Assurance Argument

Dakota College at Bottineau - ND

Review date: 4/6/2020

1 - Mission

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

1.A - Core Component 1.A

The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

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

Argument

Response to 1.A.1

The Dakota College at Bottineau (DCB) Mission Statement was developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and was adopted by the governing board.

During August 2006, the DCB (then named Minot State University-Bottineau) Campus Dean appointed five Campus leaders, including administrators, faculty, and staff, to serve on a committee charged with developing a mission statement appropriate for the College. Over the course of nearly two years, the committee (which expanded to a team of nine) integrated Campus input and committee suggestions, to establish the current Mission. The Mission was brought before the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) on April 3, 2008, and formally approved. The Mission focuses on the small, personal community-college connection offered at DCB, while still acknowledging the natural resources roots of the College.

During 2017, the DCB Student and Faculty Senates reviewed and provided continued support for the current Mission Statement, seeing it as timely and well-suited for DCB. Staff Senate began reviewing the Mission in 2017 and offered renewed support in 2018.

The Dakota College at Bottineau Mission is as follows:

Institutional Mission

Dakota College at Bottineau provides students with a quality education in a caring environment. The institution values diversity and personal enrichment by promoting engaged learning for employment and university transfer. With the help of a supportive community, Dakota College at Bottineau emphasizes nature and technology to accomplish its mission through an array of curricula, programs, and services.

- *Liberal arts education provides students the knowledge and tools to continue their education,*

to serve as good stewards of the environment, and to function as responsible citizens.
- *Career/technical education provides students with the knowledge and skills required to succeed by utilizing natural, human, and technological resources.*
- *Distance delivery provides students increased access to education and career opportunities.*
- *Community education provides diverse life-long learning experiences.*
- *Support services provide opportunities for individual growth and success.*
- *Campus activities provide for interpersonal development.*
- *Campus outreach provides area schools and groups access to college resources.*
- *Workforce training and development provides the human resources for economic development.*
- *All programs provide a greater understanding of human diversity.*

Dakota College at Bottineau's curricula, programs, and services take students beyond nature and technology and leave them with an ethic of concern and care for the natural world.

[Vision](#)

Dakota College at Bottineau is rooted in the past and grows towards the future by combining the best from the Past, Present, and Future to provide students with innovative educational opportunities. The campus will emphasize a knowledge and appreciation of Nature, implement a rapidly changing Technology, and prepare students to go Beyond and improve the quality of life.

Response to 1.A.2

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 *promoting engaged learning for employment and university transfer.*

All academic programs at DCB utilize technology, a key element of the Campus Mission, as well as the Vision and Campus Focus. 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). During Fall 2019, [DCB offered 60 courses](#) through IVN, many to dual credit students at high schools across the state. From Fall 2016 through Fall 2019, DCB offered 370 courses through IVN and had enrollment in 307 of these courses. As technology allows DCB academic programming to grow, DCB also fulfills a Core Value of being *Student Centered*. 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 2018, DCB offered 41 area high schools 132 sections of DCB

courses.

The Passport and Bridges Programs, offered at Minot State University (MSU) and Valley City State University (VCSU) respectively, not only *promote engaged learning for employment,* but directly connect DCB students to a four-year institution for *university transfer.* 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 2018 through Spring 2019, seven Passport students successfully completed the Program and transferred to MSU, and one transferred to Bismarck State College in Bismarck, ND. From Fall 2017 through Spring 2019, seven 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.

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 last three years, DCB nursing cohorts have exceeded the target on all metrics by achieving above national average pass rates on the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX), and a hundred percent job placement of students who pass the NCLEX in both the Practical Nursing and Associate Degree in Nursing programs. The DCB Nursing Department is currently moving towards external accreditation through the National League of Nurses Commission for Nursing Education Accreditation. Both the Associate Degree in Nursing and the certificate in Practical Nursing programs received pre-accreditation status in October 2019.

Student Support Services

Student support services are offered primarily through two different entities at DCB: Student Services and the Academic Support Services/TRiO Program.

Student Services provides support services via financial aid, 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 these support services and prepare students for collegiate success. This preparation includes informational sessions, community networking, and team-building activities.

Academic Support Services include advising, academic and career counseling, disability services, as well as tutoring. Academic Support Services provides these services, in part, through the TRiO Program. The student support services offered through Academic Support Services and TRiO are consistent with the Campus Mission. Both the Academic Support Services and TRiO missions address the Campus Mission of *support services providing opportunities for individual growth and success* through individual and group tutoring, peer mentoring, career and academic counseling, and

Campus socials. The [TRiO mission](#) directly aligns with DCB's Core Value of being S*tudent Centered,* providing a *supportive community* of four staff members, including an Academic Counselor and a Career Counselor, both of whom connect students with *opportunities for individual growth and success.* Students not meeting TRiO Program criteria are still served through Academic Support Services, but through the [Academic Skills Coordinator](#) and [Disability Services Coordinator](#) rather than TRiO Counselors. Advising occurs primarily in the Student Success Center but is facilitated through Student Services. As outlined in the [Advising Handbook](#), advising at DCB goes beyond scheduling, fostering DCB's Core Values of *Excellence*, *Learning*, *Respect and Responsibility, Diversity*, and being *Student Centered.* The effectiveness and utilization of these services is addressed in 3.D.1.

Enrollment Profile

The profile of DCB students remains relatively consistent, and aligns with the College Mission of *engaged learning for employment and university transfer.* During [2018](#), the top five majors of newly enrolled freshman included AS and AA Liberal Arts, as well as Small Business Management, Information Technology-Web Design, and Photography. The top five majors of all enrolled students includes both Liberal Arts majors, as well as the certificate in Practical Nursing, the Associate Degree in Nursing, and the Associate of Applied Science in Small Business. These majors are consistently the top majors at DCB, as indicated on the [2017](#) and [2016](#) DCB Student Profiles. [Enrollment reports](#) for Spring 2020 show that of the 903 students enrolled at DCB, 243 are enrolled in a transfer program and 214 are enrolled in a CTE program.

Distance delivery of courses is a key aspect of the Campus Mission, and the enrollment profile supports this. Online enrollment continues to grow at DCB. From [Fall 2016 to Fall 2019](#), the percentage of DCB students taking at least one online class jumped six percent. Additionally, DCB responded to this increase in online students by offering more course options. [Spring 2020 enrollment reports](#) show that 673 students (nearly 75% of the Spring 2020 enrollment) are taking a course through IVN, online, or in a hybrid format. More specifically, 495 students (nearly 55%) are taking at least one online course. Additionally, [296 dual credit students](#) enrolled in at least one class during Spring 2020. Many of these dual credit students take these classes online or over IVN.

Diversity is a top priority at DCB, as indicated by three separate references within the [Campus Mission](#), and the enrollment profile of DCB students reflects this priority. [Bottineau](#) is a relatively homogeneous community, but DCB contributes ethnic, geographical, and cultural diversity to the community. [Twenty-eight percent](#) of 2018 DCB students self-identified as an ethnicity other than White, with nine percent identifying as Black. Other than North Dakota, the highest percentage of DCB students come from Florida, Michigan, Montana, and Georgia. Top five states of enrollment have also included Texas and Washington in [2017](#) and [2016](#). The Diversity Committee, TRiO Program, and support offered through Cultural Diversity Tuition Waivers, provide DCB students, faculty, and staff a greater understanding of human diversity. For more details regarding the impact of these entities on DCB diversity, see 1.C.

Response to 1.A.3

DCB's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the Campus Mission. Several different Criterion address this connection. Criterion 1.B.2 and 1.B.3 describe the connections between the DCB Mission and two major planning documents: the DCB [Strategic Plan](#) and the DCB [Master Plan](#). Criterion 5.A.2 describes the resource allocation process, and provides a breakdown of the DCB budget. Expenditures for instruction, academic support, student services, and scholarships

(all areas that directly tie to the Mission) accounted for 56.3% of the fiscal year 2018 budget. Criterion 5.C.1 describes the planning and budgeting process and highlights the alignment of these processes with the College Mission. Monthly Campus Forums commonly include reports on planning and budgeting. These Forums not only provide an opportunity to hear about planning and budgeting, but also provide faculty, staff, and students the chance to provide input on these processes.

Sources

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- Mission Support Student Senate Minutes 10.30.17_Redacted.pdf
- ND SBHE Minutes MSU-B Mission Approval CL
- Passport Program Information CL.pdf
- Passport Students and Completers Minot Campus
- Spring 2020 Dual Credit Enrollment Report
- Staff Senate Meeting Minutes Mission Support
- Student Services - Office Mission
- TRiO Mission-Objectives

1.B - Core Component 1.B

The mission is articulated publicly.

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

Argument

Response to 1.B.1

DCB's Mission is clearly articulated through multiple public documents. The College Mission and Vision appear in the College's Strategic Plan, Academic Catalog, Student Handbook, and on the DCB website. Additionally, a comparison between the Mission published in the first Institutional Academic Catalog and the current Mission is available in the DCB Master Plan.

Not only does DCB emphasize the College Mission and Vision in these documents, but the Campus Core Values, Goals and Priorities, and Focus are clearly articulated and at the heart of institutional operations.

Core Values

- *Student Centered: DCB values students, considers their needs and interests, and makes sincere efforts to respond positively to those needs and interests.*
- *Excellence: DCB community members take pride in their work and strive for academic and professional excellence.*
- *Learning: DCB values innovation and quality as it serves the learning needs of its various constituencies.*
- *Respect and Responsibility: DCB acknowledges, understands, and supports the rights of others to express their ideas. Individual responsibility is integral to civil discourse, which enables meaningful learning experiences and informed decisions.*
- *Diversity: DCB supports and embraces diversity, which enriches the quality of the learning experience.*

Goals and Priorities

- *Provide quality experiences.*
- *Ensure student success.*
- *Use resources effectively.*

Campus Focus

- *Nature, Technology and Beyond (a definition of this Focus is available in the Academic Catalog).*

Many Campus committees are directly charged with addressing aspects of the Campus Mission, Core Values, and Focus, as identified in the Employee Handbook. Specifically, the Academic Assessment Committee facilitates a process to assess student learning in academic disciplines and co-curriculars, 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 Technology Committee, as well as the Earth Day Committee which helps translate this Campus Focus into action. Diversity promotion and awareness, as specified in the Campus Mission and Core Values, is spearheaded by the Diversity Committee. The Distance Education Committee works to connect all students, regardless of location, with quality DCB courses.

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

More so than other mission documents, the DCB Strategic Plan is a living document. Approved by the State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) in 2015, the Strategic Plan utilizes North Dakota University System (NDUS) strategic goals to organize DCB-specific goals and objectives. Goal champions, expected completion dates, measurable outcomes, and progress checks are clearly articulated for each objective. As a living document, the Strategic Plan underwent revisions as a result of state-wide budget reductions. The original SBHE approved Strategic Plan was pared down from seven goals and 36 objectives to the currently approved five goals and 14 objectives.

The DCB Mission is at the heart of the DCB Strategic Plan. For example, DCB Strategic Goal 2 centers on developing new academic curriculum that align with the Mission, many of which address the natural world. Additionally, the use of technology (a key aspect of the Mission) is highlighted as a method of delivery for a variety of programs and services. Students are the primary constituents of the Strategic Plan, but the Plan also identifies collaboration with Burdick Job Corps Center (Objective 2.4), the Dakota Nursing Program and Northern Information Technology Consortium (Objective 4.1).

