to the MSU President](#).

All NDUS institutions are required to follow a comprehensive set of academic, administrative, financial, personnel, facilities, and information technology [policies](#). All NDUS institutions develop and submit an annual institutional budget based on the state funding formula that complies with the established [SBHE Policy 802.6 budget guidelines](#). DCB's President, Campus Dean, and Associate Dean for Business and Finance (who serves as the College's Chief Financial Officer) are responsible for meeting with and explaining the budget to SBHE members, as well as legislative budget committees. The institutional budget requests are submitted to the NDUS Chancellor for approval. The NDUS Chancellor is responsible for the management of the financial, educational, and other policies of the University System and reports to the SBHE. The NDUS Chancellor and staff review the requests and ensure the budget complies with the SBHE guidelines. Allocation of institutional resources is generally at the discretion of [DCB administration](#) and is based on the DCB budgeting process. DCB reports to the SBHE Budget and Finance Committee on a semi-annual basis if there is a [variance of +/- \\$100,000 or two percent or more](#), whichever is greater, in any fund or revenue item.

Response to 2.C.2

The SBHE [2021-2026 Strategic Plan](#) identifies six priorities: 1) optimize student affordability while maintaining campus financial health, 2) provide access to programs people want, where and when they need them, 3) prepare students for success, 4) maximize the strengths of the unified system, 5) research excellence and innovation, and 6) workforce development. These priorities aim to preserve and enhance each of the System's 11 colleges and universities.

The SBHE demonstrates its commitment to its policy-setting and advocacy roles for the NDUS and its governance and financial responsibilities for the 11 colleges and universities through publicly-noticed, [regular meetings](#) (generally monthly) of the entire board as well as with various sub-committee meetings. [SBHE meeting agendas for the past year](#) provide a record of how the SBHE addresses all its roles, responsibilities, and priorities.

Response to 2.C.3

The SBHE ensures the interests of the NDUS and college and university constituents in its decision-making process through several structural systems. The first of these is the inclusion of a student on the SBHE as a voting member. Membership also includes a non-voting faculty and staff advisor,

both from an NDUS institution. All [regular board meetings](#) include an opportunity to [hear reports from the student member and faculty and staff advisors](#). Each of these members provides updates from the groups they represent, which are the North Dakota Student Association, the Council of College Faculties, and the NDUS Staff Senate. Regularly scheduled SBHE meetings also provide the opportunity for public comment from individuals or groups interested in addressing the SBHE. The SBHE considers the perspectives of numerous faculty, staff, student, and administrative groups when revising, developing, and monitoring System policies through the various NDUS councils. Generally, the development, revision, or review of System policies begins with the most appropriate council and then progresses through other councils as necessary, and finally to the SBHE. The [NDUS councils](#) are Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Administrative Affairs, Chief Information Officers, Human Resources, Public Affairs, College Technical Education, and Diversity. The [Chancellor's Cabinet](#), consisting of the NDUS CEOs and DCB Campus Dean, contributes recommendations and advice to the SBHE through the Chancellor. The Cabinet is expected to attend regular SBHE meetings and encouraged to provide input on agenda items pertaining to their campuses. Another avenue utilized by the SBHE to better understand current trends or issues that are affecting, or may affect, higher education in the state is the annual summer retreat. The SBHE typically conducts its [annual retreat](#) in June to explore selected current topics or issues from industry experts, state stakeholders, business leaders, or the 11 NDUS campuses.

Response to 2.C.4

Several legislative acts help ensure independence of the SBHE from undue outside influences. [North Dakota Century Code 15.10.11](#) grants the SBHE full authority for the institutions under its control. [Article VIII, Section 6](#) of the North Dakota Constitution specifies the process for nominating and selecting SBHE members and setting limits on the amount of time they can serve. SBHE members may not be appointed to serve for more than two terms, and the student member may serve no more than two consecutive one-year terms.

The SBHE is subject to North Dakota open meeting laws and [provides public notice](#) of its meetings on its website. Meeting minutes are provided for public review on the NDUS/SBHE website. To help ensure compliance with proper meeting processes, protocols, and state requirements, the SBHE retains the services and advice of legal counsel at all regularly scheduled meetings. The SBHE's legal counsel is provided by the Office of the Attorney General for the State of North Dakota.

As an example of its willingness to resist influences that are not in the best interest of the NDUS, the SBHE [approved a "needs-based" budget](#) for the 2019-2021 biennium in spite of the governor's request that all state agencies submit budgets with a 10% reduction. The SBHE was consistent in its message of support for the needs-based budget and was ultimately successful in gaining legislative support for its budget proposal.

Response to 2.C.5

The SBHE specifies its expectations of college and university presidents in [Policy 305.1](#). This policy delegates full authority to the presidents to administer their institutions in accordance with SBHE policies. With this delegation, the faculty and academic administration at DCB are responsible for curriculum and academic standards at the College. DCB faculty exercise this responsibility primarily through the Faculty Senate and its [Standing Campus Committees](#). Membership on Faculty Senate committees follows membership guidelines identified on the Standing Campus Committee list.

[SBHE Policy 401.1](#) regarding Academic Freedom affirms the SBHE's commitment to "ensuring that

the institutions of the NDUS shall foster a free and open academic community for faculty members, students, and all other NDUS employees who engage in scholarly work." The policy defines Academic Freedom as "... the freedom, without institutional, political, or other outside pressure or restraint, to explore any avenues of scholarship, research, and creative expression, and to speak or write on matters of public concern, as well as on matters related to professional duties and the functioning of the NDUS and the institution."

Sources

- 100.1 Constitutional and Statutory Authority.pdf
- 100.4 Mission and Vision of the State Board of Higher Education.pdf
- 100.5 Principles and Core Values of the State Board of Higher Education.pdf
- 100.6 Authority and Responsibility of the State Board of Higher Education
- 2-25-21-SBHE-Agenda
- 2-25-21-SBHE-Agenda (page number 2)
- 305.1 Institution President Authority and Responsibilities Contract Terms.pdf
- 310.1 Board Member Responsibilities.pdf
- 310.2 Board Officers Officer Responsibilities Elections.pdf
- 401.1 Academic Freedom.pdf
- 802.6 Budget Management and Control.pdf
- Mid-Year Reporting 12-31-2022.pdf
- MSU DCB Shared Services Agreement 2023.pdf
- ND Constitution Related to SBHE
- NDUS Councils.pdf
- NDUS Procedure 301 Chancellors Cabinet.pdf
- NDUS SBHE 2021-2026 Strategic Plan.pdf
- NDUS-Org-Chart-May-2023.pdf
- North Dakota Century Code 15_10_11 Related to ND SBHE
- North Dakota University System SBHE Overview.pdf
- Organizational Chart November 2023
- SBHE 2023 Summer Retreat Agenda.pdf
- SBHE Archives State Historical Society of North Dakota.pdf
- SBHE Meeting Minutes and Agendas 2022-2023.pdf
- SBHE Needs Based Budget Approval CL
- SBHE Policies Intro Page.pdf
- SBHE Policy 301.1 Organization and Titles of Institutions Governed by the State Board of Higher Education
- SBHE Sample Monthly Meeting Agendas Minutes Videos.pdf
- Standing_Campus_Committees_23-24

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

Response to 2.D

Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB) is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning. This commitment is reflected in the College's Mission, Vision, and Values, as well as through state and College policies.

DCB's [Mission, Vision, and Values](#) support freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in learning and teaching. The Mission states that *Dakota College at Bottineau provides a quality education in a caring environment*. The caring environment at DCB allows for freedom of expression (as evidenced by state and College policies cited below), and the College's Vision statement echoes this commitment by noting that *Dakota College at Bottineau adapts to the changing educational landscape to empower students and impact communities*. One example of this empowerment is [DCB's Honors Symposium](#) where students are given a platform to present research of their choosing to DCB faculty, administrators, students, and community members. The College's general education curriculum (see Core Component 3.B) empowers students to build knowledge and understanding in a breadth of academic disciplines, aiding in the pursuit of truth in learning. Finally, DCB highlights Integrity, Engagement, Inclusion, and Passion as College Values. The Value of [Integrity](#) clearly denotes that DCB *values respect and honesty, adhering to ethical, data-based decision-making that promotes the Mission*.

The North Dakota State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) and the College acknowledge and support academic freedom through policies on academic freedom and tenure. [SBHE Policy 401.1](#) defines academic freedom and responsibilities for faculty and staff at all colleges and universities in the North Dakota University System (NDUS). [SBHE Policy 605.1](#) provides additional support for academic freedom and tenure. The policy states in part: "...An institution is a forum for ideas, and it can not fulfill its purpose of transmitting, evaluating, and extending knowledge if it requires conformity with any orthodoxy of content and method. Academic freedom and tenure are both important in guaranteeing the existence of such a forum." Additionally, [SBHE Policy 503.1](#) states "students have the freedom to speak, write, listen, challenge, learn, and discuss any issue, subject to reasonable and constitutionally-recognized limitations." Although tenure is officially awarded by the SBHE, DCB has established [policy and procedures](#) for recommending faculty tenure through the Tenure Committee. These procedures state that "all tenured faculty members constitute the Tenure Committee whose recommendation will determine whether or not the award of tenure for a faculty member is recommended to the Campus Dean."

Consistent with SBHE policies, DCB faculty are free to teach their classes in the manner they feel best meets student needs and use pedagogy they believe is most appropriate for the course content being taught. This includes the use of instructional technology they feel best supports successful student outcomes. Faculty members are encouraged to use various evaluation and assessment measures to determine the effectiveness of their teaching practices and strategies.

The integrity of student learning is expected at DCB. The [Student Handbook](#) specifically states that "The academic community is operated on the basis of honesty, integrity and fair play." The College has [established guidelines and procedures](#) that address instances of cheating, plagiarism or other academic improprieties. The integrity of student learning is reinforced in the College's [Acceptable Computer Use Policy](#). [Artificial intelligence](#) is addressed on the DCB website.

Sources

- 401.1 Academic Freedom.pdf
- 503.1 Student Free Speech and Expression.pdf
- 605.1 Academic Freedom and Tenure Academic Appointments.pdf
- Artificial Intelligence DCB Website
- F.603.1 Tenure Faculty
- Honors Symposium Programs with Table_Redacted_1.pdf
- Mission DCB Website.pdf
- Student Handbook May 2023.pdf
- Student Handbook May 2023.pdf (page number 15)
- Student Handbook May 2023.pdf (page number 18)
- Values and definitions - Final 11-2-23

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

Response to 2.E.1-2

Although Dakota College at Bottineau's (DCB) primary focus does not center on research, it does have an established [Institutional Review Board](#) (IRB) that reviews all research involving human participants. The DCB IRB has established [policy](#) and procedures that ensure compliance with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services requirements and United States Codes of Federal Regulations 45 CFR 46. IRB members complete a [web-based training course](#) titled *Protecting Human Research Participants Online Training*. The IRB meets on an as-needed basis as the College receives a very limited number of requests for research involving human participants. It has received five proposals since the IRB was formed in 2016. The College has bolstered its institutional research expertise and capabilities through a [shared services agreement](#) with Minot State University (MSU). Through this arrangement, DCB utilizes the services of MSU's Director of Institutional Research to conduct research and analyze data for the College. DCB has a designated staff member who can respond to institutional research requests involving common report queries. As a community college, DCB is not designated as a research institution within the North Dakota University System (NDUS). However, should the College seek funding for a scientific research study, [SBHE Policy 410](#) provides guidance for implementing training requirements for any employees conducting or supporting sponsored research activities. Student guidance in effective use of research and information resources occurs at the course level and through the DCB Library. [Course-level guidance](#) ranges from instruction on appropriate sources, citation, and support, to application of research practices. The DCB Library also provides direction and aid for students in effective use of information. Library staff provide informational sessions as requested, and provide [information literacy](#) guidance through the DCB Library webpage.

DCB expects that all scholarly activities be conducted with academic integrity. The integrity of scholarly practice is assured by compliance with the College's [Copyright Policy](#), [Computer Acceptable Use](#), and [Academic Honesty/Dishonesty](#) policies in the Student Handbook, the [Academic Honesty/Dishonesty](#) policy in the Employee Handbook, and further supported through [information technology](#) policies set forth by the NDUS. Students are made aware of academic integrity standards on all [course syllabi](#).

Response to 2.E.3

The primary mechanism for guiding students in the ethical use of information resources is the instruction provided in the College's gateway English course, College Composition I (ENGL 110). The expectation for the ethical and honest use of information is [cited in the syllabi for various sections of this course](#). Although this is the primary course which guides students in ethical uses of information resources, it is not the only course. [Science, social science, upper-level English, and other courses](#) not only guide students in the principles of research, but also on the ethical use of information gleaned from research. The College provides information regarding the fair use of copyrighted works in its [Copyright Policy](#). The College's Student Handbook provides all students with information related to expectations for [academic honesty](#) in their coursework as well as possible sanctions for academic dishonesty. Although the College uses various strategies to provide students with the education and guidance needed for using information and information sources ethically, there is a realization that a more coordinated approach to these strategies would be helpful. One strategy under consideration is the incorporation of such training into the First Year Experience (UNIV 105) session conducted by the Library/Academic Atrium staff. DCB recently began integrating student support and library services, so this coordinated approach is a natural next step. Currently, DCB Library staff provide students in First Year Experience an online tour of resources available in the Library, but no guidance in the ethical use of these information resources. Guidance on [information literacy](#) and [academic honesty when using AI](#) is provided on the College's website.

All College faculty have access to the SafeAssign application through the Blackboard Learning Management System. [SafeAssign](#) is an application that allows the comparison of submitted student assignments to a database of existing academic works. The use of this application helps detect instances of plagiarism or improper attribution of sources, which helps ensure the integrity of student reports and assignments.

Response to 2.E.4

The College has a policy on academic honesty and integrity documented in both the College's [Student Handbook](#) and the [Employee Handbook](#). The policy states the College's expectations of academic honesty and clearly describes the procedures that will be enacted in cases of cheating, plagiarism, or other academic improprieties. All College syllabi include a statement regarding expectations of academic integrity. The College's [Student Code of Conduct](#) also stresses the requirement of academic honesty as a condition for good social standing at the College.

Sources

- 1200 Series – Information Technology Policies NDUS
- 410 Responsible Conduct of Research.pdf
- Artificial Intelligence DCB Website
- Copyright Policy DCB Website.pdf
- DCB Policy F.301.1 IRB
- Employee Handbook 2023-2024
- Employee Handbook 2023-2024 (page number 30)
- ENGL 110 Course Syllabi Research Highlighted CL.pdf
- Fall 2023 Syllabi Academic Integrity Examples.pdf
- Fall 2023 Syllabi Highlighting Research.pdf
- Information Literacy DCB Website
- Information Literacy DCB Website (page number 2)

- IRB Member Training Certificates 2023-2024.pdf
- MSU DCB Shared Services Agreement 2023.pdf
- MSU DCB Shared Services Agreement 2023.pdf (page number 7)
- SafeAssign
- Standing_Campus_Committees_23-24
- Standing_Campus_Committees_23-24 (page number 9)
- Student Handbook May 2023.pdf
- Student Handbook May 2023.pdf (page number 15)
- Student Handbook May 2023.pdf (page number 18)
- Student Handbook May 2023.pdf (page number 35)

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Summary

As described in the evidence provided for Criterion 2, Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB) acts with integrity and adheres to established policies and processes that have created a climate of ethical and responsible operations and decision-making by all DCB personnel. The North Dakota State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) has identified clear policies and expectations in the areas of finance, human resources, academics, student services, auxiliaries, information technology, and facilities. The College has implemented additional policies and procedures that support those of the SBHE.

The SBHE functions as a policy-driven board and delegates day-to-day management and operations to the Chancellor and Presidents/Campus Dean of the colleges and universities in the North Dakota University System (NDUS). The SBHE expects these leaders will ensure the NDUS strategic plan goals are accomplished within the missions of their respective institutions.

One challenge that faces the College as it strives to meet the various expectations and policies is its small size. Because of this small size, most employees at the College have multiple responsibilities, at times making it difficult to be aware of changing policy and process changes. Maintaining staff morale when workloads and responsibilities have increased is a significant concern. The College understands this is, and will be, an on-going challenge. This is one reason that the College has expanded shared services agreements and programs with other colleges in the NDUS. The College has also increased its professional development budget so employees may attend training opportunities related to their job responsibilities.

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

Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB) offers [21 one-year career and technical education \(CTE\) program certificates](#), [25 Associate of Applied Science \(AAS\) degrees](#), an [Associate of Arts \(AA\) degree \(with 8 different sub-plans\)](#), and an [Associate of Science \(AS\) degree \(with 19 different sub-plans\)](#). The AAS, AA, and AS degrees each require a minimum of 60 semester credit hours. Additionally, the College offers two certificate programs (Small Business Management, Cybersecurity) which consist of 15 credits or less, and a certificate of completion in Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems which consists of nine credits or less. One of the College's certificates is a 24-credit certificate in College Studies which is heavily rooted in general education coursework. [Twenty-one](#) of these programs are available fully online.

Response to 3.A.1

DCB uses several strategies to ensure programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to degree or certificate awarded.

Currency

Both [North Dakota State Board of Higher Education \(SBHE\)](#) and [DCB](#) policies help to ensure currency of courses and programs through the addition and deletion of courses as necessary. Course and Curriculum Proposal and Change forms allow faculty, guided by appropriate [advisory committees](#), industry standards, and best practices within academic disciplines, to revise courses and programs to ensure DCB upholds high academic standards. For example, the curriculum for both the [AAS](#) and the [certificate of completion](#) in Small Business Management were modified to reflect more flexibility to students based on career and degree aspirations. Additionally, an exam preparation course was removed from the required curriculum of both the [AAS and certificate in Medical Assistant](#), allowing students to officially graduate with the AAS or certificate without the course (which some students did not need to successfully pass the national exam). These examples show

how faculty continue to respond to advisory committee recommendations and best practices within academic fields, leading to revised course offerings and curriculum to ensure DCB graduates are competitive and well-prepared to enter the workforce immediately upon graduation. All course and curriculum changes must be approved by the Curriculum Committee, Faculty Senate, and Campus Dean. This process is outlined in 4.A.4.

DCB faculty discipline leaders participate in North Dakota University System (NDUS) [Academic Discipline Group](#) (ADG) meetings [twice](#) a year. These meetings are an opportunity for faculty from each of the 11 colleges and universities within the System to meet and discuss happenings that impact the academic discipline. This can [include](#) updates to course descriptions and objectives, the addition and deletion of courses outlined on the [Common Course Numbering Matrix](#), articulation agreements, and general institutional updates. Ensuring all NDUS institutions maintain academic currency and respond to industry changes is a priority during ADG meetings.