The current Strategic Plan outlines improvement plans through 2020. The NDUS and SBHE are currently working on developing a new Strategic Plan. The NDUS Vice Chancellor, as well as other members of the NDUS strategic planning team, visited DCB on November 6, 2019. The team met with Student, Faculty, and Staff Senate members, as well as attended the monthly DCB Campus Forum. During these meetings, students, faculty, and staff discussed College successes and challenges, and offered ideas for strategic planning initiatives. A strategic planning team will visit all 11 colleges and universities in the NDUS during the 2019-2020 academic year in order to collect information regarding future directions for strategic planning. Once this NDUS-wide strategic plan is complete, DCB will organize its own planning efforts around both the DCB Mission and the goals outlined at the state level.

DCB Academic Catalog

An updated version of the DCB Academic Catalog (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 2018 through 2020, 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 annually 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 during the 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 the Student Success Center.

DCB Master Plan

The current DCB Master Plan was submitted to the SBHE in 2016 and governs facility updates through 2022. 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:

- Private counseling space is needed for staff and students in the TRiO Office/Learning Center (renamed the Student Success Center). This speaks to the *support services providing opportunities for individual growth and success* aspect of the Mission.
- The current DCB dining center is not handicapped accessible, directly opposing DCB's Mission of valuing diversity. DCB has currently bonded for $2.5 million to build a new dining center which will not only speak to the Campus valuing diversity, but will also serve the greater Bottineau-area by providing resources (in the form of meeting space) to external constituents.
- Facility improvements made to Nelson Science Center align with the Campus Mission of *providing a quality education in a caring environment*. Ventilation and mechanical improvements were necessary for the safety of students, faculty, and staff. This was a priority highlighted in the Master Plan, and formalized as a capital project request submitted to the NDUS. Out of all the capital project requests made by the 11 NDUS institutions, these safety-based requests were ranked number seven.

Sources

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1.C - Core Component 1.C

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

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

Argument

Response to 1.C.1

DCB addresses its role in a multicultural society in the Campus Mission, stating *the institution values diversity and personal enrichment by promoting engaged learning for employment and university transfer*. Additionally, *Diversity* is identified as a Core Value at DCB. As shown in 1.A.1 and on the DCB Student Profile, DCB serves a diverse population of students, especially in terms of age and race. The TRiO Program at DCB also addresses the College's role of serving economically disadvantaged students.

Not only is diversity, and the role DCB plays in a multicultural society, a key element of the Mission, but it is also a common theme throughout the mission documents. The DCB Strategic Plan speaks to the College's desire to bring quality programs to a variety of student populations. Specifically, DCB Strategic Goal 2 addresses the demand for programming at different geographical locations and for diverse student populations. For example, the LEAP Program allows high school students throughout the state to earn a certificate in College Studies while simultaneously pursing their high school diploma. This programming speaks to the Mission of providing *access to education and career opportunities* through distance education.

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. DCB's Payroll Specialist/HR staff serves as the Equal Opportunity Officer, and the TRiO Director is contracted to serve as the Title IX Compliance Officer. 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. The North Dakota Department of Career and Technical Education conducted a nondiscrimination compliance review in 2017. Several areas of noncompliance were identified in this review, but the areas of noncompliance were remedied and satisfactorily met the requirements of correction during March 2018.

One way in which DCB addresses its role in a multicultural society 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. From 2009-2018, DCB awarded 249 Cultural Diversity Tuition Waivers, for a total of $330,368.65, to students identifying as racially diverse.

Ensuring that all North Dakota colleges and universities address their role in a multicultural society

is a priority at the state level as well. The North Dakota University System (NDUS) addressed this priority throughout their November 2017 Envision 2030 Diversity paper. This paper focused on a number of projects and recommendations which aim to strengthen state-wide educational models for diverse populations. One recommendation from this paper that is currently being utilized at DCB is the use of predictive analytics to determine issues. DCB currently uses Starfish, IPEDS, and SAM (Student Achievement Measure) to track and monitor student trends and academic activity. Although the Envision 2030 Diversity paper does not overtly charge the 11 colleges and universities within the NDUS with direct action, it does display a level of awareness and understanding regarding the need to address diversity within higher education.

This state-level involvement with the individual colleges and universities was facilitated by the NDUS Diversity Council in the past. This Council visited each campus and provided an Institutional Annual Diversity Report. DCB's last report from the Council was received Spring 2011. This report praised DCB for an "outstanding" institutional climate as it relates to diversity.

One area in which DCB is admittedly lacking is in the hiring of diverse faculty and staff. Of the 225 individuals employed by DCB as of August 2019, 197 identify as white. Although the racial diversity of faculty and staff is lacking, nearly 62% of employees are female. DCB is putting forth effort to remedy this by advertising open positions nation-wide. Applications are received from individuals throughout the United States, as well as internationally, from a variety of backgrounds.

Response to 1.C.2

DCB is committed to fostering a diverse environment, as evidenced by its activities, student support services, and employee training.

Diversity Activities

Prior to the 2018-2019 academic year, the DCB Diversity Committee was active, yet largely undocumented. Under new leadership, the Committee is making efforts to increase activities, formalize its meeting processes, and produce more concrete objectives to guide its operations. The Diversity Committee strives to promote inclusiveness and respect through raising cultural awareness and understanding among the Campus community. Attendance tracked for 17 events held on Campus throughout the 2018-2019 academic year indicates student participation in numbers from five to fifty-one. Promotional materials dispersed on Campus show a marked increase of efforts to publicize events and involve students, faculty, and staff.

DCB community education courses reflect attention to human diversity. From Spring 2017 through Fall 2018, 42 individuals participated in basic sign language classes offered by the North Dakota School for the Deaf through the DCB Community Education Program. These classes utilized technology, a key element of the Campus Mission, by providing this diverse learning experience to participants through Interactive Video Network.

Coaching staff, with the assistance of DCB student-athletes, offer a variety of athletic camps to young athletes in the area. The camps have been instrumental in exposing young people in a non-diverse community to men and women from other parts of the United States and other countries. These camps address the Campus Mission by providing Campus activities for *interpersonal development*, along with providing *area groups access to college resources*. The DCB Hockey Team has a long history of community outreach, including athletic camps. Since 2014, the DCB Hockey Team hosted more than 200 area boys and girls between the ages of six and seventeen. The DCB Men's and

Women's Basketball Teams have also done an admirable job of fostering a diverse environment through athletic camps. Twice a month from October 2017 through March 2018, the DCB Men's Basketball Team coached 50 area youths (24% of which were from outside of Bottineau), on basic drills and game fundamentals. Since 2004, the DCB Women's Basketball Team has served more than 1,000 area youth through DCB Shootout Camps and the Bottineau Area Hoopsters organization.

Faculty and staff at DCB seek opportunities to expose students to different cultural experiences. Since 2018, the Photography Department has organized two study abroad trips to Ireland, photographing a variety of locations and learning about the culture. Students in the Advertising and Marketing and Small Business Management AAS programs attend the Norsk Hostfest in Minot, ND, each year. This festival celebrates Scandinavian culture and draws tens of thousands of people each year for what is marketed as "pure Scandimonium." Since 2013, 26 DCB students have attended and completed a marketing project for the event.

Student Support Services

DCB provides support services which include disability, academic (including the TRiO Program), and mental health services. These services reflect attention to human diversity and acknowledge that diversity comes in many forms. Criterion 3.D.1 outlines these services.

Employee Training

Title IX training is provided to DCB faculty and staff annually during faculty in-service. During the 2019-2020 faculty in-service 68 faculty and staff attended training facilitated by the Minot State University Title IX Coordinator, as well as the DCB Title IX Coordinator. This training included information regarding knowledge, skills, and abilities to be an effective responsible employee. Nine student resident assistants, as well as six non-student DCB Housing Staff, also participated in Title IX training prior to the start of the 2019-2020 academic term.

During October 2018, the DCB Diversity Committee provided Safe Zone Training to DCB staff and faculty. Seven members of the DCB community, three faculty and four staff, participated in the training offered during LGBTQ+ History Month. The training focused on creating a safe space for all students in the LGBTQ+ community.

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1.D - Core Component 1.D

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

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

Argument

Response to 1.D.1

DCB's 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.

Strategic Planning

The current DCB Strategic Plan highlights DCB's efforts to develop new curricula that meet the interests of students, as well as promote economic development (DCB Strategic Goal 2). Of the five objectives listed under this goal, the LEAP (Leading to Education and Advanced Preparation) Program has been the most successful and the furthest reaching. Seven high school students completed the LEAP Program during its first year of implementation. This number increased to 17 graduates during the second year. Although most of these graduates are located around the Bottineau area, the LEAP Program is extending to other areas of the state.

Grants

Since December 2013, DCB has employed a full-time grant writer to secure funding for educational and research purposes associated with the College and to secure funding for the community. The two grant writers that have held the position have been very successful. The United States Department of Agriculture awarded DCB a $297,325 grant to fund a Farmers Market Promotion Program. This Program aims to benefit 50 farmers markets throughout North Dakota through assessment and training on marketing strategies. Grant funding from the North Dakota Natural Resources Trust helps facilitate natural resource conservation and awareness training by sponsoring a two-day camp for K-12 teachers and students. The North Dakota Department of Career and Technical Education awarded DCB a $9,000 grant in 2018 which allowed DCB faculty and staff to host a three-day camp for 10 high school females from six different North Dakota high schools. These students participated in a Women in Aquaculture and Hydroculture W+H2O Camp designed to immerse participants in hands-on activities common in careers related to aquaculture and hydroculture. 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 that 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 and Math Track Meet on DCB's Campus, providing outreach talks to area schools, and serving on community-based committees and boards.

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 459 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 Mission.

Response to 1.D.2

DCB's Mission-driven educational responsibilities, namely to provide *learning for employment and university transfer,* take primacy over other purposes. During fiscal year 2018, 36.5% of DCB's total budget was allocated to instruction and 5.2% 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 during fall in-service, faculty and staff sign new Code of Conduct forms. Additionally, any faculty or staff owning and/or operating a business outside of DCB reports this information to the Business Manager who submits a report to the NDUS State Auditor's Office. Finally, DCB ensures that all supervisors do not oversee family members who are also employed at the College.

Response to 1.D.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 *supportive community* in which DCB is located.

DCB's participation in the Dakota Nursing Program (DNP) and Northern Information Technology Consortium (NITC) 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 two to five cross-listed courses each semester (over the IVN system and online), and keeps its own students' headcount, FTE, and tuition/fees.

As noted in 3.E, many DCB co-curricular groups engage with the College and Bottineau communities through volunteer work and fundraising. DCB athletic teams are often called upon to help within the community, something that is largely undocumented. The Athletic Department at DCB recently underwent a change in leadership with the hiring of a new Athletic Director. This new leader aims to continue the athletic teams involvement in the community while also documenting community service. The Student Nurse Organization regularly participates in volunteer and fundraising activities, including bake sales and blood drives. Members of Leaderjacks, DCB's service learning student organization, gain leadership skills through community service activities. Additionally, DCB staff and faculty, as well as student volunteers, host an annual rummage and bake sale, with proceeds supporting local charities and service groups. These examples support the College Vision of *preparing students to go Beyond and improve the quality of life.*

Community education is specifically addressed in the College Mission as a means of providing *diverse life-long learning experiences.* The Director of Distance Education and Academic Support Services oversees the Community Education Program and offers seven to ten community education events each year.