In accordance with [SBHE policy](#), new programs at DCB begin with a Program Exploration Notice that is submitted to the Academic Affairs Council, comprised of academic leaders (e.g., Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Vice President for Academic Affairs) from each college within the NDUS. This notice is simply to inform the other colleges and universities that DCB is reviewing a potential new program and no formal approval from the Academic Affairs Council is needed. If the Program Exploration process suggests the program would be a good fit for DCB, DCB's Associate Dean for Academic Affairs then submits a New Academic Program Request Form to the Academic Affairs Council for approval. The most recent program additions at DCB include the Dental Programs in [Dental Hygiene](#) and [Dental Assisting](#). Both of these programs received approval from the SBHE during [October 2021](#).

During [even numbered years](#), DCB faculty and staff conduct a comprehensive review of the current Academic Catalog and revise it as necessary. These revisions include edits to policies and student services offered, as well as ensuring that any curriculum or course description changes are accurately reflected in the Catalog. Although the online version of the Catalog is updated regularly to reflect changes, this more thorough look at the Catalog helps to ensure accuracy and appropriateness.

To further ensure the currency of courses, the Academic and Cocurricular Assessment Committee incorporates checks for currency on [Assessment Reporting Forms](#). Updates on curriculum currency center around using Open Educational Resources (OERs) in courses, adjusting pedagogy and content to improve student learning, improving training tools, providing more diversity in course offerings, and setting forth plans to update courses that have not received redesigns within the last five years. This additional layer of monitoring provides faculty the opportunity to work as departments to ensure educational offerings at DCB mirror current standards within their fields.

Rigor

DCB utilizes two credit hour policies to ensure courses require the appropriate level of student performance for the credit awarded. Courses offered in a non-online format follow the [Definition of a Semester Credit Hour Policy](#), and courses offered online follow the [Online Seat Time Policy](#). Both of these policies were approved through the [DCB Faculty Senate](#) and [Dean's Council](#). For non-online courses, adherence to the policy is tracked using a Credit Hour Report Form. Credit Hour Report Forms are completed for all courses (see examples from [MATH 103](#), [GEOL 105](#), [ENGL 110](#), and [AGEC 141](#)) and tracked using a [master spreadsheet](#) to ensure all courses have a Form on file. New Credit Hour Report Forms are completed for each course according to a [schedule](#) identified by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

The Director of Distance Education provided information regarding the Online Seat Time Policy to all [online faculty during December 2019](#), and the need to complete an Online Seat Time Checklist is clearly indicated in the [Guide for \(online\) Course Design](#). Verification that all online courses adhered to the Online Seat Time Policy occurred during Spring and Summer 2020 and [Online Seat Time Checklists](#) were tracked using an [Online Seat Time Verification](#) list. Since the Online Seat Time Checklist is now part of the course development and redesign process, this master verification list is no longer used. All online and hybrid courses must have an [Online and Hybrid Course Development Proposal Form](#) approved by the Distance Education Committee and an Online Seat Time Checklist completed prior to being added to the course schedule. Completion of all necessary steps is tracked using an [Online Course Development/Redesign Tracking Report](#).

The College requires students to maintain satisfactory academic progress each semester. As outlined in the [Academic Catalog](#), students who fail to maintain established academic standards are put on academic probation after one semester and academic suspension if they fail to maintain progress for two consecutive semesters. From Spring 2020 through Spring 2022, [158 students](#) failed to meet satisfactory academic progress standards and were placed on academic probation, while 21 students were placed on academic suspension for repeated failure to meet these standards.

Although subjective, student course evaluations are also used to gauge perceived rigor and quality within courses. During Spring 2023, 95% of student evaluations rated DCB courses as [Challenging or Too Challenging](#). Students also ranked [quality](#) of courses high, with 30.14% of students rating the course as One of the Best, 39.27% of students rating the course as Above Average, and 5% of students rating courses as Below Average or One of the Poorest.

Response to 3.A.2

DCB utilizes the General Education Competencies as the learning goals for its degree-seeking students. These Competencies are articulated in the [Academic Catalog](#), as well as on the [College website](#). The General Education Competencies ensure that DCB students:

1. Identify the interrelationships between humans and their environments,
2. Demonstrate technological literacy,
3. Demonstrate the ability to solve a variety of mathematical problems,
4. Communicate effectively,
5. Employ the principles of wellness,
6. Demonstrate knowledge of social structures, and
7. Evaluate principles of Arts and Humanities.

General education exists within all degree programs at DCB, so these Competencies exist within all degree programs. Individual departments at DCB have [specific missions and student learning outcomes](#) that often reflect these Competencies.

General education semester hours account for a minimum of 36 credits for the [AA and AS programs](#) and 18 of the 24 credits required for the [certificate in College Studies](#). However, less than a third of the semester hours required for the [AAS degree](#) are for general education courses. Thus, [DCB articulates distinct student learning competencies for students enrolled in AAS programs](#). Students in AAS programs:

1. Employ industry-specific skills in preparation for workplace readiness and
2. Combine general education and vocational skills curriculum.

For students enrolled in CTE certificate programs, where general education courses are not required, only the first CTE student learning competency applies.

Response to 3.A.3

DCB's academic program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and locations. That is to say the [General Education Competencies](#) and [CTE Competencies](#) are consistent. [Course syllabi](#) are expected to contain consistent content information including course description, objectives, relationship to Campus Focus, as well as General Education Competencies for courses identified as general education courses. A [standardized DCB Syllabus Template](#) is available on the DCB website, and faculty are expected to include all identified areas on course syllabi. The Curriculum Committee works to ensure that new syllabi contain the required information. Additionally, the [Faculty Accountability in Online Education](#) document, a document sent to all online instructors each semester, references the expectation that all online faculty use the DCB Syllabus Template. Each semester, faculty send syllabi to the Academic Affairs Office and a [tracking spreadsheet](#) is used to ensure all course syllabi are received. Even though these steps are in place, a thorough review of all course syllabi reveals that inconsistencies exist.

Review of all course syllabi is a time-consuming task and, as such, occurs roughly every four years. During Spring 2020, the Director of Assessment and the Accreditation Coordinator completed all [Syllabi Checklist Forms](#). [Analysis of the Spring 2020 Syllabi Checklist Forms](#) showed only 23.90% of syllabi contained all required information. The alignment of course descriptions, course objectives, and General Education Competencies and Learning Outcomes across multiple sections of the same course was impacted by the fact that if one syllabus from a course was not in alignment, all syllabi for that course were marked as not aligning. For example, if one instructor for MATH 103 College Algebra failed to list the General Education Competency, all MATH 103 syllabi were marked as not in alignment.

During Fall 2023, the Director for Academic Affairs and the Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs completed all Syllabi Checklist Forms. Improvements, compared to Spring 2020, were evident during [Fall 2023](#):

Item for Review	Spring 2020	Fall 2023
Syllabus contains all required sections of the DCB syllabus template	146 (45.91%)	218 (79.56%)
Course description aligns with all other sections of the same course	82 (56.94%)	99 (83.19%)
Syllabus clearly defines course objectives	303 (95.28%)	275 (97.86%)
Course objectives align across all sections of the course	57 (43.18%)	80 (67.23%)
DCB General Education OR CTE Competencies identified	138 (61.61%)	231 (88.17%)
Alignment of General Education OR CTE Competencies across sections of the same course	26 (22.81%)	72 (63.72%)

NDUS Common Course Numbering alignment	121 (79.08%)	98 (68.53%)
Total syllabi with all "Yes" or "N/A"	76 (23.90%)	159 (56.58%)
Total syllabi with only one "No"	93 (29.54%)	59 (21%)
Total syllabi with two or more "No"	149 (46.86%)	63 (22.42%)

Overall, the analysis during Fall 2023 shows that syllabus consistency is improving in nearly all areas and that efforts, such as presentations on syllabi during [in-service](#), are helping to continually move DCB in the right direction. There was one area which saw a decrease in consistency. NDUS Common Course Numbering alignment saw an 11% drop from Spring 2020 to Fall 2023. During this time period, NDUS discipline groups have been more active, at times changing course descriptions and objectives. Although faculty are told to check the NDUS Common Course Numbering Matrices at the beginning of each semester, some faculty did not update with the new information that originated at the state-level. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs was made aware of this drop in consistency, and provided an [extra reminder](#) to all faculty at the end of the Fall 2023 semester.

DCB faculty, staff, and administrators will continue to monitor syllabus consistency. It is encouraging to see that, even with changes at the state-level and new faculty since Spring 2020, alignment of course description across multiple sections increased nearly 30%, alignment of course objectives across multiple sections increased roughly 24%, and alignment of General Education or CTE Competencies increased almost 40%. This demonstrates DCB's commitment to continuous improvement and the use of data to ensure the College is on the right path.

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3.B - Core Component 3.B

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

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

Argument

Response to 3.B.1 and 3.B.2

A [Nature, Technology, and Beyond](#) Campus Focus helps drive educational offerings at Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB). This Focus plays an integral role in the [General Education Philosophy](#) by organizing the seven General Education Competencies around the Campus Focus. The seven General Education Competencies (formerly called goals) were originally [developed in 2010](#), [revised in 2019](#), and [approved by the Faculty Senate](#) during that same year. The General Education Competencies articulate the intended learning outcomes of students at DCB and provide students an opportunity to develop knowledge and skills to become life-long learners. The General Education Philosophy speaks to this lifelong learning by specifying that the core of general education at DCB includes building knowledge and understanding concepts of the natural and social sciences, mathematics, communication, arts and humanities, technology, and wellness. The [seven General Education Competencies](#) ensure DCB students:

1. Identify the interrelationships between humans and their environment,
2. Demonstrate technological literacy,
3. Demonstrate the ability to solve a variety of mathematical problems,
4. Communicate effectively,
5. Employ principles of wellness,
6. Demonstrate knowledge of social structures, and
7. Evaluate principles of Arts and Humanities.

As noted in the [Academic Catalog](#), general education exists within all degree programs at DCB. To ensure this, faculty map all degree and certificate curricula. As evidenced on the curriculum maps, all [AA and AS curricula](#) require DCB students to take at least one course that addresses each of the seven General Education Competencies. Students pursuing an [AAS](#) degree are required to take at

least one course addressing General Education Competencies 2, 3, 4, and 5, and one course that addresses either Competency 6 or 7. Nine credits of math, science, and/or technology are required for the AAS, and most times this includes a science course which addresses Competency 1, but this is not always the case. General Education Competencies are clearly articulated on [general education course syllabi](#).

DCB's General Education Competencies are unique to the College, and the seven general education areas (GEA) at DCB align with the [ten GEA](#) within the North Dakota University System (NDUS). This alignment helps to facilitate the [General Education Requirement Transfer Agreement \(GERTA\)](#), which allows students to transfer general education course credits from one NDUS campus to another. The GERTA general education areas and the DCB courses approved for the purpose of meeting general education requirements for transfer to other NDUS institutions are outlined in the [Academic Catalog](#). As highlighted in the GERTA Guide, [NDUS policy](#) sets the framework for general education requirements, but the courses offered to support this framework are determined by the institution.

The Campus General Education Philosophy, General Education Competencies, and GERTA, support the institutional focus of ensuring that students are well-rounded, focusing on building student knowledge and understanding of concepts of the natural and social sciences, mathematics, communication, arts and humanities, technology, and wellness.

Response to 3.B.3

DCB recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work, and highlights [Inclusion](#) in its Core Values. To ensure that the Campus truly values diversity, diversity is a [common theme of assessment](#). Both the [Social Science Department](#) and [cocurricular groups](#) serving as pilot groups within the HLC Assessment Academy have current assessment reports available on diversity-related outcomes, and several additional groups have diversity-related assessment activities for future assessment cycles. This assessment supports that human and cultural diversity is important for students to understand within their curricular and cocurricular endeavors at DCB.

In addition to formal assessment centered on diversity, courses at DCB often have content related to human and cultural diversity. [Analysis of Fall 2023 DCB course syllabi reveals diversity referenced in six main areas](#):

- Relationship to Campus Focus/Mission (4 syllabi)
- Course objectives/outcomes (11 syllabi)
- Course description/outline (13 syllabi)
- Student (learning) outcomes (7 syllabi)
- Specific assignment/class activity (4 syllabi)
- Institutional Outcomes (16 syllabi)
- Other (1 syllabus)

The [Diversity Committee](#) at DCB is committed to fostering an atmosphere of inclusion and acceptance and creates opportunities for students, staff, and faculty to participate in activities which bring awareness to human and cultural diversity. During the 2022-2023 academic year, the Diversity Committee sponsored [26 activities](#) to promote human and cultural diversity, including a presentation on missing and murdered indigenous women, monthly displays in the DCB Library and Thatcher Hall centered on diverse groups, movie nights with discussion, and a presentation for faculty and

staff on anti-bias pedagogical practices.

Through its curricular and cocurricular offerings, Dakota College provides students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world.

Response to 3.B.4

Although primary faculty responsibilities center on providing a quality education in the classroom, faculty also contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge. [Seventy-seven percent of full-time faculty reported workshop or seminar attendance](#) during the 2022-2023 academic year, and 61% reported professional meeting attendance. Nineteen percent of full-time faculty reported scholarly works or publications, ranging from leading state-wide Farm Management trainings to writing and submitting accreditation reports. The Photography Department lead faculty also contributed work to several art exhibits, both within a virtual space and on-site galleries and museums. From Spring 2021 through Spring 2023, [seven faculty](#) shared research and content knowledge with the larger community through outreach talks.

From Spring 2020 through Summer 2023, [DCB offered 73 sections of cooperative education/internship, honors courses, independent studies, study abroad, and leadership classes](#). This led to a total of 1,313 students contributing to scholarship, creative work, or the discovery of knowledge, with a large majority of these students (472) enrolling in Advanced Farm Management Education.

The [Honors Program](#) at DCB affords students the opportunity to contribute to scholarship and discovery of knowledge at the Honors Symposium. Since Fall 2020, [34 students](#) have presented their research and scholarly activities at this event. Projects range from literature reviews on historical figures such as Clara Barton and Elizabeth Schuyler, to research on gene modification in food, as well as investigating common bird species that frequent DCB's Campus.

Students in the [DCB Photography Program regularly contribute to creative works](#) around Campus and the greater Bottineau community. Since Fall 2017, the DCB Photography Department has regularly featured its work at exhibits on Campus and in the Bottineau community. A total of 86 photography students contributed 589 images to exhibitions and professional publications since 2017.

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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

Response to 3.C.1

Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB) strives to ensure that the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflect human diversity. All open positions are advertised on the DCB website, the North Dakota University System (NDUS) employment page, ND Job Service, as well as two national platforms: Higher Ed Jobs and Indeed. As stated in DCB's Equal Opportunity Statement, "DCB is fully committed to equal opportunity in employment decisions and educational programs and activities, in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws for all individuals without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status or veteran status." This statement is on the employment page of the [DCB website](#), as well as in the [Employee Handbook](#).

Although DCB makes concerted efforts to ensure the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflect human diversity, the composition is relatively homogeneous. Current [human resource reports](#) show most full-time employees at DCB are white females in the 35-54 age category.

Response to 3.C.2

DCB has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both classroom and non-classroom roles of faculty. Over the past four years, DCB student-to-faculty ratios range from [10-to-1 \(in 2022\)](#), to [14-to-1 \(in 2021\)](#). Of the [34 full-time faculty](#) employed at DCB during the 2023-2024 academic year, 18 faculty members have been employed in their current positions less than five years, 10 faculty members have served DCB five to ten years, and six full-time faculty have been at DCB for

longer than ten years. This mix allows for institutional knowledge, continuity, and new ideas. Twenty percent of 2023-2024 full-time faculty are tenured (or on a tenure track) and 64.7% hold a master's degree or higher (11.76% hold a PhD).

Oversight of course curriculum, as well as assessment of student performance and achievement of learning outcomes, is performed by each individual faculty with additional oversight by the Curriculum Committee and Academic and Cocurricular Assessment Committee, respectively. Full-time faculty report on course development, program development, teaching improvements, and assessment activities each spring via the [Annual Summary of Activities](#) form.

[Full-time faculty workload](#) is set at 15 credit hours per semester, or a total of 30 credit hours during the academic year. DCB faculty do go beyond these workloads, often to teach Honors courses and extra sections of labs. [On a regular basis](#), 8-12 faculty teach overloads, for roughly 35 annual overload credits College-wide. In order to prevent faculty from going too far beyond the standard workload, [restrictions do exist](#). Even though these restrictions are in place, faculty have exceeded the maximum number of overload credits. For example, during the 2022-2023 academic year, 79 overload credits were taught, many by DCB's Science Department. This was the result of a failed science faculty search which resulted in two science faculty taking on a greater number of overload credits (the position is now filled).

While 80% of full-time DCB faculty responsibilities center on teaching, non-classroom service to College and community accounts for [20% of job responsibilities](#). To help evenly distribute committee responsibilities among faculty, the Faculty Senate devised a point system, and an ad-hoc committee meets as needed to reassess the points associated with each Faculty Senate and Campus Dean-appointed committee. During the 2023-2024 academic year, [faculty point totals ranged from 0-20 points](#), with an average of six points per faculty. Full-time faculty have an expectation of totaling roughly 10 points for committee work, with the understanding that first-year faculty should not take on this much committee work during their initial year as faculty. Although the point system does help to ensure even distribution of responsibilities, not all committees or service activities have designated points.

Faculty play active and important roles on many [Campus committees](#). For example,

- The [Curriculum Committee](#) (three faculty which always includes the Faculty Senate President) is responsible for overseeing course and curriculum additions, deletions, changes, and making recommendations to the Faculty Senate.
- The [Academic and Cocurricular Assessment Committee](#) (six faculty, with the Co-Directors and Assistant Assessment Coordinator all being full-time faculty) is responsible for overseeing assessment planning, reporting, and assessment-driven budgeting, as well as facilitating continuous quality improvement of DCB's academic programs.
- The [Academic Standards Committee](#) (three faculty) is responsible for upholding high academic expectations of DCB students, as well as monitoring students who fail to maintain these standards.
- The [Council of College Faculties](#) (one representative and one alternate) is a statewide [Faculty Senate for the 11 colleges and universities within the NDUS](#) responsible for "fostering quality in scholarly activities, teaching and learning, and considering all issues and conditions of employment which apply to the faculty at all campuses of the NDUS." Each institution within the NDUS, including DCB, elects a member (or members) to serve on the Council. Additionally, the members of the Council elect one of its members to serve as the Council's representative to the State Board of Higher Education (SBHE).

Response to 3.C.3

DCB instructors, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs, meet qualification standards, or are on a plan to meet these standards, set forth in DCB's [Policy for Determining Qualified Faculty](#). The Policy outlines qualification standards as follows:

Faculty Type	Qualification Standards
Liberal Arts/General Education/Transfer	1. Hold a master's degree or higher in the discipline or closely related field. OR 2. Hold a master's degree with 18 graduate credits in the discipline or closely related field. OR 3. Hold a master's degree and have a combination of 9 points (or less) of tested experience and a minimum of 9 graduate credits in the discipline or closely related field (tested experience points plus graduate credits must equal 18).
Career and Technical Education (CTE) Academic Skills Course (ASC) HPER and Coaching CARS/UNIV	1. Hold a bachelor's degree in the discipline or closely related field (for HPER/Coaching, the bachelor's does not need to be in the discipline or a closely related field). OR 2. If the faculty holds less than a bachelor's degree, a combination of academic credentials, work experience in the field, and tested experience may qualify the faculty (as determined by the Faculty Qualifications Committee).
Lab Only	Hold a bachelor's degree in the discipline or closely related field in which they are teaching.

DCB submitted an [interim report](#) focusing on faculty qualifications to the HLC Fall 2022, addressing previous inconsistencies identified by peer reviewers. Since this time, the [Faculty Qualifications Committee](#) continues to [review](#) all faculty transcripts, experience, and credentials to determine the discipline(s) each faculty member is qualified to teach, and uses the updated [Faculty Qualification](#), [Faculty Qualification Plan](#), and [Faculty Qualification Completion](#) forms. [Faculty Qualification Plan Deletion](#) forms are also available but have not been needed. The Director for Academic Affairs maintains a [master spreadsheet](#) of all faculty to ensure compliance with the Policy for Determining Qualified Faculty. During Fall 2023, 93% (or 95 out of 102) of all DCB faculty (including full-time, part-time, adjunct, online, and dual credit) were qualified to teach in their disciplines without being placed on a Faculty Qualification Plan. Seven DCB faculty are currently on a Faculty Qualification

Plan. Of these seven, five are full-time and two are adjunct, dual credit faculty. Six of the seven faculty on plans are estimated to complete plans by the end of Summer 2024.

Response to 3.C.4

Institutional policies and procedures outlined in [DCB Policy F.601.1 Evaluations-Faculty](#), follow NDUS policy which dictates that faculty be evaluated each year. Faculty at DCB are evaluated using four different methods.

Fall Planning and Annual Summary of Activities Forms

Each fall, all full-time faculty complete [Fall Planning Forms](#). These forms outline faculty objectives and activities for the upcoming year, including anticipated academic improvements, assessment activities, service to the College, and contributions to the community. Faculty are then required to submit [Annual Summary of Activities Forms](#) each May. These forms include the same areas identified on the Fall Planning Forms, but allow the faculty to showcase what they accomplished during the academic year. Both forms are used as part of the Performance Evaluation process.

Student Evaluations

In alignment with policy, [student evaluations](#) occur in all classes taught during a full-time faculty member's first year of employment, and alternating years thereafter. Part-time, adjunct, and dual credit faculty have student evaluations in every class, every semester.

Teaching Evaluations

During a full-time faculty member's first year, [teaching evaluations](#) occur each semester. After the first year of employment, teaching evaluations occur during alternate years to student evaluations (so that one form of evaluation occurs every year). The teaching evaluation involves the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs or the Director of Academic Affairs observing the faculty member in the classroom and submitting a formal evaluation report to the faculty.

Performance Evaluations

[Performance evaluations](#) occur annually for all benefited faculty. The evaluation draws from the Annual Summary of Activities and any teaching/student evaluations. These forms are placed in the faculty member's personnel file.

Notes about Faculty Evaluations

The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs maintains a [schedule](#) of all faculty evaluations, [tracking](#) the completion of the evaluations throughout each academic year. With the hiring of a new Associate Dean for Academic Affairs during Fall 2022 and the addition of a Director for Academic Affairs Spring 2023, the Department Chair structure went away beginning Fall 2023. As indicated on the [2023-2024 Implementation Plan](#), overhauling the faculty evaluation process is a priority at the College. Updated policy, process, and forms are forthcoming, but changes will align with NDUS's call for evaluation of faculty on an annual basis.

Response to 3.C.5

DCB has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and

adept in their teaching roles.

The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs receives annual summaries of faculty professional growth activities each spring. Most full-time faculty engage in some type of professional growth activity each year, with workshop/seminar attendance and professional meeting attendance being the most common. During the 2022-2023 academic year, [77.42% of full-time faculty attended a workshop/seminar](#), [31.29% attended a professional meeting](#), and [54.84% were members of a professional society](#). These professional growth activities contribute to the faculty evaluation process.

Several processes help to ensure that faculty are adept in their teaching roles. As required by the [North Dakota Department of Career and Technical Education](#) (CTE), all CTE faculty at DCB maintain state approval to teach within their designated fields. The approval comes in the form of either a [Postsecondary Regular or Postsecondary Provisional](#) credential. Faculty given a Provisional credential are given two years to complete the Clinical Practice Program which helps CTE professionals transition into their new roles as educators. Successful completion of the Program results in the faculty earning a Postsecondary Regular credential. Additionally, all new full-time faculty at DCB are assigned a mentor during the first semester of employment as part of the [DCB Faculty Mentoring Program](#). The [mentors](#) engage in classroom observations of the new faculty member on two separate occasions and offer suggestions for improvement in an end of the semester report submitted to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Additionally, guidance is offered to all faculty during [fall in-service](#) regarding technology available within and outside of the classroom. Training on Blackboard, the Interactive Video Network (IVN), and Microsoft Teams allow faculty to proficiently utilize the latest technology available through the College.

The policy and processes for [tenure](#) and [promotion](#) at DCB require faculty to show excellence in teaching, service to College, and service to community. Applications for tenure and promotion showcase classroom and professional success through reflection and evaluations. Recently [tenured](#) and [promoted](#) faculty demonstrate excellence within the classroom, a desire and action to maintain education and training, and exceptional service to the College and surrounding communities.

Faculty are encouraged to maintain appropriate training, currency in their academic fields, and boost innovation both in and outside of the classroom. Although a number of [professional development funds](#) exist at DCB, faculty who wish to pursue individual professional development opportunities apply for funding through the [Faculty/Staff Professional Development Application](#). Most of the applications are for offsetting graduate school tuition, conference attendance, and various certifications. During the [2023-2024](#) academic year, seven faculty applied for a total of \$7,703.49. During the [2022-2023](#) academic year, two faculty applied for \$1,500. These totals represent funding through the Faculty/Staff Professional Development Application, but does not encompass all professional development funding at the College.

Response to 3.C.6

As indicated in the faculty section of the [Employee Handbook](#), all faculty are responsible for making time available for student inquiry with a minimum of five office hours throughout the week. Faculty enter their [daily schedules](#) into Microsoft Outlook, and Campus faculty post these schedules outside their offices. [Online faculty are required](#) to be available to students by grading assignments and providing feedback within a one-week period, logging into Blackboard five days per week, and responding to student emails and questions within 48 hours. These expectations are reiterated each semester through [Online Lecturer Contracts](#) which specifically reference the [Faculty Accountability in Online Education](#) document. This document outlines faculty expectations within online

education. Additionally, contact information for faculty is included on [course syllabi](#), as well as on the [College website](#).

Spring 2023 student satisfaction surveys revealed that [85% of DCB Campus students](#) who responded felt somewhat to extremely satisfied with access to faculty (the top two categories). Dual credit students, the majority of whom are off-campus, reported similar satisfaction. [Eighty-two percent of dual credit students](#) (who felt the question applied to them) reported being somewhat to extremely satisfied with access to faculty.

Response to 3.C.7

Staff members providing student support services at DCB are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development. As evidenced on the most recent employee training logs,

- [Financial aid staff](#) attended 26 trainings, including those offered through the Department of Education, the North Dakota Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, the Federal Student Aid Office of the Department of Education, and the NDUS.
- Staff within the [Academic Atrium](#) attended trainings led by the NDUS, Starfish, Association for Title IX Administrators, National Academic Advising Association (NACADA), as well as in-house training from the Director for Student Success and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.
- [Athletic coaches and administrators](#) attended a variety of conferences, trainings, and clinics to remain current in best coaching practices. These included trainings such as *Building Champions through Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Confirmation*, *Offensive Hockey Today*, *Secrets to the Engineering of Athletic Performance: From Youth to Professionals*, and *Teaching and Modeling Behavior*.
- During the 2022-2023 academic year, the [Disability Support Services Coordinator also served as the Interim Library Director](#), participating in trainings related to both positions. These trainings included a series of trainings offered through the Online Dakota Information Network (ODIN) and the Associate on Higher Education and Disability.
- [Mental health counselors](#) engaged in training pertinent to college students, including trainings on suicide, sexuality across the lifespan, cognitive behavioral therapy for adolescence, and mental health first aid.

Currently, the [Disability Support Services Coordinator](#), [mental health counselors](#), [professional advisors](#), and [financial aid staff](#) are appropriately qualified and trained to provide effective student support services at DCB.

This emphasis on maintaining appropriately qualified, trained, and supported staff is facilitated by two practices at DCB: professional development and tuition waivers. Funding for professional development activities has [increased from 2019 to 2023](#), with a total of \$398,601 budgeted for professional development activities 2019-2023 (with \$307,153 of the funds used). During 2023, the Dean's Office and professional development related to accreditation topped the areas for professional development spending. Membership in an HLC Assessment Academy, attendance at an HLC Strategic Planning workshop, participation in an Assurance Argument Writing workshop, and attendance at the HLC Annual Conference accounted for much of this spending. A total of [\\$12,044](#) was spent on employee training during 2023. Through the Faculty/Staff Professional Development Application process, a total of five staff members received funding during the [2022-2023](#) and [2023-2024](#) academic years.

The [DCB Employee Handbook](#), [DCB Policy FS.802.1](#), and [State Board Policy 820](#) note that benefited employees are eligible for tuition and fee waivers. Reports run through the DCB Business Office only show DCB employees taking classes at DCB, not employees taking classes at other institutions within the NDUS (although graduate school tuition indicated on the [Faculty/Staff Professional Development](#) table is all tuition at NDUS institutions and the requested funds represent 50% tuition). During Fall 2023, one DCB employee was taking a DCB class and received a [\\$1,132.56 tuition waiver](#).

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3.D - Core Component 3.D

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

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

Argument

Response to 3.D.1

As outlined in the [Student Handbook](#), Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB) provides a variety of student support services suited to the needs of its [student population](#).

Disability Support Services

DCB students with documented disabilities can receive support through [Disability Support Services](#). Typical accommodations provided within this office include note taking, tutoring, homework help, proctoring and facilitation of examinations (i.e., quiet space, extended time), oral presentation of materials, braille, scribe for tests and homework, and organizational assistance to students with disabilities. From [Spring 2022 through Spring 2023](#), 76 students self-identified as needing support due to an identified disability and were served through DCB's Disability Support Services. Roughly 10-20 students received some type of support each week.

Financial Aid

[Financial aid staff](#) at DCB provide students assistance and education regarding funding opportunities, including [grants, loans, and scholarships](#). Staff within this office regularly educate Campus students, as well as the community, on the financial aid application process. [During the 2022-2023 academic year](#), financial aid staff facilitated 10 FAFSA outreach and/or help sessions, many of which occurred at area high schools. Additionally, the DCB Financial Aid Director provided information regarding the FAFSA application process and loan repayment on the local radio station.

Library

The [DCB Library](#) provides students access to [over 20,000 books, electronic resources, and databases](#). During the [2022-2023 academic year](#), the DCB Library hosted events suited to the needs of its student population, including DeStress Fest and athletic team study tables. The DCB Library is also home to Disability Support Services, as well as services for tutoring, testing, and the location of the offices for the Director of Student Success and the Student Success Specialist. A survey of student

satisfaction from [Spring 2023 shows that 89%](#) of responding students rated the DCB Library in the top two categories of satisfaction. To ensure that all DCB students have access to information provided through the DCB Library, clear instructions on the [Library webpage](#) outline how to access resources for off-Campus students.

Tutoring

Tutoring is available to all DCB students at no cost to the student. Peer tutors are identified by faculty and trained each year to provide quality tutoring services. Tutoring can be requested by the student, but can also be formally suggested by the instructor through Starfish tutoring referrals. During [Spring 2023](#), 11 DCB students worked with peer tutors, amassing 83 appointments and 133.5 hours of tutoring services. The most common subjects to prompt tutoring services were math and science. Tutoring services are monitored through the [Strategic Planning and Institutional Council for Effectiveness](#) (SPICE). Tutoring is also available to all DCB students through [NetTutor](#). [NetTutor](#) is a 24-hour, free online tutoring platform which makes it ideal for online, as well as on Campus students.

Mental Health Services

[DCB employs a part-time, licensed professional clinical counselor \(LPCC\)](#) who provides mental health and addiction counseling services to students at no cost and also serves on the Behavioral Intervention Team and Title IX Team, trains resident assistants on emotional intelligence and empathy, and aids the Diversity Committee with mental health awareness events. Beginning Fall 2023, DCB added an on-Campus Mental Health Intern to increase services offered to students. The addition of this on-Campus intern also brought increased advertising and promotion of mental health services through the [Mental Health Moment](#) posters displayed in Campus bathrooms and in the [Weekly Log](#) sent to all DCB students and employees, as well as the addition of a QR code which allows for quick scheduling of mental health appointments. During the [2022-2023 academic year](#), the DCB counselor met with 55 individual students and three groups (with 54 students in these three groups) for a total of 241 counseling sessions.

Note Regarding Student Support Services

Student satisfaction surveys are sent to students ([online](#), [dual credit](#), [Bottineau](#), [Valley City](#), and [Minot](#)) at the completion of each semester to evaluate satisfaction with services offered at DCB. Although response rates are low (ranging from 1 to 71 during Spring 2023), these surveys provide valuable feedback to DCB faculty, staff, and administration.

Response to 3.D.2

DCB provides learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students, as well as a process for directing students to courses and programs for which they are adequately prepared.

As stated in the [Academic Catalog](#), placement into English and mathematics courses is based on ACT, SAT, Accuplacer, and other approved test scores. The [course placement scores](#) used at DCB come from those outlined in [NDUS procedure](#). DCB offers a three-credit College Writing Prep (ASC 87) as a stand-alone course for students least prepared for college-level English courses. Composition Lab is a one-credit corequisite course for students enrolled in College Composition I (ENGL 110) whose test scores suggest additional instruction would aid in academic success. These

courses are offered on the [Bottineau, Minot State University, and Valley City State University campuses, as well as online.](#)

DCB offers a series of three different 8-week developmental mathematics courses, each of which is two credits: Algebra Prep I (ASC 91), II (ASC 92), and III (ASC 93). During Fall 2018, [mathematics faculty assessed the success of the Algebra Prep sequence](#) and found that success is quite low. After reviewing ASC 91, 92, and 93 success data with DCB's advising and retention team, a new developmental math sequence was proposed Spring 2021, and piloting this [new developmental math sequence](#) began Fall 2022 on DCB's Bottineau Campus (all other locations are continuing with the three 8-week developmental mathematics courses). This pilot includes a 4-credit Beginning Algebra (ASC 94) and a one-credit Math Lab (ASC 98) taken as a corequisite with MATH 103 College Algebra or MATH 104 Finite Math. The pilot of the new sequence is being monitored for success through the [SPICE](#). As reported to SPICE during January 2024, [results from the pilot](#) show an improvement in student success rates in the completion of college-level mathematics requirements. [SPICE supports](#) the adoption of the new math sequence for all locations, and mathematics faculty will seek approval through the Curriculum Committee and Faculty Senate during Spring 2024 to replace the ASC 91, 92, and 93 developmental sequence at all DCB locations and modalities beginning Fall 2024.

In addition to preparatory instruction, DCB also offers learning support to its students through services provided in the [Academic Atrium](#). As noted in 3.D.1, services include tutoring, advising (including appropriate course selection), and disability support. As indicated in the [Distance Education Handbook](#), learning support is available to all students regardless of course delivery method. Additionally, students placed on [academic probation](#) are required to enroll in [College Study Skills \(UNIV 110\)](#), a one-credit course which emphasizes skills essential for success in college work.

Response to 3.D.3

Academic advising at DCB begins immediately upon admission. An [academic advisor](#) is identified in the [acceptance letter](#) sent out by the Student Services Office, and students are instructed to contact their advisor prior to course registration. Incoming freshman have the opportunity to meet with their advisor during [First Year Experience](#) prior to classes beginning.

Although these initial contacts afford students the opportunity to connect with academic advisors, this does not always occur. [As a result of DCB's participation in the HLC's Persistence and Completion Academy](#), advising was identified as an area for improvement at DCB, and a [new advising model](#) began during Fall 2018. Prior to this model, faculty served as academic advisors within their academic disciplines, and several faculty served as general "liberal arts" advisors. Although some faculty excelled at advising, others did not. Additionally, advising was largely course selection, and often neglected advising elements such as field-of-study exploration, study skills development, Campus engagement, goal setting, and managing student expectations.

The advising model in place since Fall 2018 provides DCB students greater access to advisors since the Advising Specialists are full-time advisors and not faculty. Additionally, advising is now multifaceted, [addressing advising essentials far beyond course selection](#). Although a [majority of advising](#) occurs within this new model, certain CTE programs maintain [faculty-driven advising](#). For example, nursing students enrolled in the Dakota Nursing Program are advised by nursing faculty who follow [distinct advising guidelines](#).

One of the keys to effective advising is communication. [Starfish](#) reports, flags, and kudos, allow for

communication and transparency between instructors, advisors, and the student regarding student success, attendance, and concerns. Starfish progress reports are sent out by advising staff during weeks six and eleven each semester.

Response to 3.D.4

DCB provides the necessary infrastructure and resources to support effective teaching and learning. The DCB Campus includes [21 buildings for a total of 228,066 gross square feet of space](#). Thatcher Hall, Nelson Science Center, and Molberg, the three main academic buildings on Campus, combine for 106,452 square feet of classroom, office, and laboratory space. The [2022 Master Plan](#) continues to guide the maintenance and improvements on Campus. Some of the key [infrastructure improvements](#) recently undertaken include:

- Completion of the new [DCB Dining Center](#). This 3.7 million dollar project was completed during Spring 2022, equipping DCB with a beautiful new dining facility attached to the Knudson Student Center.
- Renovation of DCB's [Old Main](#) building into a Center for Rural Health and Education. With an anticipated Fall 2024 opening, this building will house DCB's Nursing Program, as well as other allied health programs.
- The Minot CTE Center (sometimes referred to as the 120 Building) is the location of DCB's new Dental Programs. Dental Assisting will begin Fall 2024, with Dental Hygiene added Fall 2025. This facility will bring needed CTE education to Minot, ND, and will help DCB expand its programming presence in the area.
- DCB's Library was recently remodeled to adapt to changing educational demands. Shelving was removed to create a more open concept space, allowing for athletic team study tables and group tutoring. Study cubicles were added to provide the option for quieter, individual and small group spaces.