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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 College Mission is clear, articulated publicly, and guides the institution's operations. Developed through a collaborative process, the DCB Mission highlights the Campus-wide drive to prepare students for the workforce and university transfer, 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, Goals and Priorities, and Focus. 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 Dakota College at Bottineau.

DCB's Mission drives internal operations and demonstrates the College's commitment to the public good. This commitment is evidenced by specific references in the College Mission, including community education, campus outreach, and providing the larger community with access to College resources. As shown in the Argument, these references are not merely words on a page but are calls 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 operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

Argument

Response to 2.A

Dakota College at Bottineau 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 State Board of Higher Education (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 2019, FY 2018, FY 2017, FY 2016, FY 2015 and FY 2014 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 Internal Controls and Procurement, Purchasing Cards, and Human Resources and Payroll. 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. Action plans are put in place with timelines to ensure that all issues are addressed, with procedures put in place to ensure that the situation that led to an audit finding will not happen again. Overall, the audits reflect strong adherence to NDUS and state policies. One area of concern identified in the state audit was with the College's procurement processes, notably with

two purchases. One finding indicated the College had not re-advertised its contract for food services every 10 years, although it had been negotiating its existing contract on an annual basis. Due to staff turnover, the College was unaware of this requirement to request new request for proposals (RFPs) every 10 years. The College promptly completed the steps needed to request proposals for food service and a new eight-year contract was negotiated in 2019. Similarly, it was found that a purchase of nursing manikins was awarded on a sole procurement basis when it was noted by the auditor that multiple bids should have been secured. Although this purchase was from grant funds which specifically identified that the equipment would be purchased from a select vendor so as to meet the specifications of the DCB Nursing Department, the College agreed that it would ensure that future grant proposals and equipment purchases made with grant funds would comply with the state procurement guidelines. Additionally, the state auditor noted that the College had not complied with proper steps in securing a Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) for the Nelson Science Center project. While the College had complied with the necessary steps to secure the CMAR, DCB relied on its architectural firm to maintain records of this process, which is a common practice. However, due to the loss of a data server at the architectural firm, the firm was not able to produce the required documentation, which led to the auditor's finding, as there was no way to substantiate the processes that had been followed. The College learned from this experience and will be compiling its own minutes and records on current and future major facilities projects. The College's response to these situations demonstrates that DCB is committed to operating with integrity in following financial policies and procedures.

Financial integrity is further assured by the availability of a fraud reporting hotline established by the NDUS. The Fraud Hotline is administered by Eide Bailly LLP 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 that 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 that the privacy of all students is protected in any communications with parents, family members or others.

Personnel

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. The College is addressing an issue related to the faculty evaluation process. A FY 2017-FY 2018 audit conducted by the State Auditor's Office found that DCB had not conducted faculty evaluations as per state policies. To address this issue, the faculty evaluation process has had major responsibilities assigned to Department Chairs to ensure that annual evaluations are conducted in accordance with College, SBHE, and North Dakota Century Code requirements.

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, Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources and 1202.3, Data Privacy 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 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 five 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 2019, the College used college fees and funds from its auxiliary enterprises to cover $334,038 in expenses for its athletic programs. Of this amount, 45% came from college fees, with the remaining 55% from auxiliary enterprise accounts. 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 State Board of Higher Education (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.

Administration, Faculty and Staff

All DCB employees are expected to comply with the College and University System code of conduct policies which are documented in the DCB Employee Handbook and in SBHE Policy 308.1. As part of this process, all employees sign a Code of Conduct form at the beginning of the academic year indicating their awareness and agreement with the code of conduct requirements. Additionally, all benefited DCB employees completed the North Dakota University System's Theft Fraud and Code of Conduct training in 2018. As per SBHE Policy 308.4, Conflict of Interest, DCB employees annually identify any potential conflicts of interest in business activities that the College should be aware of.

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2.B - Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control, and accreditation relationships.

Argument

Response to 2.B

Dakota College 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 that go directly to the DCB Academic Catalog, which helps ensure consistent and accurate information about program requirements. A link is also provided to 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 locations (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 webpages with specific information directly related to each 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 Faculty and Staff tab. 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.

Costs to Students

DCB fully discloses its current costs for tuition, fees, and room and board on its Tuition and Fees webpage. The costs for tuition and fees are categorized by residency factors for students from North Dakota and Canadian provinces, from Minnesota, from contiguous states, from WUE and MSEP states, from 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.

The charges for online tuition and the accompanying Distance Education Access Fee are specified via a link on the Tuition and Fees webpage. Additional information on College costs is accessible through links on the Tuition and Fees webpage to a Net Price Calculator page, a Cost of Attendance page, and a page with a breakdown of tuition and fees by credit. DCB adopted a new tuition model during Fall 2019 that incorporated almost all course fees into its base tuition rate. With this change, the published tuition and fee rates are very accurate in estimating a student's true costs of attendance at the College. To assist students and stakeholders in more readily finding information about the College, DCB provides a Consumer Information webpage which provides easily accessible links to specific webpages related to College costs, financial assistance and student loans, and student outcome data. Fall 2016, 2017 and 2018 Student Profiles provide additional data regarding student enrollment, retention, and graduation rates and academic degrees conferred.

Control

DCB discloses on its website that it is a member of the North Dakota University System (NDUS) and is governed by the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education (SBHE). The College's website provides a link to the NDUS website, which also includes information about the North Dakota SBHE and its policies, meetings and members. SBHE Policy 301.1 identifies Dakota College at Bottineau as one of the 11 college and universities governed by the North Dakota SBHE.

Accreditation

DCB's accreditation status with the Higher Learning Commission is documented on the College's website under its Accreditation page. This page displays the Higher Learning Commission's Mark of Affiliation, which is in turn linked to the Higher Learning Commission 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.

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.

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2.C - Core Component 2.C

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

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

Argument

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 college and universities. In 1990, the SBHE created a one-university system led by a 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 North Dakota University System 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, 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 2015-2020 Strategic Plan identifies the SBHE's priorities. These priorities are to 1) deliver degrees that are the best value in the nation, 2) provide programs people want, where and when they need them, 3) equip students for success, 4) maximize the strengths of the unified system, and 5) research excellence and innovation. The SBHE is currently in the process of gathering input for a revised strategic plan to determine its priorities for 2020-2025. As part of the input gathering process, NDUS staff are conducting meetings with numerous stakeholders at all 11 campuses during the 2019-2020 academic year . The input from these meetings will be used to help formulate recommendations to the SBHE for inclusion in the new strategic plan.

The SBHE demonstrates its commitment to its policy-setting and advocacy roles for the NDUS and its governance and financial responsibilities for each of the 11 college 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.2

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 advisor from an NDUS institution as well as a non-voting staff advisor from one of the System colleges or universities. 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 CEO's of the 11 NDUS institutions, contributes recommendations and advice to the SBHE through the chancellor. The NDUS college and university presidents and the DCB Campus Dean are expected to attend regular SBHE meetings and are 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.3

Several legislative acts help to ensure the 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. The SBHE is comprised of seven members who are appointed for a four-year term by the governor

and subject to confirmation by the State Senate. Members may not be appointed to serve for more than two terms. An additional student member is appointed by the governor and 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. The SBHE uses common parliamentary procedures as its protocol for conducting official business. 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.4

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, including the management and expenditure of institutional funds. 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 committees. Membership on Faculty Senate standing committees follows committee membership guidelines.

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

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2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

Argument

Response to 2.D

Dakota College at Bottineau 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 Core Values.

DCB's Mission and Vision endorse freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching. The concluding statement in the Mission notes that *Dakota College at Bottineau's curricula, programs, and services take students beyond nature and technology and leave them with an ethic of concern and care for the natural world.* The College's Vision statement reflects this belief by noting that *...The campus will emphasize a knowledge and appreciation of Nature, implement a rapidly changing Technology, and prepare students to go Beyond and improve the quality of life.* These concepts are further highlighted in the College's Core Value of Respect and Responsibility. This Core Value states that *Dakota College at Bottineau acknowledges, understands, and supports the rights of others to express their ideas. Individual responsibility is integral to civil discourse, which enables meaningful learning experiences and informed decisions.*

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. 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." Although tenure is officially awarded by the SBHE, DCB has established 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 that they feel best meets student needs, and use pedagogy that they believe is most appropriate for the course content being taught. This includes the use of instructional technology that 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.

Sources

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2.E - Core Component 2.E

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

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

Argument

Response to 2.E.1

Dakota College at Bottineau has 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 CRF 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 three 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 data analyses 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. However, should the College seek funding for a scientific research study, SBHE Policy 410.0 provides guidance for implementing training requirements for any employees conducting or supporting sponsored research activities.

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, the Computer Acceptable Use and Academic Honesty/Dishonesty Policies in the Student Handbook, and the Academic Honesty/Dishonesty and Computer Usage Policies in the Employee Handbook.

Response to 2.E.2

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 staff. 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. An additional consideration is the development and implementation of a short unit of instruction on the ethical use of information that can be utilized by instructors for incorporation into courses.

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.3

The College has a policy on academic honesty and integrity documented in both the College's Student Handbook as well as 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 contain 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

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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 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.

The major 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, making it difficult to be aware of changing policy and process changes. The major state budget reductions experienced in the 2015-2017 biennium exacerbated this issue, as the College has continued to grow its enrollment with fewer faculty and staff. Most issues identified in recent state and system audits are connected to the "many hats" that are worn by DCB staff. This has been, and will continue to be, one of the major issues facing the College. Maintaining staff morale when workloads and responsibilities have increased is a real 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 high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

3.A - Core Component 3.A

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

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

Argument

Dakota College at Bottineau offers 20 one-year career and technical education (CTE) program certificates, 27 Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degrees, an Associate of Arts (AA) degree (with 9 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 hours. Additionally, the College offers two certificate programs (Recreation Management, Small Business Management) which consist of 15 credits or less, and a Certificate of Completion in General Office Aide which consists of nine credits or less. The College also offers a 24 credit certificate in College Studies which is heavily rooted in general education coursework. Nineteen of these programs are available fully online.

Response to 3.A.1

Dakota College at Bottineau 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 and meets the DCB Mission of preparing students for university transfer and the workforce. For example, the curriculum for an AA with a sub-plan in Psychology was revised in 2018 to allow students flexibility to choose elective classes suited to the desired sub-field of psychological study the graduates wish to pursue upon transfer. Additionally, the Photography and Paramedic Technology faculty continue to respond to advisory committee recommendations, revising credit numbers, 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.

In accordance with SBHE policy, all new programs at DCB go through a two stage process of approval. Stage I is an initial stage of program exploration, and Stage II is the request for a new academic program which addresses program need, requirements, and costs/resources. Some of the more recent program additions at DCB include the Photography, Aquaponics, and Agriculture Management and Technology Programs. As indicated in the Stage II proposals for each of these programs, the curriculum requirements reflect current industry standards and are appropriate for the degree or certificate awarded.