The DCB Nursing Department offers a certificate in Practical Nursing and the Associate Degree in Nursing as part of the Dakota Nursing Program at three different locations: DCB in Bottineau, ND, Valley City State University in Valley City, ND, and Trinity Health/St. Joseph Campus in Minot, ND. Instruction and interaction occurs in [face-to-face, clinical](#), and [Interactive Video Network \(IVN\)](#) settings. A [HLC Multi-Location Visit Report completed Fall 2017](#) found the multiple sites to be adequate in resources, personnel, and services to support teaching and learning. Since this time, DCB's Nursing Programs have grown and DCB is responding by exploring [new facility options](#). As mentioned above, the renovation of Old Main into a Center for Rural Health and Education is focused on providing students, faculty, and staff with a new, modern facility that allows for educational experiences aligned with current industry standards.

Two additional areas which highlight DCB's infrastructure and resources are the Photography Studio and IT training, especially the training provided to faculty through a Learning Management System (LMS) transition.

The Photography Program began during 2013, maintaining a large classroom in Nelson Science Center and later taking over the former DCB Football locker room, as the Photography Lab. This lab contains 17 iMac computers equipped with appropriate software, such as Adobe Photoshop, as well as a [variety of light stands, backdrops, reflectors, soft boxes, cameras and lenses](#).

DCB uses Blackboard LMS and underwent a full-Campus transition from Blackboard Learn to Blackboard Ultra for Spring 2024. The Instructional Technology Coordinator provided information

and training to faculty during [Fall 2023 in-service](#), and provided [additional training](#) throughout the Fall 2023 semester. Several faculty began using Blackboard Ultra during Spring 2023 and Fall 2023 and served as resources throughout the transition.

The infrastructure and resources highlighted above allow for effective teaching and learning. Learning resources available to DCB students are covered in 4.A.4.

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3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Summary

Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB) provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered. By using both DCB and State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) policies and procedures, the College monitors the rigor, currency, and overall quality of its educational offerings. This monitoring occurs at all locations and for all modalities, including the Bottineau, Minot, and Valley City campuses, online, and dual credit locations.

General education exists within all degree programs and provides DCB students a foundation in knowing and understanding concepts of the natural and social sciences, mathematics, communication, arts and humanities, technology, and wellness. Additionally, the College strives to provide opportunities for both faculty and students to apply this knowledge through scholarship, creative work, and research.

Faculty and staff at DCB provide effective, high-quality programs and services to all students. Faculty play active roles on many Campus committees, are readily accessible to students, and engage in professional development activities. Additionally, all DCB faculty meet, or are on plans to meet, faculty qualification criteria.

DCB supports the learning of its students through a variety of student-focused services, a clear process for directing students into the proper mathematics and/or English courses, and advising that includes appropriate course placement, goal setting, and career exploration. Additionally, up-to-date infrastructure, technology, and resources further support this learning.

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

Response to 4.A.1

The [Instructional Program Review Policy](#) at Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB) directs program review to occur once every five academic years in both career and technical education (CTE) and transfer programs. DCB's policy fulfills [North Dakota State Board of Higher Education \(SBHE\) policy 403.1.2](#) which calls for evaluation of undergraduate instructional programs at least every seven years.

Academic Program Review

Prior to 2023, program review for CTE and transfer programs were separate processes. CTE program review was fulfilled through North Dakota Department of CTE Program Evaluation Reports and transfer programs were reviewed internally and a [Transfer Program Review \(TPR\)](#) report was compiled by the Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs and submitted to the Campus Dean. Although ND Department of CTE Program Evaluation Reports are valuable, they did not provide program review data such as program enrollment, number of graduates, and budget

information. Thus, DCB's program review process is now applicable to all programs.

The Fall 2023 program review was spearheaded by the Academic and Cocurricular Assessment Committee and provided a snapshot of DCB's AAS/certificate (CTE) and AA/AS (liberal arts) programs. This format was [chosen](#) to reduce filler that was present in the TPR report and to provide an administrative tool to examine the health of each academic program. The [Academic Program Review Fall 2023](#) report includes a program review overview and summary ([Section I](#)) and 33 individual program reviews ([Section II](#)). Overall, [next steps and recommendations](#) include:

- Establishing a committee specifically tasked with program review. Although assessment does play a role in program review, it is only one piece of the review. Committee membership could more closely align with the [entities](#) involved in gathering the data for the current program review (e.g., Director for Academic Affairs and Registrar).
- Developing a cycle for program review. Rather than all academic groups completing program review the same year, all groups (including cocurricular groups) could be divided over a five-year time period so that program review occurs every year for different groups. This would spread the workload and give the proposed Program Review Committee a task each academic year.
- Gaining feedback from administration on the usefulness of the program review information. With the new snapshot format, assessment leaders want to ensure appropriate information is being gathered and used. This feedback will continually improve the program review process.

Administrators will evaluate the Fall 2023 program review beginning Spring 2024, so action upon findings from this most recent program review are forthcoming. It is anticipated that the program review will influence the [Academic Master Plan](#) (Item 2.5). Historically, DCB does act upon findings gleaned from its program review process. For example, the 2019 program review showed that, although academic departments operated within their budgets, many department reports reflected a desire to update instructional materials and equipment. Increased professional development funding was identified as an area of improvement in 2019 and the [Campus Dean responded to this request by allocating \\$20,000](#) annually to a special professional development fund. Additionally, the [ND Department of CTE recommended](#) hiring the Allied Health Program Director as a full-time faculty, rather than serving as both the Program Director and the Student Services Clerk. The College was able to find the funding to act upon this recommendation and the Allied Health Program Director is [now a full-time](#) faculty member.

North Dakota Department of Career and Technical Education Program Evaluation

DCB continues to use CTE Program Evaluation Reports as an additional means of program review. In [November 2021](#), the CTE Program Evaluation Report revealed that DCB CTE programs met or exceeded expectations on 91.6% (compared to 78.8% in [2016](#)) of the twelve identified standards. These standards focus on 1) planning and organization, 2) utilization of instructional materials, 3) qualifications of instructors, 4) enrollment and student/teacher ratios, 5) equipment and supplies, 6) instructional facilities, 7) safety and sanitation practice, 8) advisory committee and community relations, 9) CTE student organizations, 10) coordination activities, 11) special populations, and 12) educational equality. Overall, these reports help to ensure quality and currency of programming.

Program Review for Externally Accredited Programs

The Paramedic Technology Program at DCB is accredited through the [Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs](#) (CAAHEP). CAAHEP is the accrediting board, but DCB

submits all paperwork to the Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the EMS Professions (CoAEMSP) who then makes the recommendation for accreditation to CAAHEP. The Program is reviewed through annual reports, during [advisory committee meetings](#), as well as through surveys administered to the Paramedic Technology advisory committee, faculty, [graduates](#), and [employers](#), which are submitted to CoAEMSP to ensure the DCB Paramedic Technology Program meets standards set forth by CoAEMSP and CAAHEP. As shown in the [2021 Annual Report](#) (submitted Spring 2023), DCB students in the Paramedic Technology Program had a [75% pass rate](#) on the national registry written exam and [100% job placement](#) for those who passed the national registry exam. The Program also had a [100% retention rate](#) for this cohort.

DCB's Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) Program received external accreditation through the National League for Nursing Commission for Nursing Education Accreditation (NLN CNEA) [February 2023](#). As with the Paramedic Technology Program, this external accreditation will provide continuous opportunities for review of the ADN Program.

External accreditation of the College's Dental Assisting Program through the [Commission on Dental Accreditation](#) (CODA) is underway. An initial accreditation on-site evaluation was conducted October 19-20, 2023, and DCB received notice of initial accreditation status during [February 2024](#).

Response to 4.A.2

DCB evaluates all credit that it transcripts according to State Board and [DCB policy](#). Transcription of prior learning credit follows [North Dakota SBHE policy](#), which is guided by HLC guidelines. The [Prior Learning Assessment Handbook](#) describes the policy and procedure used to assign prior learning credit at DCB. The methods used to assess prior learning are outlined in the Handbook and include certifications, professional licenses, experiential learning portfolios, military training transcripts, and standardized assessments. [Prior Learning Credit Applications](#) are completed by the student and program advisor, and the Prior Learning Coordinator makes a recommendation if credit should be awarded. Finally, administrative approval is granted by the DCB Registrar, and the [credit is transcribed to align with the approved application](#).

Response to 4.A.3

As outlined in the [Academic Catalog](#), DCB accepts transfer courses at full value if earned at a regionally accredited college or university. The DCB Registrar reviews and evaluates official transcripts for all non-North Dakota University System (NDUS) transfer credits, ensuring the accreditation status of the transfer school. As indicated in 4.A.2, the NDUS has a number of procedures and policies to evaluate transfer credit, as well as assure the quality of credit that DCB accepts in transfer, these policies include [403.6](#), [412](#), [441](#), and [460](#). The most influential and commonly used of these is policy 460 and procedure [460.1](#) which outline the General Education Requirement Transfer Agreement (GERTA).

The NDUS established the GERTA in 1994, which helps students seamlessly transfer approved general education course credits between institutions in the NDUS. Institution registrars regularly update the [GERTA Guide](#), which lists all general education courses offered and accepted by each NDUS institution. The Guide identifies general education coursework when a student "[transfers to](#)" and "[transfers from](#)" DCB. A complete list of GERTA approved courses is available in the [DCB Academic Catalog](#).

Response to 4.A.4

DCB maintains and exercises authority in the following areas:

Prerequisites for and Rigor of Courses

Nationally recognized examination scores dictate placement into [English and mathematics courses](#), and this placement guides the subsequent prerequisites in the English and mathematics sequence. As described in 3.D.2, DCB is currently piloting a new developmental mathematics sequence comprised of a four-credit Beginning Algebra (ASC 94) and a one-credit Math Lab (ASC 98) taken as a corequisite with MATH 103 College Algebra or MATH 104 Finite Math. Pilot results show greater student success rates with the ASC 94 and 98 sequence compared to the three, 8-week developmental courses (Algebra Prep I, II, and III). Due to this success, the ASC 94 and 98 sequence will replace the three, 8-week developmental course sequence at all locations starting Fall 2024.

DCB offers two developmental composition courses to all DCB students regardless of location. The first of the composition courses is College Writing Prep (ASC 87), which is a prerequisite for College Composition I (ENGL 110). The second developmental composition course is Composition Lab (ASC 88), which is a corequisite course taken alongside ENGL 110.

Prerequisites and corequisites are denoted on [course schedules](#) and in the [Academic Catalog](#), and apply to many 200-level courses. As is evident by the course schedules, prerequisites and corequisites are consistent for all DCB students, regardless of modality or location of course offering.

The [Curriculum Committee](#) oversees all course additions, deletions, and changes, and maintains authority over prerequisites and corequisites using professional discretion and input from faculty within the course discipline. [Course](#) and [curriculum](#) proposals and changes are submitted to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in accordance with [DCB policy](#) and brought to the Curriculum Committee for review. Once a course addition, deletion, or change is approved through the Curriculum Committee, it is then brought before the Faculty Senate for approval. Finally, the Campus Dean approves all course and curriculum additions, deletions, and changes. This multi-step process helps to ensure appropriate rigor and sequencing of courses. Within CTE programs, advisory committees provide an additional layer of reassurance that programs and courses contain the proper amount of rigor and sequencing.

Additionally, DCB's [Definition of a Credit Hour Policy](#) standardizes time spent engaging with course content which allows faculty to maintain authority over the rigor of courses offered. This extends beyond face-to-face courses through the [Online Seat Time Policy](#). Both policies were approved by the [Faculty Senate](#) and the [Dean's Council](#). Adherence to policy is tracked by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs (see 3.A.1).

Expectations for Student Learning

Expectations for student learning are guided by [department missions and learning outcomes](#), which are guided by DCB's student learning [competencies](#) (as outlined in 3.A.2). DCB faculty review department missions and learning outcomes at the [completion](#) of each five-year assessment cycle to ensure currency and accuracy. As described in 4.B, faculty at DCB continuously engage in [assessment of student learning](#) at the course-level, and a [comprehensive report of assessment activities](#) is provided to the entire Campus.

Access to Learning Resources

Learning resources are available through the DCB Library, Academic Atrium, Distance Education Office, specially equipped laboratories, and staff based at Minot State University and Valley City State University.

- DCB employs a Director of Student Success and a Student Success Specialist to aid students, staff, and faculty in the utilization of learning resources. The DCB Library contains [over 23,000 in-house resources](#). Research databases are available through the Library page on the DCB website, and access to these databases is available on and off Campus.
- The [Academic Atrium](#) provides access to tutoring, academic advising, career counseling, and transfer counseling services. The Academic Atrium includes the DCB Library and the [Academic Center for Excellence \(ACE\)](#). The ACE is the primary location for academic and career counseling and the DCB Library is home to academic tutoring.
- The Distance Education Office provides a variety of learning resources to students. Yuja lecture capture software allows faculty to record lectures in or outside of class which can then be utilized by students to facilitate learning. Lectures are automatically recorded in all dual credit classes to allow high school students access to material that may be missed due to differences in academic calendars. DCB uses Blackboard as its learning management system, with the Instructional Technology Coordinator and Distance Education Specialist serving as facilitators for training and troubleshooting. As noted in the [Distance Education Handbook](#), online students have access to the same learning support resources as on Campus students.
- [Nursing laboratories](#) in Bottineau, Minot, and Valley City provide students the opportunity to practice skills such as assisting with labor and delivery, assessing and treating irregular cardiac rhythms, and insertion of IVs and tubes by practicing on specialized manikins.
- [Nelson Science Center](#) is home to the wildlife, chemistry, and biology laboratories. These laboratories are equipped with instruction demonstration tables with sinks and propane, as well as student stations, microscopes, chemical storage, safety equipment, dissecting trays, and anatomical models.
- The [Photography Laboratory](#) provides students with a variety of backdrops, lights, reflectors, lenses, and cameras. The DCB Studio Manager maintains office hours within the Photography Laboratory to assist students with this equipment if necessary.
- The [Horticulture Department](#) provides appropriate equipment and resources to facilitate learning within the Agriculture Management and Technology, Specialty Crop Production, and Greenhouse Technology Programs. This includes a reverse osmosis system, six high tunnels to extend the growing season, and a wash and pack facility which enables students to practice food safety and preservation, as well as customer service.
- DCB students in the Passport Program at [Minot State University \(MSU\)](#) and Bridges Program at [Valley City State University \(VCSU\)](#) pay DCB tuition but student fees for MSU and VCSU. Thus, these students have access to the same services that MSU or VCSU students have access to. This includes tutoring through the Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning at MSU and the Center for Academic Visioning and Engagement at VCSU, advising and orientation unique to DCB students at [MSU](#) and [VCSU](#), as well as access to the libraries at each of these institutions.

Faculty Qualifications for all Programs

As noted in 3.C.2, all [DCB faculty meet](#), or are on a documented [Faculty Qualification Plan](#) to meet, qualification standards outlined in DCB's [Policy for Determining Qualified Faculty](#). The Policy was developed in alignment with HLC criteria and approved through the [DCB Faculty Senate](#). To ensure all DCB faculty meet these standards, the Director for Academic Affairs maintains a [spreadsheet](#) of

all faculty. The spreadsheet is updated and reviewed regularly.

Note Regarding Dual Credit Courses and Faculty

Dual credit (early entry) courses offered through DCB adhere to the same policies, procedures, and requirements set forth for non-dual credit courses. Since most dual credit students do not take classes on the DCB Campus, members of the Distance Education Department work to ensure these students understand DCB process and procedure. This is done through continuous correspondence with high school students and administrators, as well as through [visits to local high schools](#).

Dual credit faculty are held to the same qualification standards as other DCB faculty. Of the 40 dual credit faculty teaching during Fall 2023, [14 were full-time DCB Campus faculty](#) teaching face-to-face, online, or over the Interactive Video Network (IVN). The Faculty Qualifications Committee confirms the qualifications of the faculty teaching all courses including dual credit (see 3.C.2).

Additionally, DCB is taking steps toward accrediting DCB's dual credit program through the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP). The NACEP accreditation standards align closely with HLC's standards. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs is currently a [member of NACEP](#) and plans to reinvigorate the College's efforts to gain NACEP accreditation.

Response to 4.A.5

As noted in 4.A.1, DCB maintains specialized accreditation for the Paramedic Technology Program through the [Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs](#). Additionally, the Associate Degree Nursing program offered through the DCB Nursing Department is accredited through the [Commission for Nursing Education Accreditation](#) (CNEA), which is the accrediting body through the National League of Nursing (NLN). The DCB Nursing Department is currently approved through the North Dakota Board of Nursing to offer a [certificate in Practical Nursing and an Associate Degree in Nursing](#) and maintains standards outlined by the [North Dakota Board of Nursing](#). The North Dakota Board of Nursing will visit DCB's Campus during April 2024 to ensure the DCB Nursing Program continues to adhere to standards set forth by the Board. DCB began seeking accreditation for its Dental Assisting Program through the [Commission on Dental Accreditation](#) (CODA) during the 2023-2024 academic year. A site visit occurred during Fall 2023 and initial accreditation status was granted [February 2024](#).

Response to 4.A.6

DCB evaluates the success of its graduates well in some programs and not as well in others. The most recent IPEDS cohort reports show a total of 319 students in the [2014-2015](#) cohort, of whom 97 received an award (certificate or degree) from DCB and 137 enrolled in another institution after leaving DCB. For the [2013-2014](#) cohort, a total of 285 students comprised the cohort, with 88 receiving an award from DCB and 54 transferring to a different institution. It should be noted that subsequent enrollment status is unknown for 90 students from the 2014-2015 cohort and 133 students from the 2013-2014 cohort. The NDUS tracks transfers for all colleges within the University System. From [Fall 2020 through Fall 2023](#), 153 DCB students transferred to another college within the NDUS, with 41% transferring to Minot State University.

Graduates of the certificate in Practical Nursing (PN) and Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) Programs display high levels of success on the NCLEX exam. From 2020-2023, first time pass rates for DCB nursing students were higher than the national average for both the [PN](#) and [ADN](#) graduates,

with the exception of ADN students in 2021-2022 when the DCB pass rate was 77% and the national average was 80.83%. Job placement rate for PN students ranged from 90%-100% between 2020 and 2023, and the ADN placement rate was higher (97%-100%) during the same time period. Students in the Paramedic Technology Program see similar success, with [75% successfully passing](#) the national registry or state written examination, and [all](#) who successfully passed the examination being placed into full-time, part-time, or volunteer paramedic positions.

Outside of IPEDS and programs such as Nursing and Paramedic Technology, DCB does not engage in formal surveys of its graduates. However, DCB employees working within the Academic Atrium (i.e., Advising and Student Support Specialists) maintain informal records of student success through student surveys sent to graduates throughout the year following graduation. Of the 90 graduates tracked from the [Fall 2020-Summer 2021](#) cohort, five transferred to a different school, 13 entered into degree-specific workforce employment, five entered into employment not related to earned degree, and four graduates were tracked but marked as other. Seventy percent of Fall 2020-Summer 2021 graduates did not respond to the survey. Anecdotally, many CTE faculty know what former DCB graduates are doing (vocationally), but this knowledge is not formally recorded at this time.

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4.B - Core Component 4.B

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

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

Argument

Response to 4.B.1-3

Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB) engages in ongoing assessment of student learning both at the curricular and cocurricular level. Through clearly stated student learning competencies and a five-year assessment cycle, DCB works hard to ensure that assessment is meaningful, contributes to continuous improvement, and draws substantial participation of relevant faculty and staff.

Clearly Stated Competencies for Student Learning

DCB identifies seven General Education Competencies (modified and approved by [Faculty Senate](#) in September 2019) which serve as the student learning competencies for DCB students enrolled in Associate of Arts (AA) and Associate of Science (AS) programs, as well as students pursuing a certificate in College Studies. Although there are different [sub-plans for the AA and AS degrees](#), the same seven Competencies serve as the learning competencies for all AA and AS sub-plans, which are discipline-based transfer programs. This consistency of learning competencies was done because, although some sub-plans require a number of plan-specific course requirements outside of general education (such as the [AS in Marketing and Management](#) which requires five Business Administration (BADM) courses), other sub-plans require only general education courses (such as the [AA in Social Science](#)). As noted in the [Academic Catalog](#) and on the [College website](#), DCB students will:

1. Identify the interrelationships between humans and their environment,
2. Demonstrate technological literacy,
3. Demonstrate the ability to solve a variety of mathematical problems,
4. Communicate effectively,
5. Employ the principles of wellness,
6. Demonstrate knowledge of social structures, and
7. Evaluate principles of Arts and Humanities.

Each of these Competencies has [specific Learning Outcomes and Performance Indicators](#).

Due to the additional emphasis on career and technical skills, DCB outlines (in the [Academic Catalog](#)) two Career and Technical Education (CTE) Competencies for students pursuing an

Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in one of DCB's CTE programs. The first Competency speaks to the career and technical aspects of program curriculum, and the second speaks to the importance of integrating principles of general education into each curriculum. Students in these programs will:

1. Employ industry-specific skills in preparation for workplace readiness, and
2. Combine general education and vocational skills curriculum.

Students in CTE certificate programs are not required to complete the general education coursework necessary to earn an AAS degree and, as such, will not achieve the aforementioned CTE Competency related to general education. Thus, students in the CTE certificate programs will only:

1. Employ industry-specific skills in preparation for workplace readiness.

These Competencies serve as the program-level learning goals for DCB students, whereas [department learning outcomes](#) are more specific to the academic field of study. Additionally, each [course syllabus denotes the specific goals of the course](#), which relate to the department learning outcomes, and the broader degree Competencies.

Cocurricular Competencies come straight from the General Education Competencies. Cocurricular leaders and students were [surveyed](#) to determine if the existing Competencies could also be used as Cocurricular Competencies. Surveys revealed cocurricular themes that did, indeed, mirror General Education Competencies (GEC) and CTE Competencies:

1. Cocurricular Competency (GEC 4: Communicates effectively, LO #4): Collaborates with others,
2. Cocurricular Competency (GEC 6: Demonstrates knowledge of social structures, LO #2): Examines the world of human diversity,
3. Cocurricular Competency (GEC 6: Demonstrates knowledge of social structures, LO #3): Recognizes human social structures, and
4. Cocurricular Competency (CTE Competency 1): Employ industry-specific skills in preparation for workplace readiness.

These Cocurricular Competencies center around five themes that have helped to drive cocurricular assessment: community, leadership, teamwork, career preparedness, and diversity.

Effective Processes for Assessment of Student Learning and Achievement of Learning Goals

Assessment of student learning, both at the curricular and cocurricular level, occurs through the Academic and Cocurricular Assessment Committee (ACAC). The ACAC is led by two Co-Directors of Assessment, and is comprised of staff, faculty, and cocurricular leaders at DCB.

Curricular Programs

The ACAC implemented a new, five-year cycle of assessment for curricular programs beginning Fall 2019. The cycle consists of two years assessing one learning outcome (LO), two years assessing a different LO, and the final year of the assessment cycle centers on curricular program review. The second LO assessment concluded Spring 2023, and program review occurred during Fall 2023 with the [Program Review Report](#) submitted to the Campus Dean and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs December 2023. The next assessment cycle will begin Fall 2024 and will focus on LOs not assessed in this last cycle. Most departments assessed LO #1 during the first two-year cycle and LO #2 during the second two-year cycle. Each year during [faculty in-service](#), the Co-Directors of Assessment

provide training on assessment during [Adjunct Day](#). This is done in the hope that this will increase assessment activity among both full-time and adjunct faculty.

This new assessment cycle replaces an assessment process used at DCB from 2009-2019. The former process occurred annually and involved new planning, assessment, and reporting each academic year. The new assessment process aimed to 1) increase sample sizes by gathering data over a two-year period, 2) put more emphasis on planning to ensure outcomes are measurable, assessment methods are appropriate, and timelines are maintained, and 3) focus on assessment *for* student learning, rather than assessment *of* student learning. Progress toward achievement of the third goal included creating new [Department Assessment Plans](#), [Planning](#) and [Reporting Forms](#), and expanding ACAC involvement with the assessment process. The [Assessment Reporting Forms](#) include follow-up on prior action steps and assessment-driven change aimed at ensuring faculty close the loop on previous assessment-related plans.

Cycle One Assessment Results

Fall 2019 through Spring 2021 assessment primarily focused on LO #1. Each department identified courses that fall under the assessed LO and the [Academic Assessment Report](#) indicates the percentage of courses where assessment results were submitted. The following table summarizes the assessment findings:

Competency	Department	Learning Objective	% of LO-Specific Courses Reporting	Assessment Finding
GEC 1	Science	LO #1	90%	62.5% of students met benchmark.
GEC 2	Information Technology	LO #1	42%	Students fell below the 70% benchmark on the final project. Students were above the benchmark on the final exam.
GEC 3	Mathematics	LO #1	29.5%	70% mastery was met in 4 of 7 classes.
GEC 4	Communication	LO #1	52%	89% of students demonstrated satisfactory level skills in ENGL 110 and 88% in ENGL 120.

GEC 5	Wellness	LO #1	63.9%	Benchmark of 90% demonstrating physical wellness met in 100% of varsity sport activity classes.
GEC 6	Social Science	LO #1	80%	84.82% (goal of 70%) of students met the benchmark.
GEC 7	Arts and Humanities	LO #1	67%	87% of PHOT 180 and 88% of ART 182 students met the 70% benchmark.
CTE Competency 1	Agriculture	LO #1	100%	Students met the 70% benchmark in 3 out of 5 courses (range of 60% to 100%).
	Horticulture	LO #2	16.7%	Not enough data to draw conclusions.
	Business	LO #1	45%	In the five courses that were assessed, students in two of the courses met the 70% benchmark (range of 57.1% to 100%).
	Computer Technology	LO #1	38%	Students met the 70% benchmark in all assessed courses (range of 87% to 90%).
	Education and Human Development	LO #3	70%	Students met the 70% benchmark in all assessed courses (range of 80% to 100%).
	Allied Health	LO #1	0%	Lead instructor left prior to submitting data/reporting form.

Diagnostic Medical Sonography (DMS)	Did Not Report	0%	Did Not Report
Paramedic Technology	Did Not Report	0%	Did Not Report
Natural Resources	LO #1	0%	Did Not Report
Practical Nursing	LO #1	100%	Students met the 70% benchmark in all assessed courses (range of 73.2% to 97.7%).
Nursing Associate Degree	LO #1	100%	Students met the 70% benchmark in all assessed courses (range of 71% to 97.5%).
Photography	LO #1	100%	Students met the 70% benchmark in all assessed courses (range of 87% to 90%).
Technical Studies	Did Not Report	0%	Did Not Report

Overall, there was a [54.7%](#) rate of reporting on courses during this first cycle of assessment. As shown in the table, most departments met the benchmarks set forth for student learning at the course level, but when benchmarks were not met, faculty identified plans for addressing shortcomings. For instance, instructors teaching in the Science Department plan on adding more reviews, handouts, and supplementing material with videos to clarify LO-related topics, Technology faculty plan on adding more hands-on project days, and Mathematics faculty plan to spend more time on application and understanding of concepts. When benchmarks were met, some departments raised the benchmark. For example, English raised their benchmark to 90% of students demonstrating a satisfactory level of LO-related skills and identified using Starfish (an early alert system used by DCB) to help ensure students can achieve at this higher level.

All four departments that did not report are led by adjunct faculty. Improving the rate of adjunct faculty assessment reporting is a priority of the ACAC. The Co-Directors of Assessment reached out to the leaders of the DMS, Paramedic Technology, Natural Resources, and Technical Studies programs during the second cycle of assessment to try to elicit both planning and reporting submission from these groups.

An area of concern raised through this first cycle of the new assessment cycle was related to communication and the chain of command. [Seventy-five percent](#) (15) of departments reported on assessment. Although this level of participation is quite high, a quarter of departments providing no assessment data is concerning. Of the five departments (Allied Health, Diagnostic Medical Sonography, Paramedic Technology, Natural Resources, and Technical Studies) that did not report, two are new programs and all are primarily comprised of adjunct faculty. Although adjunct faculty are informed about (and contractually required to participate in) assessment, requests for assessment

data are often unanswered. Additionally, requests are often made by on-Campus department faculty who have limited authority over adjunct faculty. There were also concerns about who should compile departmental assessment data: department faculty or the ACAC. Overall, [three goals](#) for improvement emerged from this first cycle of assessment: 1) increasing department reporting rate, 2) increasing the course reporting rate, and 3) streamlining the process for reporting.

Cycle Two Assessment Results

Fall 2021 through Spring 2023 assessment primarily focused on LO #2. Again, each department identified courses that fall under the assessed LO and the [2021-2023 Academic Assessment Report](#) indicates the percentage of courses where assessment results were submitted. The following table summarizes the assessment findings:

Competency	Department	Learning Objective	% of LO-Specific Courses Reporting	Assessment Finding
GEC 1	Science	LO #2	88.9%	Students in 14 of the 15 sections (93.3%) met the 70% benchmark.
GEC 2	Information Technology	LO #2	78%	Average student score on final projects and exam was 83%, which was above the 70% threshold.
GEC 3	Mathematics	LO #2	55.6%	70% mastery was met in 5 of the 6 courses assessed (range of 66.7% to 80%).
GEC 4	Communication	LO #2	46%	Benchmark of 100% mastery was not met (range of 87% to 97%).
GEC 5	Wellness	LO #1	100%	Benchmark of 90% demonstrating physical wellness met in 100% of varsity sport activity classes.
GEC 6	Social Science	LO #2	70%	87.6% (goal of 70%) of students met the benchmark.

GEC 7	Arts and Humanities	LO #2	82%	Students met the 70% benchmark in 13 of 14 courses.
CTE Competency 1	Agriculture	LO #2	100%	75% (goal of 70%) of students met the benchmark.
	Farm Management Education	LO #2	100%	81.3% (goal of 70%) of students met the benchmark.
	Horticulture	LO #3	16.7%	Students achieved the 3.5 or higher rating (3.75) in the one course assessed.
	Business	LO #2	10%	In the two courses that were assessed, students in both courses met the 70% benchmark (range of 90.2% to 100%).
	Computer Technology	LO #2	100%	Students met the 70% benchmark in all courses (range of 80% to 98%).
	Education and Human Development	LO #3	0%	New instructor did not receive assessment from previous instructor.
	Allied Health	LO #2	58%	80%-100% of students met the 70% or higher benchmark on the post-test in all assessed courses (goal of 80% of students).
	Diagnostic Medical Sonography (DMS)	Did Not Report	0%	Did Not Report

	Paramedic Technology	LO #2	100%	100% of students met the 70% or higher benchmark in the five assessed courses.
	Natural Resources	LO #2	67%	In the two courses assessed, students in one of the courses met the 70% benchmark (range of 66.7% to 100%).
	Practical Nursing	LO #2	100%	The goal of 70% of students hitting the benchmark was met in all courses (range of 77% to 100%).
	Nursing Associate Degree	LO #2	100%	The goal of 70% of student hitting the benchmark was met in all courses (range of 79.1% to 100%).
	Photography	LO #2	100%	99.5% of students met the proficiency benchmark (goal of 70% of students).
	Technical Studies	Did Not Report	0%	Did Not Report

During Cycle Two of assessment, there was a [65.4%](#) rate of reporting on courses, up from 54.7% during Cycle One. Similar to Cycle One, most departments met the benchmarks set forth for student learning at the course level. In cases where the benchmark was not met in all courses, often there was a reason. For instance, in Natural Resources a low sample size in ENVT 110 could explain why 70% of students did not meet the 70% or higher benchmark (only coming in at [66.7%](#)). Additionally, low enrollment in [AGEC 244](#), with the added impact of a student dropping the course midway through the semester, impacted assessment results in Agriculture Management and Technology. Small sample size could also account for failure to hit the benchmark in general education areas, including [BIOL 230](#) and [MATH 105](#). Although Communication did not meet its student learning objective, the benchmark was set at 100% mastery of skills. In the three courses assessed, the percentage of students who demonstrated 100% mastery ranged from [87% to 97%](#), which is quite high. This increased benchmark is a direct result of assessment from Cycle One, where students in ENGL courses demonstrated [88-89%](#) mastery of LO #1.

The percentage of departments reporting also increased during Cycle Two, from 75% reporting during Cycle One to 86% during Cycle Two. [Paramedic Technology](#) faculty worked with the Co-

Directors of Assessment and not only submitted assessment data for LO #2, but retroactively submitted data on LO #1. The individualized approach used with Paramedic Technology will now be used with the Diagnostic Medical Sonography faculty. As noted in the 2021-2023 Academic Assessment Report, the assessment of the Technical Studies program is challenging, but provides opportunities to include assessment of prefixes that have not previously found a home (i.e., UNIV and CARS).

Although Cycle Two of assessment ended with similar concerns as Cycle One (such as adjunct faculty not reporting accounting for 67% of non-reporting by course, the same as in the 2019-2021 Cycle), improvements in the process are evident. The three goals for Cycle Two identified by the ACAC after Cycle One included: 1) increasing the department reporting rate, 2) increasing the course reporting rate, and 3) streamlining the process for reporting. As evidenced above, goals one and two were met, with an 11% increase in department reporting and a 10.7% increase in course reporting. Although small steps to streamline the reporting process have been made, this is still a priority after Cycle Two.

Cocurricular Programs

DCB joined an HLC Assessment Academy during Summer 2020 with an identified project centering on establishing a sustainable program for cocurricular assessment at the College. This was prompted by two factors: 1) the lack of cocurricular assessment at DCB prior to this time, and 2) an [interim report](#) focused on establishing cocurricular assessment due to the HLC September 2022.

Through its Academy work, DCB worked with cocurricular leaders and students to establish Cocurricular Competencies which guide the assessment of cocurricular programming. A group of six cocurricular groups ([Leaderjacks](#), [Men's Hockey](#), [Phi Theta Kappa](#), [Photography Club](#), [Student Nursing Organization](#), and [Student Senate](#)) were chosen to pilot the newly established cocurricular assessment process. The groups selected were chosen due to their connection with the Campus Mission and Focus and are representative of the types of cocurricular offerings at DCB.

At present, the cocurricular pilot is working on a three-year assessment cycle. Two years for cocurricular assessment, and one year (the 2023-2024 academic year) for cocurricular program review. During discussions with DCB's Academy mentor it was suggested that the Academy members, in consultation with the ACAC, consider what assessment cycle length would work best for cocurricular assessment. Engaging in program review every three years may be too frequent and some alignment with the five-year assessment cycle may be more beneficial.

Cocurricular assessment occurred during two separate academic years (2021-2022 and 2022-2023) for the pilot groups. After cocurricular leaders and students identified themes for desired cocurricular outcomes (the basis behind the Cocurricular Competencies), assessment leaders wanted to ensure that students were coming away from cocurricular participation having experience with and exposure to the identified themes of community, leadership, teamwork, career preparedness, and/or diversity.

Cocurricular Assessment Pilot: Year One

During the 2021-2022 academic year, assessment of Cocurricular Competencies occurred using a student self-assessment survey which used a 5-point Likert scale (0-Not at all, 5-strongly agree) where students rated agreement with theme-based statements. The [survey](#) had 17 standard statements with the opportunity for cocurricular leaders to add in their own statements. Student

participants in the six cocurricular groups completed the self-assessment survey during Spring 2022. Overall [results for the six cocurricular groups](#) showed a self-assessment average of 4.36 in leadership, 4.75 in teamwork, 4.38 in community, 4.44 in diversity, and 4.57 in the activity-based questions. Thus, averages revealed students slightly to strongly agreed with cocurricular activity participation aiding in a stronger connection to community, enhancement of leadership and teamwork skills, career preparedness, and an understanding of diversity. Students scored themselves highest on a teamwork-related question (I can work together with others towards a common goal) and lowest on a leadership-related question (I'm confident to speak out in a group setting). A diversity-related question (I feel comfortable initiating conversations about diversity, equity, and belonging) also had a lower rating, yet still had an average score of 4.11, indicating that students agreed that they felt comfortable initiating conversations about diversity, equity, and belonging.

Cocurricular leaders helped to validate the data by filling out the same survey for each student participant. The [cocurricular leaders](#) scored the students 4.34 in leadership, 4.85 in teamwork, 4.47 in community, 4.43 in diversity, and 4.69 in the activity-based questions. A t-test was used to determine if student and cocurricular leader scores were significantly different. Results show average responses by students are equal to the average responses by the cocurricular leader. Further tests were run to identify if individual questions were found to be significantly different when comparing the means. The means were not found to be significantly different. Thus, student and leader responses were not statistically different from each other at either the specific question level or at the aggregate category level. This suggests that the self-assessment survey is an accurate tool for these groups.