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 made 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 revitalized Academic Assessment Committee incorporated checks for currency on Assessment Reporting Forms. Academic departments will complete these forms for the first time during Spring 2021. This additional layer of monitoring provides faculty the opportunity to work as departments to make sure 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. As new policies, implementation strategies were put in place at the end of the Fall 2019 semester. The Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs, with the help of Department Chairs, will begin assessing compliance with the Definition of a Semester Credit Hour Policy. These individuals will select 50-60 courses to assess beginning Spring 2020 and 50-60 courses to assess during Fall 2020. A Credit Hour Report Form will be completed for each class, and courses not meeting policy requirements will be reassessed the following semester. A Credit Hour Report Form will be completed for each course once every four years with copies of the Forms available on the DCB website. The Director of Distance Education provided information regarding the new policy to all online faculty during December 2019. Given the number of online classes and instructors, as well as the limited time between policy approval and the start of the 2020 spring semester, faculty were given until the end of Spring 2020 semester to complete the Online Seat Time Checklist for current online classes. Additionally, the online development process now requires the Online Seat Time Checklist, in addition to the Online and Hybrid Course Development Proposal Form, to be completed prior to full approval.

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. At the end of the Fall 2019 semester, 61 students failed to make satisfactory academic progress standards and were placed on academic probation and three students

were placed on academic suspension for repeated failure to meet these standards.

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. The learning goals for the AA, AS, and certificate in College Studies are outlined in the Transfer Program Review report.

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.
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 theme, as well as General Education Goals/Competencies for courses identified as general education courses. A standardized course syllabus form 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. The Director of Distance Education helps to ensure all dual credit and online faculty understand the need for consistency with their syllabi. Even though these steps are in place, the oversight of current courses/syllabi for consistency has been lacking.

Beginning Fall 2019, Department Chairs began overseeing the consistency of syllabi information across all modes of delivery and all locations. Department Chairs, with the help of faculty within their departments, completed Syllabi Checklist Forms for all Fall 2019 course syllabi. Analysis of the Syllabi Checklist Forms revealed that inconsistencies existed within syllabi. It was found that

50.52% of syllabi contained all required information, and were consistent with all sections of the same course where applicable. However, 30.66% of Fall 2019 syllabi lacked one piece of required information or were inconsistent with other sections of the same course in one area, and 18.82% were inconsistent in at least two areas. Although some of these inconsistencies were minor (such as not having the DCB Student Email Policy on the syllabus), some of these inconsistencies were more concerning. For example, for courses in which having alignment of course objectives was applicable (i.e., multiple sections of the course were offered), 12.72% of syllabi did not show consistency. Additionally, when multiple sections of general education course syllabi were assessed, only 69.52% of the syllabi aligned in terms of the General Education Competencies and/or Learning Outcomes identified.

During Spring 2020, the Director of Assessment and the Accreditation Coordinator completed all Syllabi Checklist Forms. Analysis of the Spring 2020 Syllabi Checklist Forms shows less consistency than in the fall. During Spring 2020, only 23.90% of syllabi contained all required information (a 26.62% drop). Additionally, only 56.94% of course descriptions, 43.18% of course objectives, and 22.82% of General Education Competencies and Learning Outcomes aligned across multiple sections of the same course. These percentages reflect a 31.3%, 44.1%, and 46.71% respective drop from fall to spring in each category. Although there are a number of possible explanations for these drops, the Director of Assessment and Accreditation Coordinator believe the number of coders used during the fall analysis lead to inconsistent coding and inaccurate numbers. The Spring 2020 results reflect consistent coding and reflect more accurately the alignment of current syllabi. Administrators are aware of the consistency issues and are finalizing plans on how to best address these concerns.

Sources

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3.B - Core Component 3.B

The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

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

Argument

Response to 3.B.1-3

As stated in the Campus Vision, a *Nature, Technology, and Beyond* focus drives educational offerings at 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 revised 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.

DCB faculty, staff, and administrators spearheaded the revision of the General Education Competencies, as well as Learning Outcomes and Performance Indicators, to align with best practices learned at the HLC Assessing General Education Workshop during Spring 2019. The revisions

support the Campus desire for continuous quality improvement, especially within academic programming.

As noted in the Academic Catalog, general education exists within all degree programs at DCB. To ensure this, faculty recently engaged in curriculum mapping for all degree programs, as well as certificate programs. 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 pursing 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 Campus, 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.4

DCB recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work. The Campus Mission addresses diversity in three different locations and identifies diversity as a Core Value, specifying that *Dakota College at Bottineau supports and embraces diversity, which enriches the quality of the learning experience*. To ensure that the Campus truly values diversity, diversity is a common theme of assessment. Cultural, racial, ethnic, and gender diversity, as well as a respect for this diversity, have all been assessed, and these assessment reports reveal that diversity is understood and valued by DCB students.

Analysis of 2018-2019 DCB course syllabi reveals diversity referenced in five main areas:

Relationship to Theme/Mission (5 syllabi)
Course objectives/outcomes (9 syllabi)
Course description/outline (9 syllabi)
Student (learning) outcomes (8 syllabi)
Specific assignment/class activity (3 syllabi)

Additionally, 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 2018-2019 academic year, the Diversity Committee sponsored 17 events to promote human and cultural diversity, including

exposure to Latin American culture, cuisine, and music, as well as LGBTQ+ discussions and Safe Zone Training.

Response to 3.B.5

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. Twenty percent of full-time faculty reported scholarly works and/or publications during the 2017-2018 academic year. A majority of these works were submitted by Farm and Ranch Management faculty who contributed to local annual averages publications. The Photography Department lead faculty also contributed several art exhibits, and the DCB Head Hockey Coach maintained an active blog. During the 2018-2019 academic year, 20.83% of reporting faculty noted scholarly works and/or publications, with similar contributions as the previous year. During the 2017-2018 academic year, 12 faculty shared research and content knowledge with the larger community through outreach talks, and four faculty members contributed during the 2018-2019 academic year.

From Fall 2008 through Fall 2018, DCB offered 928 total sections of cooperative education, honors courses, independent studies, study abroad, and leadership classes. This led to a total of 3,938 students contributing to scholarship, creative work, or the discovery of knowledge, with a large majority of these students 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 2013, 69 students have presented their research and scholarly activities at this event. Projects range from literature reviews on medical conditions, such as celiac disease and Angelman Syndrome, to agricultural-based research on soil composition and wheat growth, as well as research on the impact of caffeine, chia seeds, and electrolytes on the human body.

Students in the DCB Photography Program regularly contribute to creative works around Campus and the greater Bottineau community. Since the addition of the Photography Program in Fall 2013, five exhibits occurred on Campus, one in the Bottineau community, one in the state of North Dakota, and one exhibit in Bundoran, Ireland. Students and instructors of the Photography Program published two books: one a collection of images taken of DCB's historic Old Main building, and the other a collection of images from Willow City, a small, rural town located 20 miles from Bottineau. A total of 68 photography students contributed 345 images to exhibitions and professional publications since 2013.

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NDUS 2018 GERTA Guide CL.pdf (page number 74)
PHOT Student Creative Work Summary Table and Exhibit Examples
Syllabi Referencing Diversity-Summary Information and Actual Syllabi 2018-2019

3.C - Core Component 3.C

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

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

Argument

Response to 3.C.1

DCB has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both classroom and non-classroom roles of faculty. DCB student-to-faculty ratios range from 8-to-1 in 2015, to 17-to-1 in 2018. This reflects a steady increase in College enrollment beginning Fall 2015. Although the ratio has increased in recent years, the ratio is still appropriate and many classes have fewer than 17 students allowing for more one-on-one instruction. Of the 31 full-time faculty employed at DCB during the 2019-2020 academic year, 20 faculty members have been employed in their current positions less than five years, six faculty members have served DCB five to ten years, and five full-time faculty have been at DCB for longer than ten years. This mix allows for institutional knowledge, continuity, and new ideas. Thirty-two percent of 2019-2020 full-time faculty are tenured, or on a tenure track, and 58.06% hold a master's degree or higher (19.35% 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 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 15-16 credit hours per semester, or a total of 30-32 credit hours during the academic year, a range that accommodates the demands of teaching laboratory sections of a class. DCB faculty do go beyond these workloads, often to teach Honors courses and extra sections of labs. On a regular basis, 8-11 faculty teach overloads, for a total of between 49.50 to 65 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 by up to two credits.

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 2018-2019 academic year, faculty point totals ranged from 0-19 points, with an average of six and a half points per faculty. Full-time faculty have an expectation of totaling roughly 10 points for committee work. 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 (five faculty which always includes the Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs and Faculty Senate President) is responsible for overseeing course and curriculum additions, deletions, changes, and making recommendations to the Faculty Senate.
> The Academic Assessment Committee (five 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 (four 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 North Dakota University System (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.

Response to 3.C.2

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. During Spring 2017, an ad hoc committee of faculty developed the Policy for Determining Qualified Faculty, relying heavily on HLC guidelines, and the Policy was approved through the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Qualifications Committee reviews faculty transcripts, experience, and credentials to determine the discipline(s) each faculty member is qualified to teach. The Committee also oversees the development of Faculty Qualifications Plans, as well as the progress made on these Plans. Under the Policy for Determining Qualified Faculty, nearly 88% of all DCB faculty (including full-time, part-time, adjunct, online, and dual credit) are qualified to teach in their disciplines without being placed on a Faculty Qualifications Plan. Fourteen DCB faculty are currently on a Faculty Qualifications Plan to meet DCB Faculty Qualifications standards. Of these fourteen faculty, four are full-time and ten are part-time or adjunct. Four of those on plans will complete all necessary coursework by the completion of 2020.

The Policy for Determining Qualified Faculty was recently reviewed by an ad hoc committee. This committee reviewed the Policy and recommended several changes. Currently, Liberal

Arts/General/Transfer Faculty (i.e., non-CTE) are qualified to teach in a specific discipline in one of three ways: 1) having a master's degree in the discipline they teach, 2) having a master's degree in a different discipline and 18 graduate credits in the discipline they teach, or 3) having a master's degree outside the discipline and tested experience in the discipline equivalent to 18 graduate credits. Understanding the need to move away from this third option of qualifying a faculty member, the ad hoc committee modified this option so that tested experience in the discipline alone is not enough. The updated Policy requires that if a Liberal Arts/General/Transfer Faculty has a master's degree outside the discipline, these faculty need a minimum of nine graduate credits in the discipline they teach and tested experience equivalent to the remaining needed credits. These changes were presented to the Faculty Senate in September 2019 and approved. This revised Policy for Determining Qualified Faculty takes effect beginning August 2020.

Response to 3.C.3

Institutional policies and procedures outlined in the Employee Handbook require DCB faculty to undergo regular evaluation. During the first year of full-time employment, faculty are evaluated for two consecutive semesters by both students and the Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs. Additionally, each new, full-time faculty is assigned a peer mentor. The peer mentor guides the new faculty member through DCB policy, procedure, and effective instruction. After the first year of employment, the Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs alternates yearly classroom observation and evaluation with student evaluations.

Part-time faculty follow the same evaluation schedule as full-time faculty, having evaluations performed by both the Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs and students. Online faculty are evaluated every semester through student evaluations. Additionally, online faculty began self-evaluations during Spring 2019.

The policies and procedures for faculty evaluations described to this point are the policies and procedures prior to Fall 2019. An audit of the 2017-2018 academic year (received in May 2019) conducted by the State Auditor's Office found that eight out of 14 faculty members were not evaluated in compliance with North Dakota State Board of Education (SBHE) policy, four out of 14 student evaluations were not performed for faculty tested, and evaluations were not always housed in faculty personnel files. The Campus Dean looked at DCB policy, as well as SBHE policy, and determined that the number of evaluations for which the Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs was in charge of was not reasonable. A new Evaluations Policy for faculty was recently put into place. Rather than the Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs evaluating all full-time faculty, this responsibility now falls on Department Chairs. By the completion of the Fall 2019 semester, all Department Chairs performed classroom teaching observations, and a schedule of classroom observation and evaluation is in place to ensure that all faculty are evaluated.