The Academy team met during [May 2022](#) to reflect on the cocurricular assessment process. Cocurricular leaders expressed appreciation for certain aspects of the self-assessment survey, but commented on how not all themes (community, leadership, teamwork, career preparedness, and diversity) applied to all cocurriculars. For example, although Men's Hockey encourages leadership, teamwork, an appreciation of teammates from diverse backgrounds, and engagement with the community through volunteer opportunities, participation in Men's Hockey does not focus on career preparedness. Additionally, some of the questions associated with each theme were not applicable to all cocurricular groups. Based on this feedback, the Academy team revised the survey and contemplated having each cocurricular leader edit the survey to only include questions applicable to their cocurricular group. However, the Academy team opted to continue with the full, but revised, survey for all groups.

Cocurricular Assessment Pilot: Year Two

Five of the six groups continued piloting the cocurricular assessment process during the 2022-2023 academic year with the revised survey. At the end of Spring 2023, it was announced that the [DCB Photography Program](#) would transition to an online only program beginning Fall 2024. With low enrollment in the Program and the Photography Club, the Club was removed from the cocurricular pilot group. Additionally, instead of cocurricular leaders validating the survey during the 2022-2023 academic year, student focus groups were used to validate data.

[Overall results for the five cocurricular groups](#) during the second year of the pilot revealed self-assessment average scores of 4.22 in leadership (down 0.14), 4.61 in teamwork (down 0.14), 4.24 in community (down 0.14), and 4.53 in diversity (up 0.09). All of these averages reveal that students participating in the cocurricular activity felt the activity provided opportunities for strengthening leadership, teamwork, community connection, and diversity-related experiences. All students rated themselves highest (4.70) on a diversity statement (I respect cultures, values, and opinions different

from my own) and lowest (4.01) on a community statement (I have used resources in the community (off-campus)).

The [qualitative data](#) from the student focus groups came from 21 students in five groups: Leaderjacks, Men's Hockey, Phi Theta Kappa, Student Nursing Organization, and Student Senate. A total of [eight questions](#) were posed to groups of 4-5 students. The focus group discussions were facilitated by DCB HLC Assessment Academy Team Members not directly related to the cocurricular group (e.g., the Men's Hockey coach served as the facilitator of Student Nurse Organization focus group and not the Men's Hockey focus group). Overall, focus group responses seemed to align with survey responses: students felt they had ample opportunities to lead, students felt stronger as a team as the semester/season/year went on, and students felt a stronger connection to community primarily shown through volunteering opportunities. The focus groups did reveal that students struggled with defining diversity and providing specific examples of how the cocurricular encouraged diverse experiences. However, many students spoke of meeting new people from different backgrounds and how this provided opportunities for personal growth.

Note Regarding Cocurricular Program Review

The next, and final step, of the cocurricular assessment pilot includes Cocurricular Program Review. Cocurricular Program Review will occur with the five pilot cocurricular groups and will lay the foundation of program review for all cocurricular groups at DCB. Spring 2024 Cocurricular Program Review will mirror that of academic program review (see Core Component 4.A.1) with a [snapshot approach](#), allowing for the review of assessment findings, leadership/staffing, facilities, budget, enrollment/participation, and program outlook/viability. The goal of participation in the HLC Academy is to establish a meaningful and effective process and procedure for cocurricular assessment which can be applied to all cocurricular groups at DCB. This will allow for all cocurriculars to undergo assessment of Cocurricular Competencies and a Cocurricular Program Review prior to the Comprehensive Evaluation during the 2029-2030 academic year.

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4.C - Core Component 4.C

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

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

Argument

Response to 4.C.1-4

Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB) works to continually pursue educational improvement through goals and strategies that improve retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs. This improvement occurs through dedicated student success and support, academic, and athletic initiatives.

Student Support and Success Initiatives

Student support services help to improve retention, persistence, and completion rates at DCB, primarily through effective and caring staff, dedicated advising, the Starfish early alert system, and monitoring retention data to refine retention efforts.

As highlighted in 3.D.3, academic advising at DCB begins immediately upon admission to the College and occurs for all students. Academic advising efforts center on forming connections with students regardless of student status or location. For example, although many dual credit students are non-degree seeking, every dual credit student is overseen by the Distance Education Specialist who also serves as the [LEAP Program advisor](#). This advisor not only works with dual credit students, but also works with high school administrators and counselors to ensure dual credit students are positioned for success. Many times, this includes the Distance Education Specialist [visiting the high school](#) to promote DCB dual credit programming and to help register students for classes. By assigning an advisor and establishing strong connections within area high schools, DCB is taking steps to aid in dual credit student success. This success is, at times, translated into completion numbers when dual credit students pursue the LEAP program (noted below under Academic Initiatives).

Non-dual credit students are advised by an Advising Specialist, program leader, or former Advising

Specialists who now serve as either the Director of Student Success or Student Support Specialist. All advisors perform manual [program and graduation audits](#) to ensure that students are meeting graduation requirements and are on track for graduation. Additionally, advisors aim to make multiple contacts with advisees each semester, helping to establish a quality relationship between the advisor and the advisee. As shown in the [2022-2023 Institutional Effectiveness Annual Summary Report](#), advising contacts are historically high ([ranging from 97% to 100%](#)) when the advisor is a professional advisor (i.e., Advising Specialist), but is significantly lower ([29% to 33%](#)) when CTE faculty advisors are included. There are two primary reasons for this difference: 1) professional advisors' full-time jobs center on advising, whereas CTE faculty advisors balance advising with other faculty roles, and 2) advising contacts are tracked through Starfish. Many CTE faculty advisors are making the connections with advisees, but these connections are not recorded in Starfish.

Starfish is DCB's early alert system and allows faculty to alert students, advisors, and athletic coaches regarding student performance within courses. The Director of Student Success coordinates four Starfish surveys each semester: [administrative withdrawal](#) surveys for 8-week and 16-week courses, a survey during week 6 and another during week 11. These surveys are timed to provide students feedback on course success before midterms and before the final day to withdraw from classes. A total of 1,343 Starfish surveys were sent to faculty during Spring 2023, with a completion rate that ranged from [42.79% to 77.78%](#). A total of [1,812](#) flags were raised on these surveys, ranging from Good Work to In Danger of Failing.

Shift from Retention to Student Success

Retention staffing has been a priority at DCB since Spring 2012. Although the position title has changed, ranging from Retention Coordinator to Director of Retention, at least one member of DCB's staff or faculty has been tasked with leading retention efforts, coordinating these efforts with other key players across Campus, since this time.

Much of DCB's current retention-related efforts occurs through the [Academic Atrium](#). The Academic Atrium includes two physical locations: the DCB Library and the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE). Although these two locations are very close in proximity, student use of the two facilities greatly differs. The ACE was home to TRiO staff from 2015-2020 and, in this capacity, became a hub for student activity. After the completion of the TRiO grant at the end of the 2019-2020 academic year, two TRiO staff members were hired as Advising Specialists and were joined in the ACE by the Director of Advising and a Distance Education Specialist. These four DCB employees created a student-friendly environment, and the ACE continued to be a hub for student activity. The DCB Library, although the home to DCB's tutoring services, did not see similar foot traffic. Campus leaders recognized a need to re-envision these services to continue to provide valuable student services, many of which directly impact retention, persistence, and completion.

In order to better support students and merge the services offered through the [DCB Library](#) and the [ACE](#), a [Director of Student Success](#) was hired during Summer 2023. During Fall 2023, a [Student Support Specialist](#) joined the Director of Student Success to oversee tutoring, the DCB Testing Center and many of the day-to-day library activities. Two [Advising Specialists](#) were hired to continue advising work that began with the TRiO Program.

Although DCB still has a dedicated [Retention Committee](#), Campus retention efforts are now a priority of the Director of Student Success. The success of students is at the heart of retention, persistence, and completion, so moving away from retention and focusing on student success was seen as a more inclusive take on retention. The Director of Student Success leads the Retention

Committee and is leveraging the initiatives of the Student Success Specialist and the two Advising Specialists in an effort to improve the success of all students at DCB, thus impacting retention, persistence, and completion.

These efforts are tracked within the Academic Atrium and reported to the College's Strategic Planning and Institutional Council for Effectiveness (SPICE). SPICE (formally the College's Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC)) maintains planning and reporting forms on student success initiatives, namely advising, tutoring, and retention. The [2022-2023 Institutional Effectiveness Annual Summary Report](#) provides a summary of progress toward identified goals of each group that reported to the IEC. Student success initiatives were met with varying degrees of success:

Group	Outcomes
Advising	<p>Successes: Professional advisors continue to ensure contacts with nearly all (99%) of advisees, and freshmen registration numbers continue to rise (37% to 54%).</p> <p>Challenges: When all advisors are considered, the percent of advisors meeting the two recorded contacts in Starfish is only 33%.</p>
Tutoring	<p>Successes: Tutors were identified for all course prefixes, appropriately trained, and tutoring events occurred throughout the academic year.</p> <p>Challenges: Although 62% tutoring referrals through Starfish resulted in a tutoring session during Fall 2022, information was not reported for Spring 2023.</p>
Retention	<p>Successes: Eight students on Academic Improvement Plans finished the semester in good academic standing (with three of these students making the Honor Roll).</p> <p>Challenges: The Retention Committee lacked clear direction and purpose.</p>

Information gleaned through IEC reporting and data has led to several institutional improvements. As indicated on [IE Reporting forms](#), retention leaders struggled finding a direction for the Retention Committee, especially since the true goal is to help students become successful, rather than just to retain them. One of the biggest improvements is shifting focus from *retention* to *student success*. This is what led Campus leaders to hire a Director of Student Success, charged with integrating the Academic Atrium into a center for student success.

Although these internal goals and measures for student success guide much of the day-to-day operations, the College still relies on information from IPEDS, reporting this information to the North Dakota University System (NDUS). The [NDUS publishes reports](#) of DCB's retention,

persistence, and graduation numbers, and DCB echoes these numbers through the publication of annual Student Profiles (e.g., [2021](#), [2022](#), and [2023](#)). Historically, DCB has had the lowest retention rates compared to the four other two-year colleges in the NDUS. However, DCB's 2021 retention rate was 73%, which was the highest in the NDUS for two-year schools. This rate dropped down to 59% in 2022, but 59% represents the second highest retention rate for the College over the past 10 years. Although DCB's 150% graduation rate of 33% in 2022 was the highest it has ever been, it is still the lowest in the NDUS. Many of the initiatives described in 4.C are aimed at improving these numbers, but DCB recognizes that IPEDS is not the only data that reflects student success at DCB.

Academic Initiatives

Certificate of College Studies and LEAP

DCB's [certificate in College Studies](#) is a 24-credit certificate designed to expose students to collegiate study in at least five general education areas at DCB. Especially for students who may not have a chosen career path, this certificate allows them to earn a certificate that will benefit them as they continue toward an associate's degree, or if university transfer occurs prior to the completion of an associate's degree. [Fifty-four students](#) have graduated with a certificate in College Studies over the past three years. Although this certificate was originally designed to provide incentives for full-time students to continue progression towards an associate's degree, dual credit students have taken advantage of this certificate through the [LEAP Program](#). During [Spring 2022](#), ten dual credit students completed the LEAP Program and 17 students completed the Program during [Spring 2023](#). Not only are more dual credit students taking advantage of the LEAP Program, but DCB is also seeing more high schools represented among students who complete the LEAP Program, with a total of 11 different high schools represented during Spring 2023.

Academic Program Completion Rates

Programs with specialized accreditation at DCB do an outstanding job of tracking persistence and reporting completion rates. For example, DCB's Nursing Program tracks the completion rate of students who graduate from the Program within 100% of the Program length (two semesters). This rate ranged from [89% to 97% over the past three academic years for Associate Degree Nursing students](#) and [71% to 85% for Practical Nursing students](#) (within 100% Program length of three semesters).

DCB's [Paramedic Technology Program](#), accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP), tracks the student retention, job placement, and pass rates on the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) exam. Student retention was 62% for the class of 2019-2020 and 100% for the class of 2020-2021. Pass rates on the NREMT range from 63% on the first attempt to 75% by the third attempt (leading to a 75% job placement).

With the updated program review process (detailed in 4.A), DCB is making great strides to track completion numbers across all academic programs. Assessment leaders pulled 2019-2023 enrollment and graduate information to create a master list of [program enrollment and graduates](#). Overall, there was much variability with completion rates, ranging from 0% to 2833% completion. One difficulty faced in this process is that these numbers can only be tracked using the program declared in Campus Connection. Many students change their program of study without changing the program in Campus Connection, something that inflates the numbers of non-completers. Conversely, this can also inflate the percentage of graduates in a program. For example, DCB's certificate in College Studies is not a degree that many students declare upon admission, yet many gain this 24-credit general education

heavy certificate on their way to other AA and AS degrees. From 2019-2023, only three students declared the certificate as their program of study, yet 85 students earned the certificate during that time, leading to a 2833% graduation rate. This is being addressed amongst Advising Specialists, who are working to ensure the appropriate plan of study is selected in Campus Connection.

Athletic Improvements

With an on-Campus student population that is [54% athletes](#), student-athlete retention, persistence, and completion efforts are a top priority for the DCB Athletic Department. As indicated in the [DCB Athletic Department Strategic Plan](#), multiple strategies and goals are in place to track student-athlete success, challenges, and to improve student-athletic retention numbers.

The current DCB Athletic Department Strategic Plan guides planning for the Department through 2026. Progress made on the current plan was reported to the Institutional Effectiveness Committee (IEC; now reconfigured and renamed SPICE) monthly beginning January 2021. As summarized in the 2022-2023 [IEC Annual Report](#), all four retention-related objectives (all under Goal 1: Ensure DCB Student-Athlete Success) were successfully tracked and met throughout the academic year:

Goal 1: Ensure DCB Student-Athlete Success		
Objective 1.1	Achieve GPA-based athletic eligibility standards above standards set forth by the NJCAA	Average all team GPA: 3.27 (NJCAA standard GPA requirement is 2.5)
Objective 1.2	Improve DCB student-athlete retention	Average all team fall-to-spring retention rate: 91%
Objective 1.3	Improve DCB student-athlete graduation rate	For eligible student-athletes, there was a 97.77% graduation rate (44 of 45 eligible student-athletes graduated Spring 2023)
Objective 1.4	Improve DCB student-athlete eligibility status in future semesters	Average all team eligibility: 95%

In addition to the efforts highlighted in the DCB Athletic Strategic Plan, the overarching composition of the Athletic Department reflects DCB's dedication to improving retention, persistence, and completion rates. After the announcement that the [DCB Football Program](#) was to be discontinued at the end of the Fall 2019 season (due, in part, to low retention numbers despite an 11 year history of targeted retention efforts), the DCB Athletic Department began work on adding a new athletic program to the College: Women's Hockey.

The DCB Women's Hockey Program was added beginning Fall 2020. With a roster of approximately 20 players, the Women's Hockey Program has already shown retention success, retaining [95%](#) of players from Fall 2021 to Spring 2022 and [88%](#) of players from Fall 2022 to Spring 2023. Completion rates are also quite high for the program, with [10 out of 11 eligible players](#) graduating during Spring 2023.

As an open enrollment institution, DCB faces retention, persistence, and completion challenges similar to other open enrollment institutions. However, DCB lives its Mission of *providing a quality education in a caring environment* through initiatives designed to support students during their time at the College, ultimately aiming to improve retention, persistence, and completion rates. Campus

leaders charged with championing student success initiatives regularly report to the College's institutional effectiveness group (now SPICE, formally IEC) which not only holds the groups accountable for progress toward identified goals and objectives, but, more importantly, provides an opportunity to pivot direction when needed to best serve students.

Sources

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4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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

Summary

Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB) administrators, faculty, and staff take pride in providing quality educational programs, learning environments, and support services, and assessment of these services occurs regularly. As shown in the Argument, assessment data facilitates pedagogical and institutional change to benefit student learning.

Driven by College policy and procedure, DCB demonstrates a high level of responsibility for the quality of its educational programs. CTE departments have done a commendable job responding to industry changes, and assessment of these programs is solid. Course-level assessment of DCB's transfer programs is strong and program-level assessment continues gaining momentum with a new program review process.

Assessment is part of the culture at DCB, and a continuous improvement mentality encourages innovation. DCB's updated program review process and participation in an HLC Assessment Academy showcases this innovation, as well as the College's drive to continually improve.

DCB faces retention, persistence, and completion challenges similar to other community colleges, but actively seeks to raise these numbers by implementing a variety of initiatives related to student support and success, as well as academic and athletic improvements. Many of the initiatives undertaken to improve these rates have resulted in an overall better learning environment for students, especially the College's shift from a retention-focus to a student success and support focus.

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

Argument

Response to 5.A.1

Governance at Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB) is truly shared, engaging those at the state-level through the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education (SBHE), administrative-level through DCB's College Council, and engaging the College as a whole through three College Senates. Each level plays a role in planning, policies, and procedures, as described here and in 5.A.3.

The North Dakota SBHE is the [governing board](#) for DCB. The SBHE establishes policies and procedures for all 11 colleges and universities in the North Dakota University System (NDUS). All NDUS institutions are required to follow a thorough set of System-wide [policies](#). Policies are accompanied by [NDUS procedures](#) which further delineate steps and additional information for complying with SBHE policies. Additionally, the NDUS has developed a robust [Human Resource Policy Manual](#) to address the many topics related to various personnel matters. New and revised SBHE policies typically are vetted through the various NDUS councils, which include Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Administrative Affairs, Chief Information Officers, Human Resources, Public Affairs, College Technical Education, and Diversity. The councils include representation from the colleges and universities and other key constituencies within the NDUS.

In addition to the comprehensive SBHE policies and procedures, DCB has developed additional policies and procedures that further define or clarify specific operations or functions. These policies are documented on the [College's Policies webpage](#). DCB has a defined [policy](#) development process. New policy proposals and policy revisions are directed to College Council. The Council reviews the

policy submissions and determines which Senate(s) (Faculty, Student, Staff) are required to review and make recommendations on the proposals or revisions. Once the appropriate Senate(s) have made their recommendations, College Council completes a final review, incorporates any additional revisions, and makes a final recommendation to the Campus Dean. Policies become official with final approval from the Campus Dean. This process ensures College-wide input as well as a framework for timely action.

DCB ensures employees and students are engaged in College governance through its three Senates (Faculty, Student and Staff) by holding regular meetings to discuss items important to their members. Similarly, the College currently has [standing committees](#) that address a wide range of activities related to various College functions.

Response to 5.A.2

[DCB administration](#) uses data to reach informed decisions in the best interest of the institution and its constituents. This is a central tenant of DCB's Core Value of *Integrity*. As such, there are a number of recent examples of these data-informed decisions, including:

- The NDUS, realizing that System-wide salaries needed equity adjustments, allocated an [equity fund](#) for colleges within the System to use to address salary inequity. DCB relied on College and University Professional Association (CUPA) data and the work of the DCB [Staff](#) and [Faculty](#) Senates to adjust salaries. Using CUPA data, DCB administrators identified equity raises for all full-time positions to bring faculty and staff closer to market median. Equity raises were applied during the [2023-2024](#) contract year and only four full-time employees ended up below 90% of market median.
- In conjunction with equity concerns at the state-level, internal equity for coaches was [reviewed critically](#), with past coaching experience, internal years of service, and degree attainment used as driving factors. Using this data, all head coaches were moved to standard 10-month faculty contracts and salary adjustments were put into place to address equity concerns.
- With an on-Campus student population comprised of [54% student-athletes](#), athletic recruitment is commonly used as a way of fostering enrollment. Beginning Fall 2023, athletic teams were each given new recruitment goals. These goals were communicated during Spring 2023 through the [Athletic Contract Expectations for DCB Head Coaches](#) document. The Athletic Director based recruitment goals on [athletic association rules](#) (where applicable) and [internal historical trends](#) by sport. These numbers represent a reasonable increase from numbers identified within the [DCB Athletic Strategic Plan](#).
- During Spring 2023, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs was informed by DCB's adjunct sociology instructor that the instructor was being offered a full-time position at another entity. The instructor expressed desire to stay at DCB. The Associate Dean looked at [enrollment](#) within the instructor's courses, [budget dollars](#) available, and the instructor's qualifications to take over the Human Resource Management Program. Based on the available funding and the large number of students that the instructor was teaching, a [full-time contract](#) was offered for the 2023-2024 academic year.
- DCB's three residence halls were constructed in 1960 ([Mead Hall](#)), 1963 ([Gross Hall](#)), and 1972 ([Milligan Hall](#)). Although updates have occurred since construction, all three buildings are showing their age. DCB [commissioned an architectural firm](#) to prepare deferred maintenance budgets for all three residence halls, which totals over \$17.4 million. With roughly [40-50%](#) of the College's full-time equivalent students living in the residence halls, and off-Campus housing being a challenge within a small, rural community, DCB's residence halls

are vital to the College. The deferred maintenance report confirms that continuing to update the current buildings is not fiscally responsible. This report provides the supportive evidence DCB needs when requesting state funding in future legislative sessions to build new residence halls.

- Prior to 2023, DCB was spending roughly \$27,000 each year on water treatment chemicals for its boiler system. Looking at this historical data, [DCB made the decision](#) to purchase and install a reverse osmosis system which will cut the water chemical needs in half. The chemical savings will pay for the reverse osmosis system within one year and will save the College roughly \$17,000 annually thereafter.
- With the hiring of a new Physical Plant Director Spring 2021, several structural changes within the Physical Plant Department occurred. The new Director determined the Department was overstaffed and productivity expectations were quite low. With one retirement and one resignation, the Director opted to not fill these positions. Additionally, the Director took on additional responsibilities himself, including ordering all supplies. These changes resulted in a [\\$68,129 savings from 2020 to 2023](#). These changes were received favorably within the Department and the Director was promoted to Associate Dean for Facilities and Technology during November 2023.

Data used to inform decisions originates in a number of locations, including SBHE meetings, North Dakota legislative sessions, College Council, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Student Senate, the Strategic Planning and Institutional Council for Effectiveness, Campus Forums, the Academic and Cocurricular Assessment Committee, and other Campus committees. DCB fosters an environment that encourages the sharing of data for institutional improvement.

Response to 5.A.3

A strength of DCB is the collaboration that exists among all College groups regarding the establishment of academic requirements and policies. The small size of the College is certainly one factor that supports collaboration and generally contributes to decisions that have broad consensus across the College. The College's [committee structure](#) also contributes to good collaboration and support for the College's academic requirements and standards. In particular, the Curriculum Committee and Academic and Cocurricular Assessment Committee play significant roles in establishing requirements and standards related to teaching and learning.

DCB's Faculty Senate is heavily involved in the development and oversight of a variety of academic requirements and policies. The Faculty Senate regularly reviews such topics as proposed new courses and course revisions, curriculum updates, College policies, assessment of student learning, faculty qualifications, committee membership, and handbook updates. Although not as active as the Faculty Senate, both the Student Senate and Staff Senate provide input and review into College academic requirements, policies, and procedures as appropriate.

To better promote shared governance at DCB, two councils and one committee have been realigned and redeployed. The responsibilities of the Policy Review Committee were absorbed by Administrative Council during Spring 2023. Prior to this action, Administrative Council served as a reporting and information sharing group that provided communication between the Campus Dean and Senate leadership on a monthly basis. No actions were taken, and the group lacked specific purpose. With Administrative Council absorbing the responsibilities of the Policy Review Committee, information-sharing was enhanced with policy considerations. Administrative Council sought insight from the various Senates on all policy additions, deletions, and changes prior to making recommendations to the Campus Dean. During Fall 2023, Administrative Council was

formally replaced by College Council. College Council membership includes the Campus Dean, the Associate Deans, and Senate leadership. The duties of the College Council were codified in a [charter](#), which was adopted [August 2023](#).

Prior to 2023, the Dean's Council met weekly to address day-to-day operations and College-specific financial, personnel, and policy issues. The Dean's Council was comprised of the Campus Dean, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, the Business Manager (who was an employee of Minot State University), the Physical Plant Director, the Athletic Director/Mental Health Counselor, and the Associate Dean for Student Services. The Dean's Council served as the final decision-making body at DCB and, while [minutes](#) were available online and [College staff are encouraged to view them](#), the group was perceived to operate behind closed doors.

Today, Dean's Council is comprised of the Campus Dean, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, the Associate Dean for Business and Finance, the Associate Dean for Facilities and Technology, and the Associate Dean for Student Services. The role of Dean's Council has been diminished from policy-setting to implementation of day-to-day operations, with policy and planning shifted to [College Council](#) for transparency and to ensure that faculty, staff, and student-representatives are involved in these processes.

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5.B - Core Component 5.B

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

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

Argument

Response to 5.B.1

Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB) has qualified and trained operational staff and infrastructure sufficient to support all operations.

Human Resources

As shown in DCB's [Institutional Update](#), institutional head count for the past two years is as follows:

	2023	2022
Full-Time Faculty	31	29
Part-Time Faculty	71	43
Full-Time Administration	3	2
Part-Time Administration	0	15
Full-Time Staff	38	21
Part-Time Staff	16	15
Student-to-Faculty Ratio	10-to-1	14-to-1

The number of part-time faculty and part-time administration appear to have shifted greatly in the past two years, but actually represent a difference in coding. In 2022, full-time staff who also taught a class were not coded as part-time faculty. This was remedied in 2023, thus explaining the increase from 43 to 71 part-time faculty. Additionally, employees who held director roles (e.g., Co-Directors of Assessment, Director of Accreditation) were classified as part-time administration in 2022, but not in 2023. With all new full-time administration (Campus Dean, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Associate Dean for Student Services) beginning Fall 2022, this difference in classification is not surprising, and the shift in institutional headcount does not indicate a substantial change in operational staff. DCB's [organizational chart](#) provides an overview of the College's administrative structure (with a total of four Associate Deans as of late Fall 2023) and key functional areas that

support the College Mission.

DCB employees have the qualifications and training necessary to be successful in their positions. DCB follows the human resource policies established by the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education (SBHE). These policies guide the hiring processes at DCB, along with additional procedural directions from the North Dakota University System (NDUS) Human Resource Policy Manual. [NDUS Human Resource Policy Manual](#) (which is only accessible online) Sections 2-4, outlines appointment, qualifications, and probationary periods for staff. SBHE Sections 602 through 608 address various issues such as faculty appointments, discrimination, performance evaluations, academic freedom and tenure, faculty rights, the classification of higher education employees, the application of the NDUS Human Resource Policy Manual, and compensation and benefits. The [DCB Employee Handbook](#), as well as the [DCB Policies webpage](#) provides information regarding College-specific employee policies and procedures. More detailed information regarding the qualifications required for DCB faculty is provided in Criterion 3.C.2.

To ensure that operational staff remain current in their roles, DCB budgets for professional development. During the [2023 fiscal year](#), the College budgeted \$124,093 for professional development and expended \$97,559 worth of these funds. Additionally, all [benefited DCB employees](#) are eligible for a tuition waiver and/or release time from work for up to three academic courses per calendar year at DCB and other NDUS institutions. DCB employees are entitled to a 100% waiver for DCB courses and 50% waiver for courses taken at other NDUS colleges or universities.

All employees are required to attend [annual in-service](#) sessions prior to the start of the fall semester in which numerous employee training activities are conducted. This includes annual [Title IX training](#). Additionally, the College began conducting [online computer security training](#) for College employees and students during the 2018-2019 academic year. The most recent training occurred October 2022 and showed only 6% of the 1,697 employees and students succumbed to the phishing attempt.

Fiscal Resources

Although DCB is financially sound, it has gone from the highest CFI in the NDUS in [2018](#), to the lowest in [2022](#). This drop is a result of debt. DCB has a new Dining Center with a \$2.5 million bond payment, and an Energy Savings Project with a total debt of \$1.3 million. The Energy Savings Project is intended to pay for the cost of the debt. Despite dropping drastically, DCB's current CFI of 1.85 is still considered solid as the Public Institutions Composite Index standard is above 1.10 and all other ratios are good.

The College's [primary sources of revenue](#) in 2022 were state appropriations (34.6%), grants and contracts (27.6%), tuition and fees (22%), auxiliary enterprises (11%), other (3.2%), and sales and services of education departments (1.6%). State appropriations are based primarily on a [funding formula](#) which is calculated on a biennial schedule. Due to growing enrollment in recent years, the College increased its revenues from tuition and fees. These increases are reflected in the NDUS annual financial statements for the years [FY 2020](#), [FY 2021](#), and [FY 2022](#). Fall semester enrollment at DCB steadily increased from [2015 \(692 students\)](#) to [2021 \(1,163 students\)](#). Enrollment in 2022 shows a plateau with 1,080 students enrolled. Fall semester full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment is down, with 550 FTE during Fall 2022 compared to 615 FTE during Fall 2021. The average fall semester FTE over the past five years is 580. To address the enrollment plateau and decrease in FTE, DCB has [increased advertising and recruitment efforts](#).

DCB maintains tuition and fee revenue. Currently, tuition is [charged on a per credit basis up to 12 credits](#) and again after 18 credits. Credits from [12-18 are billed at a flat rate](#). The College does assess required fees of [\\$34.04](#) per credit for wellness, student activities, and technology at the College and state-level. Students enrolled in online courses are assessed a distance education access fee of [\\$39.66](#) per credit to support the delivery and on-going development of online courses and programs. College reserves of [\\$1,767,537](#) at the end of FY 2022 exceed the 5-7% requirement established by the North Dakota SBHE as noted on the reserves report.

While grants and contracts contributed [\\$3.5 million](#) to College revenues during FY 2022, almost all of these funds went directly to personnel, operations, and equipment needed to fulfill the grant and contract requirements.

Physical Resources

DCB's main Campus is sited on approximately 29 acres on the northern edge of the city of Bottineau. From the original Old Main building constructed in 1906, the College has grown to a current total of 21 buildings, which includes storage and concessions buildings. The NDUS classifies buildings as [Type I \(instruction – state funded\)](#), [Type II \(college support – state funded\)](#), and [Type III \(residence halls/other – locally funded\)](#). DCB has nine Type I facilities with a total area of 148,419 gross square feet (GSF), nine Type II buildings that total 13,083 GSF and three Type III residence halls that comprise 66,564 GSF. Total Campus GSF is 228,066 with an estimated replacement value of [\\$27 million](#).

Most of the College's buildings were constructed in the 1960s and early 1970s. Despite the age of these facilities, they have generally been well maintained over the years and are clean, attractive and safe. As documented in DCB's [2022 Master Plan](#), most of the Campus buildings had a facility condition rating of *good* to *excellent*, with only four of the 21 buildings falling into the *poor* or *very poor* category. Buildings with *poor* or *very poor* ratings include: Old Main, the Hoophouse (storage), Gross Hall, and Mead Hall. The College's Old Main building has been vacant for over 15 years and received a condition rating of Very Poor. Through state appropriations, a major capital campaign, and generous private donations, [Old Main](#) is undergoing a major renovation to open as a Center for Rural Health Education. The project has an anticipated completion date of Fall 2024 and is being [tracked](#) through the College's Strategic Planning and Institutional Council for Effectiveness (SPICE), as well as a major item on the [2023-2024 Implementation Plan](#). Once complete, Old Main will be the home of DCB's Nursing and Allied Health Programs. It is anticipated that the building's rating will move from *very poor* to *excellent*. The College's three residence halls (Gross, Mead, and Milligan) were rated as *average* in the [2016 Master Plan](#), with Gross and Mead Halls moving to a *poor* status in the [2022 Master Plan](#). As mentioned in 5.A.2, the College is well aware that new dorms need to be constructed, and has the [architectural report](#) to support this need at the legislative level.

A 2016 [Master Plan and Space Utilization Study](#) conducted by the NDUS found that most NDUS institutions were below the System's targets for efficient space utilization. This included DCB. The NDUS report stated that "DCB has a very high level of building space efficiency, [but a relatively high level of assignable space per FTE](#). This can be attributed in part to online trends which are reducing on Campus percentages of FTE. Overall classroom and teaching lab utilization was found to be approximately 35% of target, which is attributed to the previously mentioned trends, but also the relatively small size of DCB..." DCB recognizes that the challenge for the future is not to acquire more space or buildings on the Bottineau Campus, but instead find ways to reconfigure existing facilities to meet current and future needs. A recent example of how DCB is addressing this

challenge is by swapping the location of the Business Office and Student Services. During December 2023, the DCB Business Office moved into the space previously occupied by Student Services. This space includes more private offices which allows all staff to have separate and, in most cases, private offices to conduct business. Student Services moved to a more open concept space previously occupied by the Business Office. This new space allows admissions, recruitment, and student life personnel to work in a more communal environment. The new Student Services Office is also one of the first offices that students see when entering Thatcher Hall, the Campus' main academic building. This supports DCB's desire to put students first.

Technology Resources

DCB provides a robust IT infrastructure to meet the needs of faculty, staff, and students, both on Campus and online, as well as to off-site locations in the state. The IT Department receives [sufficient funds](#) each year to maintain and upgrade IT hardware and software across the Campus and off-site locations.

The main Campus bandwidth is currently between [300-800 megabits per second](#), with the three Campus residence halls having a one gigabit connection. The site in Minot has a one gigabit connection. All Campus buildings are connected by one gigabit fiber, and all desktop connections are one gigabit connections. The residence halls, Campus, and the Minot site have extensive wireless coverage, managed and monitored by the IT Department with access provided to students, staff, and guests. DCB provides Microsoft Office 365, OneDrive storage, and an antivirus program to all faculty, staff, and students.

DCB IT manages [367 desktops and laptops](#), 18 servers (both physical and virtual), Windows server software, and 13 Interactive Video Network (IVN) advanced classrooms on Campus and in Minot. The IVN classrooms provide interactive teaching capability and connectivity to other college campuses in the NDUS and to the dual credit (early entry) schools in the state. DCB has two computer lab/classrooms, four computer carts for faculty to use in classrooms, and eight study and commons areas throughout the Campus with computers for students to use. The IT Department provides software and support for email, web, file sharing, learning management system (LMS) and security systems to the DCB faculty, staff, and students. DCB provides local Campus administration for the Blackboard LMS which is provided by the NDUS.

Response to 5.B.2

DCB's Mission, Priorities, and Goals continue to be relevant and realistic for a comprehensive community college. The College's Mission underwent a thorough revision during the 2022-2023 academic year, with a new Strategic Plan, Priorities, and Goals following during the 2023-2024 academic year (as noted in 1.A.1). The College's Mission, Priorities, and Goals are stated below:

Mission: Dakota College at Bottineau provides a quality education in a caring environment.

Priorities and Goals:

- *Priority One: Student Success*
 - *Goal 1: Guide students on their academic journey*
 - *Goal 2: Invest in the development of the whole student*
- *Priority Two: Community Commitment*
 - *Goal 1: Articulate college identity*

- *Goal 2: Align and expand community and workforce programs*
- *Goal 3: Enhance community relationships*
- *Priority Three: Institutional Improvement*
 - *Goal 1: Develop a team approach that values a culture of passion*
 - *Goal 2: Modify our processes to enhance our services*

The Priorities represent the heart of DCB, the Goals were specifically chosen with the purpose of guiding DCB through the next five years, and the Items identified on the [2023-2024 Implementation Plan](#) are specific to the current academic year. With Priorities that are unlikely to change, Goals that take into account changing trends in higher education and within the state, and Items that guide immediate action, DCB's planning is realistic given its organization, resources, and opportunities.

Response to 5.B.3

DCB has historically utilized an incremental budgeting process, meaning the previous budget cycle has been the base for developing the budget for a new fiscal year. A copy of the [College's annual budget](#) is printed in late summer or early fall and placed in the DCB Library for review by any employee, student, or community member.

The incremental budget development process has been consistent over time and has typically been closely monitored and led by the College's Business Office and Associate Dean for Business and Finance. In order to ensure departments understand their respective budgets, the Associate Dean for Business and Finance schedules one-on-one and group meetings with Departmental Budget Managers during late spring to review their budgets and ensure they understand the various funds available to them and how to monitor and track expenditures. Based on these meetings, the College is receiving improved input into the annual budget development process due to a better understanding of past departmental expenditures as well as expanded explanations for any additional funding requests.

Monthly budget reports are sent from the Business Office to all designated Departmental Budget Managers. These reports include a "[Budget to Actuals](#)" summary and an [Excel transaction spreadsheet](#). The Budget to Actuals report summarizes the proportion of budget funds expended to date, both as a total and within key fund categories. The spreadsheet documents each transaction by account code and fund. These reports provide timely information to the Departmental Budget Managers on the status of their budgets.