Response to 3.C.4

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 and Student Affairs receives annual summaries of faculty professional growth activities each spring (beginning Spring 2020, these summaries will go to Department Chairs). Most full-time faculty engage in some type of professional growth activity each year, with workshop/seminar attendance and professional society membership being the most common. During the 2018-2019 academic year, 41.66% of full-time faculty attended a professional

society meeting, and 20.83% engaged in a professional society activities. 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. As mentioned in 3.C.3, 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 and Student Affairs. Additionally, guidance is offered to all faculty during fall in-service regarding technology available within and outside of the classroom. Training in Pexip, Yuja, Blackboard, the Interactive Video Network (IVN), and Starfish allow faculty to proficiently utilize the latest technology available through the College.

The 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.

Although state-wide budget cuts did reduce state-appropriated funds, Campus-wide professional development activities and funding remained relatively strong. With a reduction to $27,913.43 spent on professional development in 2017, this amount rose to $41,553.25 in 2018. Despite this relatively stable funding, Campus administrators and faculty saw the need for additional funding for professional development opportunities. Beginning during fiscal year 2019-2020, an additional professional development fund was set aside to encourage faculty and staff to maintain appropriate training, currency in their academic fields, and boost innovation both in and outside of the classroom. As of October 2019, five instructors have been approved to receive a total of $3,218.14 from this fund. Funded activities include graduate school tuition, conference registration and travel costs, as well as funding for permaculture design certification and distance running coach certification.

Response to 3.C.5

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 submit daily schedules to the Dean's Office each semester, 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. Additionally, contact information for faculty is included on course syllabi, as well as on the College website.

In a December 2018 student survey sent to the DCB student listserv, 62 students responded to questions regarding experiences at DCB. Of these 62 DCB students, nearly 83% of students indicated their access to faculty was excellent or good (the top two categories). This same survey

looked at the availability of academic advisors, many of which are full or part-time faculty, and found 85% (of students who felt this question applied to them) agreed or strongly agreed that the availability of the advisor(s) met their needs.

Response to 3.C.6

Staff members providing student support services at DCB are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development. During the 2018-2019 academic year,

> Financial aid staff attended 11 trainings, including those offered through the North Dakota Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, the Federal Student Aid Office of the Department of Education, and the Rocky Mountain Financial Aid Association/Department of Education.
> TRiO staff, as well as the Academic Skills Coordinator, attended trainings led by ASPIRE Leadership Institute, the Council for Opportunity in Education, and the HLC Persistence and Completion Academy scholars.
> Athletic coaches and administrators attended a variety of conferences and clinics to remain current in best coaching practices. These included trainings such as *Game Action Do's & Don'ts, Transform Your Game Next Season, NDUS Football Coaching* clinics, and coaching trainings led by USA Hockey and the Minnesota Hockey Coaches Association.
> The Library Director sought out innovative means to teach and convey information literacy through a *Using Games to Teach Information Literacy* webinar.
> The Disability Support Services Coordinator participated in eight crisis prevention trainings to maintain her status as a master level trainer for nonviolent crisis intervention.

Currently, the Disability Support Services Coordinator, Mental Health Counselor, academic advisors, and financial aid staff are appropriated qualified or 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: tuition waivers and professional development. Over the past five academic years, $20,264.15 budget dollars went towards employee tuition and fee waivers. As stated in 3.C.4, total budget dollars spent on professional development ranges from $17,459.99 during 2013 to $41,553.25 during 2018.

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SBHE Policy 605.1 Academic Freedom and Tenure Academic Appointments Highlight

SBHE Policy 605.1 Academic Freedom and Tenure Academic Appointments Highlight (page number 5)

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Tuition Waiver Report and Summary

3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

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

Argument

Response to 3.D.1

As outlined in the Student Handbook, 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), oral presentation of materials, braille, scribe for tests and homework, and organizational assistance to students with disabilities. During the course of the 2018-2019 academic year, 49 students self-identified as needing support due to an identified disability, and 22 of these students sought assistance on a regular basis.

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 2018-2019 academic year, financial aid staff facilitated 10 FAFSA outreach and/or help sessions, many of which occurred at area high schools.

Library

The DCB Library provides students access to over 20,000 books and 11,000 electronic resources/databases. In a 2017 survey of DCB students, 90% of surveyed students reported using the DCB Library for a variety of reasons including research, computer usage, printing, and studying. Off-campus access to Library resources are available, and 40% of students reported utilizing these

resources, with academic journal article searches being the primary reason for off-Campus usage.

Academic Support Services

In 2014, a survey of DCB students revealed a high percentage of students met TRiO Program eligibility requirements set forth by the U.S. Department of Education. Specifically, 43% were low income, 59.5% were first generation, 26.6% were both low income and first generation, 3.0% had a documented disability, and 45% were disabled and low income. The 2014 TRiO SSS grant proposal was accepted, and the TRiO Program at DCB began in 2015. Through this grant, four staff members currently fulfill grant objectives for 144 eligible students each year.

Although grant funded, the TRiO Program is under the supervision of the Director of Academic Support Services, who also oversees the Academic Skills Coordinator. The TRiO Program offers students a variety of services, including tutoring, academic advising, and career counseling. From 2015-2019, 228 students received academic advising and 203 received assistance with course selection through the TRiO Program. Tutoring is available to TRiO students through the TRiO Program, and to non-TRiO students through the Academic Skills Coordinator at DCB. During the 2018-2019 academic year, TRiO paid for a total of 78 hours of tutoring services for TRiO students, and non-TRiO students received just shy of 110 hours of student-led tutoring services through the Academic Skills Coordinator. Tutoring is also available to all DCB students through NetTutor. NetTutor is a 24-hour online tutoring platform available at no cost to DCB students 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. Through the Shared Mental Health Services with Williston State College and Lake Region State College, DCB students have access to two additional counselors and one to two interns (depending on the year) completing graduate work through the University of North Dakota. During the 2018-2019 academic year, the DCB counselor met with 43 students for a total of 293 sessions.

Note Regarding Student Support Services

Several of these student support services were assessed during a December 2018 survey of DCB students. Sixty-two students, roughly seven percent of the total student population, from the main Bottineau Campus, online, Minot State, Valley City State, and other (dual credit schools), reported on satisfaction with various services offered at DCB. Survey results revealed:

> 95% of students who use the DCB Library rated their satisfaction levels as excellent or good (the top two categories)
> 78% of students who worked with the Financial Aid Department rated their satisfaction levels as excellent or good

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 as a stand-alone course for students least prepared for college-level English courses. Composition Lab is a one-credit co-requisite course for students enrolled in College Composition I (ENGL 110) whose test scores deem 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.

Currently, 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), replaced a previously employed developmental math sequence that included ASC 92 Beginning Algebra (3 credits) and MATH 102 Intermediate Algebra (4 credits). This two course sequence is still offered at the Minot State campus. During Fall 2018, mathematics faculty assessed the success of the new Algebra Prep sequence and found that the current and previous developmental sequences had similar success rates. Because of this finding, the Mathematics Department proposed a new co-requisite model for developmental mathematics (similar to the English model). This new model minimizes the number of remedial courses students need to take prior to college-level courses and increases class time covering required material by moving into a 16-week course format. Original plans were to implement the new model in Fall 2020. However, due to the discontinuation of the DCB Football Program (see 4.C), the Mathematics Department will maintain the current model during the 2020-2021 academic year and assess the effectiveness of the three-course sequence on this new, non-football student-athlete population. If assessment data reveals the sequence is not better than the previous model, the co-requisite model will go into effect Fall 2021.

In addition to preparatory instruction, DCB also offers learning support to its students. The Student Success Center offers support through the Academic Skills Coordinator and the TRiO Program. As noted in 3.D.1, services include tutoring, advising, and course selection. 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. The 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 the First Year Experience Advisor Fair.

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 new advising model provides DCB students greater access to advisors since the five academic advisors are not full-time 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.

Moreover, two application suites allow for more in-depth advising and communication. First, students and advisors can access *What If* reports in Campus Connection to address progress towards degree completion, which facilitates planning and scheduling. Secondly, Starfish reports, alerts, and kudos, allow for transparency between instructors, advisors, and the student regarding student success, attendance, and concerns.

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 Arntzen, the three main academic buildings on Campus, combine for 104,870 square feet of classroom, office, and laboratory space. The 2016 Master Plan continues to guide the maintenance and improvements on Campus, and several of the legislative requests identified in the Master Plan have already been addressed. Some of the key infrastructure improvements recently completed include:

> Renovated showers and new hallway carpet in Gross Hall,
> New water heater, shower wall paneling, hallway carpet, and heat exchange in Mead Hall,
> New shower tile and carpet in the hallways and common area in Milligan Hall, and
> Renovated restrooms, mechanical room, student lounge, and new entry doors in Nelson Science Center.

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. During Fall 2019, Heart of America Medical Center in Rugby, ND, became the fourth location for DCB to offer programming towards a certificate in Practical Nursing.

Two additional areas which highlight DCB's infrastructure and resources are the Photography Lab and Entrepreneurial Center for Horticulture (ECH). The Photography Program began during 2013, maintaining a large classroom in Nelson Science Center as the Photography Lab. This lab contains 11 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. As indicated in the 2016 Master Plan, new additions to the ECH include a vegetable wash/pack facility and seven high tunnels where students and instructors have the opportunity to plant, grow, and harvest an assortment of vegetables and sell these through the on-Campus Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Program.

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

Response to 3.D.5

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 laboratory application of research practices. The DCB Library also provides direction and aid for students in effective use of information. Library staff provide informational sessions during First Year Experience, which includes discussion of the 11,000+ electronic resources for research, including a variety of databases.

Expectations regarding academic honesty/dishonesty are outlined in the Student Handbook and on course syllabi. Furthermore, any research approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) is overseen by a faculty-principal investigator certified in research with human participants. The IRB members are also certified in research with human participants to protect against unethical research.

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3.E - Core Component 3.E

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

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

Argument

General Note Regarding Co-Curriculars

As noted in the Assessment Handbook, DCB utilizes the HLC definition of co-curricular as *learning activities, programs and experiences that reinforce the institution's mission and values and complement the formal curriculum.*

Response to 3.E.1-2

Co-curricular programming, as well as community education through the Community Education Program, not only enhances the educational experience of DCB students, but also supports the *Nature, Technology, and Beyond* focus emphasized in the Campus Mission. The Campus Mission specifically states that DCB *emphasizes nature and technology to accomplish its mission through an array of curricula, programs, and services,* and goes on to note:

> *Community education provides diverse life-long learning experiences,*
> *Campus activities provide for interpersonal development,*
> *Campus outreach provides area schools and groups access to college resources, and*
> *All programs provide a greater understanding of human diversity.*

Nature

The Wildlife Club and Horticulture Club promote a nature focus to DCB and the Bottineau community. During Spring 2019, seven DCB students attended the North Dakota Chapter of the Wildlife Society meeting in Mandan, ND. The DCB Wildlife Club sponsored chili/wild game feeds to help offset the cost of this professional development opportunity. The Horticulture Club participated in field trips to local nurseries and greenhouses, and attended conventions such as the North Dakota Nursery and Greenhouse Convention, the North Dakota State University High Tunnel Conference, and the Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service (MOSES) Organic Farming Conference.