Response to 5.B.4

DCB's resource allocations have remained consistent over time and are comparable to the other four community colleges in the NDUS. The specific categories in which the [NDUS tracks expenditures](#) are a) instruction, b) academic support, c) student services, d) institutional support, e) physical plant, f) scholarships, g) auxiliary enterprises, h) public services, i) research, and j) depreciation. A FY 2022 comparison of DCB's expenditures compared to other NDUS two-year colleges is provided in the following table:

	DCB (% of Budget)	NDUS Two-Year College Average
Instruction	32.8%	34.1% (range of 32.8 to 38.0%)
Academic Support	7.8%	5.8% (range of 1.5 to 10.0%)

Student Services	13.3%	9.3% (range of 5.4 to 13.3%)
Institutional Support	12.5%	12.6% (range of 12.0 to 14.4%)
Physical Plant	11.0%	8.1% (range of 5.0 to 11.0%)
Scholarships	7.0%	7.6% (range of 5.4 to 10.0%)
Auxiliary Services	11.7%	11.2% (range of 8.5 to 18.8%)

The two-year colleges did not expend any funds for public service and research as this is a component of the four-year colleges and universities. DCB's depreciation expenses were 3.9% of its overall budget, compared to the average of 7.7% (range of 3.9 to 15.1%). Based on this analysis, DCB's various expenditures are [reasonable and consistent with its peers](#) in the NDUS. As DCB has not made any significant adjustments in its budget proportions during the past five years, these allocations have been consistent over time.

As a public college within the NDUS, DCB does not provide any significant payments or revenue disbursements to a superordinate entity.

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5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

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

Argument

Response to 5.C.1-6

History of Planning and Improvement

Ensuring systematic and integrated planning and improvement at Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB) has greatly improved since 2019-2020. When the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan was developed, this work was done during a transitional time at the College. During Spring 2015, the long-serving Campus Dean announced his retirement and a new Campus Dean did not begin until Fall 2015. The [2015-2020 Strategic Plan](#) was finalized by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs with input from the Dean's Council. The original 2015-2020 Strategic Plan included 34 objectives, many of which were highly aspirational. [Modifications](#) were made to the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan during August 2019, reducing objectives from 34 down to 14. These changes reflected more realistic planning given the state of the College and resources available.

Prior to Spring 2021, evaluation of strategic planning goals (shown as Progress notes on the Plan) was done through the Dean's Council, but not on a regular basis and communication regarding progress was not always shared with the Campus community. At times, the College's Outcomes Assessment Task Force (OATF) evaluated items related to the Strategic Plan, but only if those items were identified on OATF [planning and reporting](#) forms. OATF worked with both [academic](#) and [functional](#) area assessment, but allowed functional areas to self-identify goals for evaluation. When OATF became the Academic and Cocurricular Assessment Committee during Fall 2019, functional area evaluation no longer fell under the umbrella of this Committee (see 4.B for details of the College's academic and cocurricular assessment process), but no Campus group was assigned this responsibility. During the 2020 Comprehensive Evaluation, this lack of functional area evaluation was noted, and DCB was tasked with creating an institutional effectiveness committee to regularly evaluate the College's functional areas, and the College submitted an interim report on institutional effectiveness early [Fall 2022](#).

During Fall 2020, DCB created the [Institutional Effectiveness Committee](#) (IEC). The IEC was originally charged with evaluating progress toward meeting objectives identified in the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan, and later added evaluation of 1) progress toward addressing audit findings, 2) policy, and 3) other functional areas likely to be added to the forthcoming strategic plan. The IEC received [monthly updates](#) from all groups, and the groups [rotated meeting](#) with the IEC to discuss successes, challenges, and needs. The IEC submitted annual reports to the Campus Dean during Summer [2021](#), [2022](#), and [2023](#), and made recommendations whether groups needed to continue to report each month or if an annual update would suffice.

Strategic Plan Development

As described in 1.A.2-3, strategic planning was slowed from 2020-2022 for several reasons, but a Strategic Planning Committee (with representation including faculty, staff, student advisors, administration, and DCB employees located in Bottineau, Minot, and Valley City) began work on revitalizing the Campus Mission, Vision, and Values during the 2022-2023 academic year. Once the Mission, Vision, and Values were approved, the Strategic Planning Committee and the IEC were [combined](#) into the Strategic Planning and Institutional Council for Effectiveness (SPICE) during Summer 2023. Campus leaders and members of SPICE knew DCB's next strategic plan would be finalized during the 2023-2024 academic year, but did not want to go into the year without a clear plan for strategic improvement. With Priorities of 1) Student Success, 2) Community Commitment, and 3) Institutional Improvement, already in place, the Campus Dean called on Campus administration to [identify actionable items](#) within their departments that centered on these priorities. SPICE [fine-tuned these items](#) during Fall 2023, sent the 2023-2024 Implementation Plan to both Faculty and Staff Senates for comment and endorsement, and College Council provided the final approval during [October 2023](#).

While the Implementation Plan was in the hands of the Senates and College Council, SPICE worked on articulating Goals for the forthcoming strategic plan. These Goals were also sent to Faculty and Staff Senates and approved through College Council during [December 2023](#). Based on feedback received through a Campus survey, [Strategies for Success](#) was chosen as the name of DCB's newest strategic plan.

The 2023-2024 Implementation Plan is a one-year plan which allows for planning on the basis of sound understanding of the College's current capacity, while also anticipating evolving external factors. The items were identified by administration and modified by SPICE. The items on the Plan were influenced by many factors, including North Dakota University System (NDUS) strategic planning. This was the case for [Item 1.1](#) Establish new digital literacy standards. This Item comes from the [System-level](#), where all 11 campuses in the NDUS are called to educate students on digital literacy. Each spring, SPICE will put out a call (to Dean's Council, as well as Faculty, Staff, and Student Senates) for Implementation Plan items (that fit within the Priorities and Goals identified in DCB's Strategies for Success Strategic Plan) for the following year. These will go through the same fine-tuning process described above and will be sent to Senates and College Council for final approval (with a goal of approval by end of September each year).

Overall, DCB is making strides to be more intentional with planning, calling on different departments to establish plans to guide operations. For example, the [2023-2024 Implementation Plan](#) calls for the development of an Academic Master Plan (Item 2.5), Enrollment Management Plan (Item 3.5), and an Information Technology Plan (Item 3.8). As items on the 2023-2024 Implementation Plan, it is anticipated that after these plans are put in place, monitoring implementation and progress on these plans will be items on the 2024-2025 Implementation Plan.

Monitoring Progress

Progress on strategic planning objectives/goals/items is monitored by SPICE (formerly IEC). Groups reporting to SPICE complete [Institutional Effectiveness \(IE\) Planning Forms](#) each fall, and update [IE Reporting Forms](#) each month. These IE reporting groups come to SPICE meetings at [assigned times](#) throughout the academic year to share updates and seek guidance if needed. At the completion of each academic year, SPICE submits an [annual report](#) summarizing the progress made on identified goals. Decisions are made whether the group will continue to report monthly or be off-boarded to an annual update.

With the newly developed Implementation Plan, a mid-year check point was put into place. During [SPICE's January 30, 2024](#), meeting, Priority Leaders for [Student Success](#), [Community Commitment](#), and [Institutional Improvement](#) provided a status update on all items on the 2023-2024 Implementation Plan. Priority Leaders reported two items were completed, 23 items were in progress (one of these [updates](#) came after the meeting), and three items had not yet been started. Item Champions for the three items (3.1, 3.7, and 3.11) that had yet to be started had anticipated start dates during Spring 2024 and all three items were [anticipated to be completed](#) by the end of the Spring 2024 semester. SPICE reviewed updates on each item, offering [recommendations](#) on several items. Item Champions will continue to provide updates to Priority Leaders throughout the Spring 2024 semester, Priority Leaders will have the opportunity to bring concerns to SPICE during regular monthly meetings, and a final status report on the 2023-2024 Implementation Plan will occur during the final 2023-2024 SPICE meeting during May 2024. Progress on the 2023-2024 Implementation Plan was communicated to the DCB community through the [Weekly Log](#) and at the February 6, 2024, Campus Forum.

Not all functional areas at DCB report to SPICE or have items on the Implementation Plan. To ensure that improvement occurs in all areas at the College, DCB relies on employee evaluations to address continuous improvement. As directed by State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) [Policy 17 Performance Development](#), *each staff employee shall participate in a performance development review* once a year after the employee's probationary period. Unlike the faculty evaluation process (see 3.C.4), this review is not standardized across departments, so the reviews vary. Some [performance reviews](#) clearly outline plans for improving operations and performance, and track progress on previous plans, while other reviews do not do this as well. Overhauling the process for employee evaluation is [Item 3.2](#) on the current Implementation Plan, and [steps are being made](#) to ensure greater consistency.

Other Institutional Plans and Metrics

The College's Strategic and Implementation Plans are not the only plans or metrics that the College monitors. The [DCB Athletic Department Strategic Plan](#) was an objective on the 2015-2020 DCB Strategic Plan and was monitored by the IEC through Spring 2023. DCB's Athletic Director does an outstanding job tracking the objectives outlined within the Plan, thus prompting the [IEC to move](#) this group to an [annual update](#) rather than monthly reporting. The DCB Athletic Department Strategic Plan outlines objectives over a five-year period and gained the support of [Logrollers](#), DCB's athletic board.

DCB's [2022 Master Plan](#) was developed according to a framework specified by the NDUS and outlines facility improvement at the College. The Associate Dean for Facilities and Technology (formerly the Physical Plant Director) [monitors progress](#) made on facility and improvement projects, and currently reports to SPICE regarding progress on the [Old Main](#) and [CTE Center](#) projects. The

plan operates on a six-year outlook for facility and physical infrastructure goals.

Other NDUS-wide metrics also help DCB to evaluate operations, assist in planning, and foster continuous improvement. These metrics include enrollment, NDUS strategic planning, SAM (Student Achievement Measures), IPEDS, and financial data. Many of these data sources drive strategic planning at the College.

The College regularly reviews enrollment trends. Generally starting in mid-October of each year, the Dean's Council begins receiving a [weekly report](#) of student applications received as well as a [report of student program admits](#). These reports show current enrollment numbers and a comparison to previous years. Data from these reports are used to determine where additional marketing efforts may be needed. The College reviews [daily enrollment reports](#) from the first day of classes through the 20th day, which is the date of the official enrollment census across the NDUS. While overall College enrollment has grown significantly since 2015, the College is concerned that several of its career and technical education (CTE) program areas (notably horticulture, natural resources, and computer technology) are still experiencing low enrollments based on the latest [CTE enrollment report for Fall 2023](#). This data, in conjunction with data from the 2023 Program Review (see 4.A.1), will help guide the Academic Master Plan (Item 2.5 on the [2023-2024 Implementation Plan](#)).

The College utilizes the NDUS SPOL (Strategic Planning Online) program to monitor its progress in meeting objectives identified annually for [Enterprise Risk Management](#), a requirement of all colleges and universities within the NDUS. The objectives identified in the SPOL system are tied to both the NDUS and DCB Strategic Plan/Implementation Plan, such as creating an enrollment management plan, automating services, improving experiences for faculty, staff, and students, and developing an academic master plan.

DCB tracks [SAM](#) and [IPEDS](#) data, as do all the colleges and universities in the NDUS. These reports allow for a comparison of DCB to its peers in the University System. Although IPEDS data are lagging indicators, they do provide the College with some feedback on how well retention and graduation efforts are working, and have served as a driving force behind [retention-related initiatives](#) at DCB.

The College's financial performance is documented in the [NDUS's annual financial report](#). The System's colleges and universities use the same accounting and budgeting system, which allows for meaningful comparisons of DCB's overall financial health and operations to similar colleges in the System. The annual NDUS financial reporting includes a measurement of the College's financial reserves, which show DCB having [\\$1,767,537 in appropriated fund reserves](#). When comparing these reserves to the College's combined appropriated general fund and net tuition revenue of \$7,173,539 for FY 2022, the College's reserves are at 24.6% of its appropriated budget. As noted in the reserves report, the required range for reserves for DCB is 5-7%, or \$317,283 to \$444,196. DCB's [CFI is calculated annually by the NDUS office](#) and serves as another performance measurement for the College's finances. In FY 2022, DCB's CFI was 1.85.

Budget and Resource Allocation

DCB's Mission and [Strategic Plan](#) (with annual [Implementation Plan](#)) help guide resource allocation decisions at the College. Embedded in the Mission statement, *Dakota College provides students a quality education in a caring environment*, is the importance of liberal arts/transfer education, career and technical education, and student support services. These in turn provide the foundation for the College's resource allocations. As described in Criterion 5.B.4, DCB's resource allocation is similar

to the other two-year colleges in the NDUS. Expenditures for instruction, academic support, student services, and scholarships (all areas that directly tie to the Mission) accounted for [60.1% of the fiscal year 2022 budget](#). This is one indicator that resource allocations are consistent with the College's Mission and planning. DCB has traditionally utilized an incremental budgeting philosophy which reflects no major changes in departmental budgets from year to year. This, along with increased enrollment, conservative spending, and improved College reserves, has allowed the College to identify funding for improving programs and services as well as adding programs and services that are clearly Mission and Strategic Plan oriented. Examples of resource allocation that support DCB's Mission, [2015-2020 Strategic Plan](#), and the [2023-2024 Implementation Plan](#) are described below:

- As specified in the [2015-2020 DCB Strategic Plan](#), DCB had several facilities projects needed to improve Campus, as well as the student experience. Through planning and [legislative funding](#), DCB's new [Dining Center](#) opened February 2022. Renovation of Old Main into a Center for Rural Health Education is occurring through a [major capital campaign](#), [legislative dollars](#), and planning centered on providing a *quality education* to DCB's nursing and allied health students.
- Integrating student support and library services in the Academic Atrium is Item 1.6 on the current [Implementation Plan](#). One of the biggest resources used to fulfill this item is ensuring the right people are staffed in the Academic Atrium. [Increased funding](#) to hire additional staff, including a Director for Student Success, a Student Success Specialist, and two Advising Specialists, helps to guarantee this integration is successful.
- DCB, in collaboration with the city of Minot, ND, will bring post-secondary career and technical education (CTE) to Minot and the surrounding region beginning Fall 2024. The new CTE Center was an objective on the [2015-2020 DCB Strategic Plan](#), continues to be an Item on the [2023-2024 Implementation Plan](#), and addresses one of the North Dakota governor's [strategic initiatives](#). The College has [secured funding](#) from multiple sources for this project, understanding that bringing CTE education to the area is paramount, and DCB is taking the initiative to ensure success.
- The first programs to be offered at the CTE Center are DCB's newly approved Dental Programs, with Dental Assisting beginning Fall 2024 and Dental Hygiene beginning Fall 2025. During 2021, DCB brought on a dental consultant experienced with dental programming and curriculum. This individual now serves as the interim Dental Program Director and has been instrumental in ensuring that the CTE Center is equipped with technology and resources that mirror those available in modern dental clinics. Allocating [funding](#) for staff, faculty, equipment, and specialized accreditation efforts shows alignment with the Campus Mission and Implementation Plan.
- As described in 5.A.2, salary inequity exists throughout the NDUS, including at DCB. Although the funds were provided by the state, DCB leaders provided compelling evidence, through the use of College and University Professional Association (CUPA) data, that DCB was deserving of these funds. The equity monies provided helped to bring almost all full-time DCB employees to [90% of market median](#).

The College's annual budgeting process timeline is based on the NDUS budget cycle. Various timelines are in place, depending on the types of budget revenue or expenses. However, all budget components are expected to be completed by late spring of each year so that the SBHE can take official action on institutional and System budgets at its [May or June meeting](#). Major budget components such as caps on tuition rates, state appropriations and funding formula, and funding levels for employee compensation and benefits, have generally been determined by the state legislature and the SBHE, leaving the College with limited budget decision-making in these areas.

However, once [state budget guidelines](#) are in place, the College is able to proceed with completing its budget. Input is gathered throughout the year, both formally and informally, on departmental staffing and operating needs. The College's Strategic Plan and the Master Plan are major drivers of budget allocations that are in addition to the College's incremental budget process. Significant facility projects require legislative authorization in addition to SBHE approval. Consequently, facility projects are [prioritized and submitted to the SBHE every two years](#) rather than annually because of the biennial legislative process. The College's budget is presented to the NDUS Chancellor's Office for review and then to the SBHE for final approval along with the other 10 colleges and universities within the NDUS.

Faculty and staff have the opportunity to request additional funding through Academic Assessment [Planning](#) and [Reporting](#) forms, [Budget Worksheet](#) forms, and through [Program Review](#). The College values resource allocation based on evaluation, so the use of these forms helps to make this connection clear.

Historically, after all [budget meetings](#) have been conducted, the Business Manager (formerly an employee of Minot State University, but now a DCB employee with the title of Associate Dean for Business and Finance) compiled a summary of requested budget changes for consideration by the Dean's Council. The Dean's Council would identify budget needs related to College and NDUS Strategic Plan priorities and priorities identified on other guiding plans (e.g., DCB Master Plan). Beginning Spring 2024, after departmental budget meetings are conducted, the Associate Dean for Business and Finance will bring a comprehensive budget to SPICE for review and consideration. SPICE will forward a recommendation to College Council for final approval. These steps help to ensure transparency in the budgeting process ([Item 3.7](#)) by bringing the comprehensive College budget to a greater number of College leaders, including Strategic Plan Priority Leaders, Senate leadership, and Associate Deans.

Overall, DCB engages the College-community in its strategic planning efforts, utilizing a one-year Implementation Plan which allows the College to react to changes in educational landscape, resources, economic shifts, and other factors. Plans are implemented and tracked both internally through SPICE and externally through the NDUS. The College aims to align its budget and resources to support its strategic planning initiatives.

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5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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

Summary

Dakota College at Bottineau's (DCB) resources, structures, processes, and planning are sufficient to fulfill the Campus Mission of *providing a quality education in a caring environment*, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

The North Dakota State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) is the governing board for the College, and DCB abides by SBHE policies and procedures, as well as DCB policies. College administrators use data to inform decisions, often relying on Faculty, Staff, and Student Senate recommendations for improvement and change. DCB's College Council is responsible for policy and planning at the College and includes faculty, staff, and student-representatives within its membership.

With 60.1% of DCB's budget directed toward instruction, academic support, student services, and scholarship, the College uses its resources to support educational offerings. The College is also making great strides in addressing facility upgrades. The renovation of the College's historic Old Main building into a modern facility for nursing and allied health education has been a top priority over the past four years. Additionally, DCB is bringing CTE programming to the community of Minot, focusing on dental programming in the College's new CTE Center. Both of these facilities demonstrate DCB's planning and dedication to quality educational programming.

DCB engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement through the use of the College's newly devised 2024-2029 Strategies for Success Strategic Plan, 2023-2024 Implementation Plan, 2022 Master (Facilities) Plan, NDUS financial reports, and IPEDS data. Progress toward attainment of items on the Implementation Plan is tracked through the College's Strategic Planning and Institutional Council for Effectiveness (SPICE). By integrating the use of a one-year Implementation Plan with other longer-term plans, the College is able to respond to challenges and opportunities while ensuring quality improvement.

Sources

There are no sources.