Every spring, DCB participates in an Earth Day Celebration. Events include the presentation of the annual DCB Conservation Award, a tree planting ceremony, and a regional Water Festival. The Conservation Award is presented to an individual who demonstrates leadership and makes contributions to conservation, preservation, and enhancement of natural resources. Recipients include past DCB Fisheries and Wildlife instructors, employees of the North Dakota Forest Service,

and local biologists. One of the highlights of the Earth Day Celebration is the Water Festival. DCB faculty and students provide a host of hands-on water-related activities to over 500 area 5th and 6th grade students during the Water Festival.

Community education activities at DCB also contribute to this nature focus. Classes on succulent arrangement and wreath making are some of the most popular offered through the Community Education Program. DCB horticulture students lead the succulent classes, educating Campus and community members on succulent care, design, and transplanting techniques.

Technology

Technology is woven throughout co-curricular and community education programming. Photography faculty and students utilize a number of different technologies in the Photography Club and the Ireland Study Abroad trip. These technologies include a wide variety of digital cameras, including cell phones, point and shoot cameras, and a full range of DSLR cameras from consumer to professional models. Along with the cameras, students use both consumer and professional lenses, including wide angle, telephoto, prime, and macro lenses. Students also do extensive post-production work with a variety of software available with Adobe Suite, including Bridge, Lightroom, and Photoshop. The Photography Department led 22 students on two study abroad trips in Ireland, exploring locations such as Donegal, Eagle's Rock, Sliabh Liag Cliffs, Glencar Waterfall, and Glenveagh Castle. This study abroad opportunity encompasses a six-week online course and a one-week on location, hands-on learning experience in Ireland. DCB students donated photographs taken during these trips to the Wishing Chair Foundation in Ireland, an organization which sells donated images as posters and postcards to fund study abroad programs for underprivileged students. It is the connection to technology, as well as education and guidance from instructors, that allows co-curricular participants to capture the beauty of Ireland.

Participants of the Honors Program engage with an array of technologies, ranging from handheld body fat analyzers, to pH testing strips, and PowerPoint and other presentation software.

DCB, as well as the other colleges and universities within the NDUS, fosters a partnership with Ed2Go as part of community education. Ed2Go offers online, non-credit training for DCB students and community members. During the 2018-2019 academic year, six individuals completed an Ed2Go course, with four enrolling in *Introduction to Quickbooks* and two enrolling in *Become a Veterinary Assistant*. This use of technology allows DCB to provide educational opportunities to students and community members that might not otherwise be available.

Beyond

The *Beyond* of the Campus Focus refers to preparing students not only for the present but also to go beyond and improve the future. DCB athletic teams, the Student Nurse Organization (SNO), LeaderJacks, Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society, and Student Senate all go beyond to improve the future for the community and future students at DCB. SNO is one of the most active co-curricular groups at DCB, hosting blood drives, volunteering at various Campus and community events, and educating the Campus and community on health-related issues. LeaderJacks volunteer at events such as the Water Festival, Rotary Roses, and Special Olympics, positively impacting the larger community. The DCB Student Senate acts as a liaison between the student body and the College administration. In this capacity, the Student Senate makes changes to improve student life for future DCB students. Noteworthy changes implemented by the Senate include extending Dining Center hours to accommodate student class schedules and allowing second-year students to move off

Campus, as well as representing the DCB student body when the governor visited the Bottineau Campus during Fall 2018.

Many of the community education offerings promote a beyond focus. For example, the Lego Labs offered to area elementary and middle school children help to foster a curiosity for engineering, while also allowing DCB student volunteers to go beyond by aiding future generations of learners. Group fitness classes encourage participants to think beyond the present, establishing healthy routines and lifestyles.

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3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Summary

DCB provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered. By using both DCB and State Board of Higher Education policies and procedures, the College monitors the rigor, currency, and overall quality of its educational offerings. Although this monitoring occurs best at the home Campus, as well as through the Dakota Nursing Program, the Director of Distance Education helps to ensure that this monitoring also occurs for online and dual credit courses and programs.

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. Through the Fall 2019 addition of Department Chairs, the evaluation process is now more manageable, and adherence to policy will be monitored.

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, as well as advising that includes appropriate course placement, goal setting, and career exploration. Additionally, up-to-date infrastructure, technology, and resources further support this learning.

The College fulfills its Mission-driven claims for an enriched educational environment (namely through community education, Campus activities and outreach, and an understanding of diversity), doing much of this through co-curricular programming. Co-curricular and community education programming help to foster DCB's *Nature, Technology, and Beyond* focus.

Sources

There are no sources.

4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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

4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

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

Argument

Response to 4.A.1

DCB's Instructional Program Review Policy directs program review to occur once every five academic years in both career and technical education (CTE) and transfer programs.

CTE Program Review

DCB uses CTE Program Evaluation Reports from the North Dakota Department of CTE as the program review for each CTE program at the College. In October 2016, the CTE Program Evaluation Report revealed that DCB CTE programs met or exceeded expectations on 78.8% of the identified twelve 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. The previous report, submitted in February 2012, found that DCB CTE programs met or exceeded expectations on 78.3% of the identified standards. Overall, these reports help to ensure quality and currency of programming.

Transfer Program Review

Although policy calls for program review to occur every five academic years for non-CTE, or transfer programs, this has only recently gone into practice. During the 2017-2018 academic year, a comprehensive look at the Faculty Handbook (now combined with the Staff Handbook and named the Employee Handbook) revealed transfer programs were not following North Dakota University System (NDUS) State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) policy. This shortcoming was brought to the attention of administrators, and a plan was put in place for transfer program review to occur during the following academic year.

Program review for the AA, AS, and certificate in College Studies programs occurred for the first time during the 2018-2019 academic year, with a final program review report submitted to the Campus Dean during Fall 2019. The six main academic departments (Arts/Humanities/Communication, Information Technology, Mathematics, Physical Education, Science, and Social Science) each submitted department reviews which included department missions and objectives, budget data, course information, faculty information, and a five-year assessment plan (identifying plans for course-level assessment for four consecutive years, and a fifth year for program review). These department reviews were summarized and compiled into a comprehensive program review called the Transfer Program Review (TPR). In addition to these summaries, the TPR includes strengths and opportunities for improvement within DCB's transfer programs. Conclusions of the TPR include:

> Assessment of Student Learning: Assessment occurs in all departments, but adjunct faculty (including dual credit, online, and distance-site) do not regularly participate in assessment in all departments. To facilitate effective assessment, the Arts/Humanities/Communication Department is now divided into two separate departments for assessment. General Education Competency 7 guides the Arts/Humanities Department assessment, and General Education Competency 4 guides the Communications Department.
> Student Enrollment Data: Trends regarding student enrollment and success emerged across most departments. Developmental courses consistently had high failure and withdrawal rates. Both the Mathematics and English Departments are exploring co-requisite course models for developmental mathematics and writing courses to remedy this issue. Each department identified high and low enrollment classes, and Department Chairs will help explore options to address low enrollment courses.
> Faculty Data: The TPR notes that DCB faculty meet qualification guidelines or are on a plan to do so. Future program reviews should speak more specifically to these qualifications, as well as teaching load, professional development, and contributions to the College and community.
> Facilities and Technology: Faculty reported general satisfaction with on Campus technology and facilities, noting the effectiveness of the Interactive Video Networking (IVN) classrooms at the College. Dissatisfaction was expressed regarding facilities and technology at some distance sites and this was noted as an area for improvement.
> Budget Data: 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.

The Campus Dean responded to this request by allocating $20,000 annually to a special faculty professional development fund.

Program Viability: The number of students graduating with a certificate in Colleges Studies have risen whereas students graduating with an AA, AS, AAS, certificate or diploma have remained relatively stable.

The next program review will occur during 2021-2022 for CTE programs and during 2023-2024 for transfer programs. Department Chairs were identified in the TPR as resources to help facilitate improvements identified within the program review, and this is a logical next step. The two Department Chairs for transfer programs will help each department develop action plans, timelines, and leaders to address opportunities for improvement cited in the six department reviews. The three CTE Department Chairs will ensure that suggestions offered in the CTE Program Evaluation Reports are addressed prior to the next evaluation.

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 board, faculty, graduates, and employers, which are submitted to CoAEMSP to ensure the DCB Paramedic Technology Program meets standards set forth by CoAEMSP and CAAHEP. For the past two years, the DCB Paramedic Technology Program has submitted their Annual Report as part of a pilot program initiated through CoAEMSP. The pilot involves focusing on a specific cohort (the 2017 cohort) and presenting information regarding this cohort in a new (piloted) format. As shown in the 2017 Annual Report submitted Spring 2019, DCB students in the Paramedic Technology Program had a 100% pass rate on the National Registry written exam and 100% job placement. However, the Program did have a 50% attrition/retention rate. Both the admissions and orientation process underwent modifications to remedy this issue.

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 State Board of Higher Education 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. The most influential and commonly used of these policies is 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. Currently, for DCB students in Bottineau, Valley City, and online, the developmental mathematics sequence consists of three two-credit courses (Algebra Prep I, II, and III). DCB currently offers a two-course developmental mathematics sequence in Minot but plans to standardize the instruction of all developmental mathematics courses regardless of location.

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 co-requisite course taken alongside ENGL 110.

Prerequisites and co-requisites are denoted on course schedules and in the Academic Catalog, and apply to many upper-level courses. As is evident by the course schedules, prerequisites and co-requisites 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 co-requisites using professional discretion and input from faculty within the course discipline. Course proposals and changes are submitted to the Associate Dean for Academic and Student 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 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. As newly developed and approved policies, clear steps are in place to ensure adherence (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, updating when necessary, during discipline group work sessions during the annual fall in-service. 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 at the completion of each academic year.

Access to Learning Resources

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

DCB employs a Library Director and Associate Librarian to aid students, staff, and faculty in the utilization of learning resources. The DCB Library contains over 30,000 in-house resources and access to over 2 million books, magazines, videos and manuscripts through interlibrary loan. Research databases are available through the Library page on the DCB website, and access to these databases is available on and off Campus.

The Student Success Center provides access to tutoring, academic advising, career counseling, and transfer counseling services. This office is the hub for TRiO activity and contains the offices for three TRiO staff, as well as the Academic Skills Coordinator. These four individuals provide access to learning resources for TRiO and non-TRiO students.

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. Lecture capture is automatically completed 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 Administrative Assistant to the Director of Distance Education serving as facilitators for training and troubleshooting. As noted in the Distance Education Handbook, online students have access to the same learning resources as on Campus students.

Nursing laboratories at the Bottineau, Minot, Valley City, and Rugby sites 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 tables, 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 Aquaponics, Hydroponics, 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 Qualifications 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. In order to ensure all DCB faculty meet these standards, a spreadsheet maintained by the Administrative Assistant to the Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs, as well as the Director of Distance Education, contains a list of all faculty, including full-time, part-time, online, and dual credit and identifies all disciplines in which the faculty members are qualified to teach. This 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, additional communication occurs prior to each term to help ensure these students understand DCB process and procedure.

Dual credit faculty are held to the same qualification standards as other DCB faculty. Of the 57 dual credit courses taught during Fall 2018, 22 were taught by full-time DCB Campus faculty teaching face-to-face or over the Interactive Video Network (IVN). Department Chairs are responsible for reviewing the expectations for student learning of each course, (including dual credit) through the completion of the DCB Syllabus Checklist. The Faculty Qualifications Committee confirms the qualifications of the faculty teaching all courses including dual credit (see 3.C.2).

Additionally, the Director of Distance Education, along with a team of administrators, faculty, and staff, is taking steps towards accrediting DCB's dual credit program through the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP). The NACEP accreditation standards align closely with the HLC's standards. The DCB Director of Distance Education is currently a member of NACEP and attended the NACEP National Conference with a member of the Mathematics Department in October 2019. A committee of administrators, faculty, and staff are currently working to ensure that DCB's dual credit program meets the NACEP standards. Once this process is complete, DCB will apply for external accreditation through NACEP and complete a self-study when the application is accepted.

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 DCB Nursing Department is currently seeking specialized accreditation through the Commission for Nursing Education Accreditation (CNEA), which is the accrediting body through the National League of Nursing (NLN). The DCB Nursing Department received pre-candidacy approval for

the Associate Degree in Nursing and the certificate in Practical Nursing in October 2019 and is currently working on the self-study, which is due for submission in May 2020, followed by a site visit during October 2020. 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.

Response to 4.A.6

DCB evaluates the success of its graduates well in some programs and not as well in others. IPEDS reports show a total of 352 students in the 2010-2011 cohort, of whom 110 received an award (certificate or degree) from DCB, and 58 enrolled in another institution after leaving DCB. For the 2008-2009 cohort, a total of 232 students comprised the cohort, with 95 receiving an award from DCB and 29 transferring to a different institution. It should be noted that subsequent enrollment status is unknown for 176 students from the 2010-2011 cohort and 108 students from the 2008-2009 cohort. The NDUS tracks transfers for all colleges within the University System. From Fall 2016 through Fall 2019, 158 DCB students transferred to another college within the NDUS, with nearly 42% transferring to Minot State University.

Graduates of the certificate in Practical Nursing (PN) and Associate Degree in Nursing Programs display high levels of success on the NCLEX exam. From 2012 until 2017, 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 2015 when the DCB pass rate was 80% and the national average was 82.53%. Between 2012 and 2017, DCB PN graduates had a 100% pass rate in four out of those five years. Employment of nursing graduates is informally tracked by faculty and staff within the Nursing Program. Between 37.50% (PN) and 85.71% (ADN) of 2018-2019 graduates in the PN and ADN Programs were known to be employed or continuing their education in nursing as of February 2020.

Currently, DCB does not engage in formal surveys of its graduates. However, informal reports from CTE program faculty reveal that 56.10% of 2017-2019 graduates are employed in positions directly related to their DCB degree, and over eight percent transferred to another institution after graduating with a CTE credential. Of the 82 non-nursing CTE graduates during 2017, 2018, and 2019, DCB faculty could account for the post-graduate status of 61 (nearly 75%).

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4.B - Core Component 4.B

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

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

Argument

Response to 4.B.1

Clearly Stated Goals 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 Assessment Handbook and Academic Catalog, 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 both the Assessment Handbook and 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.
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:

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.

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

Assessment is part of the culture at DCB, with the Outcomes Assessment Task Force (OATF; now renamed the Academic Assessment Committee) leading Campus-wide assessment. Faculty and instructional staff plan annual assessment activities during in-service each year, submitting Discipline Planning Forms at the beginning of each fall semester. These planning forms clearly identify the learning outcome assessed, as well as how and when the assessment will occur. The beginning of each fall semester is a time for all academic discipline groups to meet and analyze assessment data from the previous year. Adjuncts and full-time faculty collate data, interpret results, and evaluate future directions. This process is documented on the Discipline Reporting Forms and is expanded upon during assessment meetings with the OATF. The OATF summarizes all reports and provides this information to the Campus Dean. This process is relatively effective for academic departments with the following percentage of departments reporting in the identified years: 76.5% in 2014-2015 and 2015-2016, 58.8% in 2016-2017, and 64.7% in 2017-2018 and 2018-2019. Additionally, anywhere from 10-20 service areas report to the OATF each year (percentage is harder to determine accurately due to reorganization of departments).

Although this process is effective at the course-level, the connection to program-level student learning assessment needs improvement. With the 2019 retirement of the long-serving OATF Chair, DCB administrators encouraged emerging assessment leaders to receive training in best practices by attending the HLC Emerging Leaders and Assessing General Education workshops Spring 2019. This commitment to effective and improved assessment process is also supported by the hiring of a part-time Director of Assessment, as well as the development of an Assessment Handbook which articulates and guides academic and co-curricular assessment at DCB. This new Director of Assessment initiated program-level assessment (highlighted in 4.B.3) through the mapping of all program curricula.

Response to 4.B.2

<div align="center">Curricular Programs</div>

DCB regularly assesses the course-level achievement of curricular program learning outcomes. This assessment can be broken down into two main areas: general education and CTE.

General Education Assessment

The Competencies outlined in 4.B.1 are the newest versions of the student learning competencies for

DCB students. Prior to Fall 2019, assessment of general education courses (and the AA, AS, and certificate in College Studies programs) was driven by general education goals that varied slightly from the ones in 4.B.1. The learning outcomes serve as the assessment objectives within courses at DCB, as well as department-level learning outcomes for many departments.

Course-level assessment data reveals that DCB students identify the interrelationships between humans and their environment, demonstrate technological literacy, solve mathematical problems, communicate effectively, employ the principles of wellness, demonstrate knowledge of social structures, and evaluate principles of Arts and Humanities. Annual reports compiled by the OATF show that faculty regularly assess the achievement of general education competencies/goals. Although most areas regularly report on assessment activities, some goals are only modestly assessed and some courses have not been assessed at all. For example, assessment on the ability of students to employ the principles of wellness is relatively weak, and has not included assessment of activity-based courses. Curriculum mapping and better assessment planning (see 4.B.4) will help to ensure that assessment occurs more evenly.

CTE Assessment

CTE faculty regularly assess the technical skills of students (Competency 1) and the integration of general education within technical courses (Competency 2) but have done this assessment without program-level competencies**.** The CTE Competencies are new to DCB assessment. Prior to Fall 2019, CTE faculty assessed student learning based on department learning outcomes. Although this process was effective in many ways, it did not unite students completing either an AAS or a certificate with a common learning goal. During Fall 2019 in-service, CTE faculty brainstormed program-level competencies that encompass all CTE degree programs, devising the current Competencies which were approved by the Faculty Senate during September 2019.

Co-curricular Programs

Although assessment in both academic and service areas at DCB is part of the Campus culture, co-curricular assessment is admittedly not. The HLC definition of co-curricular (*learning activities, programs and experiences that reinforce the institution's mission and values and complement the formal curriculum)* serves as the DCB definition of co-curricular. During the 2018-2019 academic year, the Faculty Senate appointed four faculty members to an ad hoc co-curricular committee charged with, 1) identifying a comprehensive list of all DCB co-curricular programs, 2) developing Co-Curricular Experience Competencies (CECs) for these programs, and 3) establishing a schedule for assessing these programs. Additionally, during Fall 2019 in-service, co-curricular faculty/staff leaders revised missions and objectives, as well as mapped co-curricular activities to the CECs to ensure that all Competencies were appropriately addressed by co-curricular activities at DCB. This mapping activity revealed a fairly even distribution of activities under each CEC.

Moving forward, one member of the Academic Assessment Committee will monitor assessment of co-curricular programs, making sure that these programs complete newly designed planning and reporting forms according to the identified assessment schedule.

Response to 4.B.3

DCB strives to improve student learning by using information gained from assessment. Some examples submitted to the OATF between 2014 and 2018 include:

During 2015, science faculty assessed DCB student ability to interpret experimental data to draw logical conclusions. Assessment data revealed students were not improving in graphing and graphing interpretation at the level identified by faculty. During Spring 2016, faculty dedicated more class time to this skill, and student learning improved beyond the threshold set by faculty.

Social science faculty found, through assessment, that many students did not demonstrate basic levels of core objectives set forth by the Social Science Department, as well as the Campus general education goals. Changes to pedagogy resulted in statistically significant improvements in learning as it relates to the collision of social structures, knowledge of governmental systems, and the varieties of social groupings. These pedagogical changes remain in place.

Student learning within developmental mathematics courses is directly tied to accurate placement within the developmental course sequence. Thus, assessment of developmental mathematics course placement is a common practice for mathematics faculty. The sequence of developmental mathematics courses was modified during Fall 2013 to include a series of three 8-week developmental mathematics courses for the most under-prepared students, and assessment data revealed that the placement scores used for the new sequence of developmental mathematics courses was appropriate. In 2018 mathematics faculty assessed the success of this new developmental mathematics sequence finding similar success rates to the previous model. This assessment-driven finding motivated faculty to propose a new co-requisite developmental sequence that will increase class time, and facilitate greater student learning.

During 2014, English faculty noted that students struggled to effectively paraphrase information. Due to this assessment-based finding, additional assignments and class activities were added to the curriculum to allow students the opportunity to practice paraphrasing. A 2016 follow-up assessment of student paraphrasing revealed improvements due to these additional practice opportunities. Specifically, in 2014, 43.47%, 72%, and 55% of students met or exceeded a rubric score of three or higher on the three major course papers. During 2016, 58%, 85%, and 83% of students met or exceeded a rubric score of three or higher on the three major course papers (representing a 14.53%, 13%, and 28% rise in rubric score).

Nursing faculty continually assess DCB student learning through the administration of the Assessment Technologies Institute (ATI) Comprehensive Predictor. The Comprehensive Predictor contains questions rooted within the Dakota Nursing Program (DNP) curriculum and program. Success on the Comprehensive Predictor (for both PN and ADN students) predicts success on the NCLEX exam. Students who do not pass the Comprehensive Predictor the first time are required to meet with the DNP Site Coordinator or nursing instructor to develop a plan for remediation using ATI resources.

The examples highlighted to this point in 4.B.3 reflect information gleaned in DCB's previous assessment model. As mentioned in 4.B.1, the retirement of the long-serving OATF Chair meant a change in leadership and an updated approach to assessment for student learning. The previous assessment model provided numerous examples of course-level assessment, but no connections to program-level assessment. During Fall 2019 Assessment Day, faculty began making connections between course-level assessment and program-level assessment by mapping curriculum across the respective student learning competencies. Curriculum maps for AA and AS sub-plans, AAS degrees, and certificates allowed faculty to visualize the specific competency and learning outcomes in each required course and to identify any gaps. Additionally, the general education curriculum was mapped to ensure that the curriculum properly addressed all General Education Competencies. Through the curriculum mapping process, four assessment-related issues emerged:

1. Career Studies courses (CARS 102 Career Exploration and/or CARS 105 Job Search) are part of the curriculum in eight AAS programs, and Leadership Through Service (UNIV 101, 102, 201, 202) is part of 13 AAS programs and three certificate programs. Although these courses were reported by many faculty to be essential to the learning outcomes of the curriculum, these courses did not necessarily have course-level learning outcomes that fit all the curricula in which they are required. Program leaders, as well as the instructors of these courses, will meet during Fall 2020 to address this issue.

2. There was an overarching issue with BOTE 108 Business Mathematics, namely that the BOTE (Business, Office and Technology Education) prefix does not align with the learning outcomes of the course and a MATH prefix is more appropriate. This course is a requirement in 11 AAS programs and four certificate programs. Additionally, switching to a MATH prefix would also be appropriate because this course is approved as an AAS-only mathematics general education course (it is not a North Dakota University System (NDUS) General Education Requirement Transfer Agreement (GERTA) approved course to fulfill mathematics requirements within the AA and AS programs).

3. Several curricula required courses that did not fit within the learning outcomes of the program, and/or had learning outcomes which were infrequently addressed within the curricula. The curriculum map for the general education program revealed that none of the arts and/or humanities courses addressed Learning Outcome 5. Further assessment is needed to determine if these courses and/or learning outcomes are truly necessary and valuable for the program or if modification of department-level learning outcomes is needed to account for these courses.

4. Finally, the certificate and AAS in Agriculture Management and Technology are offered through the North Dakota Agriculture Consortium. As such, there are classes offered by campuses other than DCB, and collaborative instructors at these campuses have no assessment obligation to DCB or to the Consortium. The Academic Assessment Committee will address this concern with DCB's agriculture instructor, and encourage the Consortium to develop a mission, learning outcomes, and a unified assessment process within the Consortium. Until this process is in place, agriculture classes offered by DCB will be assessed using DCB Horticulture Department mission and learning outcomes.

As part of a more informal assessment process, faculty self-reported assessment-driven course changes since Fall 2018. A brief questionnaire was administered to 129 faculty through the DCB faculty Listserv. Thirty-four faculty responded to the request, and analysis of responses revealed (in at least one of their courses) 85% of faculty altered an assignment, 88% altered a teaching technique, and 76% altered a student learning assessment method (such as an exam) within the last two years. All of these changes were driven by faculty desire to improve student learning.

Response to 4.B.4

DCB's process and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice as it relates to course-level assessment, and this assessment includes the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members, particularly among full-time faculty and staff. DCB has taken several steps to increase the involvement of all faculty in the assessment process. These steps include communication initiated by the Director of Distance Education, identifying assessment activities as part of contractual responsibilities for both dual credit and online faculty, hiring Department Chairs to coordinate assessment activities, and providing training on assessment during faculty in-service adjunct day.

The newly re-envisioned Academic Assessment Committee, under the leadership of a seasoned

OATF member, is prioritizing not only the importance of course-level assessment, but also program-level assessment. The Director of Assessment began the academic year calling for thoughtful, holistic assessment planning. During Fall 2019 faculty in-service, the Director of Assessment charged faculty with three main tasks:

1. Reviewing and revising department missions and learning outcomes, and mapping each course in the department to at least one learning outcome. These Department Assessment Plans now serve as master plans for assessment for each department.
2. Completing Learning Outcome Assessment Timelines, which includes information about when and how data is to be collected.
3. Working with the Academic Assessment Committee to complete thoughtful, student learning-centered Academic Assessment Planning Forms. These assessment forms were updated from previous forms to clearly address the connections between competencies, department learning outcomes, and course-level learning outcomes.

Curriculum maps completed during Fall 2019 Assessment Day also help to ensure that course-level assessment connects to program-level assessment. By moving away from a yearly "plan-assess-report-repeat" model, the Academic Assessment Committee aims to improve assessment process and methodologies by:

1. Increasing sample size. With a student to teacher ratio of 17-to-1, many faculty reported "meaningful" results with very small sample sizes. By taking multiple semesters to collect information, faculty will gather more representative data, and be able to draw more meaningful conclusions.
2. Putting more emphasis on planning. Prior to Fall 2019, faculty assessment-related interaction with the OATF members occurred primarily at assessment reporting meetings when poor methodology and assessment practice was already complete. Under the guidance of the new Academic Assessment Committee and Director of Assessment, assessment planning occurs with the help of the Director and Committee. This helps to ensure that outcomes are measurable, assessment methods are appropriate, and timelines are maintained.
3. Focusing on assessment *for* student learning, rather than assessment *of* student learning. Since the last HLC re-accreditation visit, DCB has done a commendable job of collecting data regarding student learning. However, the true purpose of academic assessment (i.e., assessment for student learning) is, anecdotally, not understood. The first steps of this process are well underway with new Department Assessment Plans, Learning Outcomes Assessment Timelines, and Academic Assessment Planning Forms (evidenced above). The Academic Assessment Committee plans to focus efforts on expanding Committee member productivity and increasing the scope of assessment operations. With a Committee-based understanding of assessment for student learning, these Committee members will serve as assessment leaders on Campus.

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4.C - Core Component 4.C

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

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

Argument

History of DCB Retention Efforts

During Spring 2012, the DCB Campus Dean established a Retention Coordinator position responsible for overseeing implementation of the Early Warning System, which required instructors to track attendance during the first three weeks of each semester. Students missing two or more classes in the first three weeks were reported to the Retention Coordinator and the Campus Dean. The Retention Coordinator engaged in targeted advising strategies, making connections, and addressing obstacles to student success. The Campus Dean sent all students identified through Early Warning a letter discussing the correlation between class attendance and academic success.

During Fall 2013, more Campus resources were invested in retention efforts. Retention staff, including a Director of Retention, Retention Coordinators, and an administrative assistant, implemented the First Year Sequence (FYS) Policy, which identified the most academically at-risk students and placed these students with a retention staff member as an advisor. Additionally, faculty self-coded general education courses to reflect potential for academic success. This coding was distributed to all faculty for advising purposes and was later revised for students who met FYS criteria.

Despite these efforts and increased resources, retention, persistence, and completion numbers remained below Campus standards. Retention staff, as well as faculty, administrators, and other non-retention staff noticed that many FYS students were low-income, first generation, and/or identified as having a documented disability. DCB applied for a TRiO-Student Support Services grant during Fall 2014, and received five years of funding beginning Fall 2015. Additionally, DCB administrators, staff, and faculty sought further assistance with retention-related challenges and joined the four-year HLC Persistence and Completion Academy during Summer 2016.

Response to 4.C.1-4

The Campus Dean, TRiO Program, and the Retention Committee represent the three retention groups at DCB. Each of these entities addresses a different aspect of retention, persistence, and/or completion. The goals of each group reflect this practice.

Campus Dean

The Campus Dean closely monitors retention, persistence, and completion data for the College and commonly reports to the Outcomes Assessment Task Force (OATF) on these items. During 2013, the Campus Dean aimed to increase both football student-athlete retention and overall first-time, full-time student retention rates by three percent. This was done at the Bottineau Campus location and was facilitated through the hiring of two retention staff. Fall to fall retention rates decreased by 5% for first-time, full-time students, and 17% for freshman football student-athletes. Rather than eliminate these retention positions, the Campus Dean facilitated the start of the First Year Sequence (FYS) Program. Reports to the OATF in 2014 show that the FYS Program was successful, increasing fall-to-spring retention by nearly 7% from the previous year. Although fall-to-spring retention rates did improve, fall-to-fall Campus retention continued to decrease compared to the previous year, and all-delivery methods (on-campus, online, distance site) retention rates were even lower. This collection and analysis of retention data led the Campus community to focus on retention-specific strategic planning.

The original 2015-2020 Strategic Plan outlines the retention efforts championed by the Campus Dean's office. Specifically, the Strategic Plan identifies five objectives designed to support Strategic Goal 6: *Implement new approaches and fine tune current techniques to improve fall-to-spring and fall-to-fall retention as well as graduation rates.* These objectives include measurable outcomes and center on:

1. Submitting a proposal for a TRiO-Student Support Services grant,
2. Implementing a new advising model,
3. Developing a handbook of policies, procedures, and expectations for retention-related staff and efforts (e.g., First Year Experience (UNIV 105) and FYS),
4. Implementing a reverse transfer initiative, and
5. Establishing the certificate in College Studies for retaining under-prepared students.

Due to state-wide budget allotments (see Criterion 5) and subsequent staffing resignations, the handbook and reverse transfer initiative were put on hold. DCB staff, faculty, and administrators have successfully addressed the other three objectives, although some are in their infancy of implementation.

As discussed above, a TRiO-Student Support Services grant proposal was written and accepted during 2014, with the TRiO Program staring on the DCB Campus in 2015. Currently, DCB serves 144 students through the TRiO Program. This represents nearly 57% of the full-time, on Campus student body. Details regarding the success of the TRiO-led retention efforts can be found in the next sub-section.

The new advising model (as referenced in 3.D.3) is a result of DCB's participation in the HLC's Persistence and Completion Academy. Through the Academy, project team leaders enlisted the help of the Minot State University Institutional Research Office, and analyzed retention rates for student-athletes and non-student-athletes. In an OATF report submitted in 2018, the Dean's Office reported the overall graduation rate between 2010-2016 was 39.78%. Non-athletes had a higher completion rate at 44.09%, whereas athletes had a completion rate of 36.28%. Interestingly, when looking at the

completion rates for student-athletes in different sports, two-sport student-athletes had the highest completion rate at 69.81%. The data revealed a need for better tracking and advising to improve these completion, general retention, and persistence rates. The new advising procedures outlined in the Advising Handbook went into effect during Fall 2018, thus the goal of a 10% increase in fall-to-fall retention by Fall 2017 due to a change in advising was not feasible. Even without the change in advising, DCB did experience a nine percent increase in first-time, full-time fall-to-fall student retention.

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. Completion of this certificate has risen in recent years, in large part due to the efforts of the TRiO staff. Although this certificate was originally designed to provide incentives for full-time students to continue progression towards associate degrees, dual credit students have taken advantage of this certificate through the LEAP Program. Of those awarded certificates in College Studies, seven of those in Spring 2018 and 17 of those in Spring 2019 were high school students.

TRiO Program

TRiO programming clearly articulates goals that relate to student retention, persistence, and completion. Specifically,

> Objective A: 40% of all TRiO participants will persist from one academic year to the beginning of the next or earn an associate's degree or certificate,
> Objective B: 90% of all TRiO participants will meet the performance level required to stay in good academic standing at DCB,
> Objective C1: 30% of new participants served each year will graduate from DCB with an associate's degree or certificate within four years, and
> Objective C2: 10% of new participants served each year will receive an associate's degree or certificate from DCB and transfer to a four-year institution within four years.

From 2017-2018, 81% of TRiO participants met Objective A, persisting to the following fall or graduating, but only 69% of TRiO participants met DCB grade point average criteria to stay in good academic standing (Objective B). The 2018-2019 Annual Performance Report submitted to the U.S. Department of Education revealed the following:

Criteria	Approved Rate	DCB Actual Attained Rate
Persistence	40%	78%
Good Academic Standing	90%	65%
Associate's Degree or Certificate	30%	45%
Associate's Degree or Certificate and Transfer to 4-Year Institution	10%	38%

Although DCB's TRiO Program has had great success facilitating persistence from one academic year to the next, as well as supporting students on their way to successful completion of their academic programs at DCB, the Program has repeatedly missed the 90% good academic standing objective (an objective set forth in the initial TRiO grant). The objectives and corresponding percentages set forth in the grant narrative were chosen because they were deemed challenging, yet

attainable, but were also set with the understanding that these numbers may need to be adjusted in future grant applications. Ninety percent of TRiO students maintaining a 2.0 GPA is very challenging, and may be unattainable at this time. The TRiO Program at DCB is currently funded through the 2019-2020 academic year, and a new TRiO-Student Support Services grant application was submitted in January 2020. This new application reflects a slightly more realistic percentage for good academic standing, setting the objective at 80%. This goal is still ambitious, yet more attainable.

Retention Committee

The Retention Committee has evolved since its beginnings at DCB. Initially, the Committee sought to bring student-life activities to Campus. The Committee played a large role in SOC 105-First Year Experience (FYE; now UNIV 105) by bringing First Week Activities to Campus for first-year students. These events included a scavenger hunt, canoeing at Lake Metigoshe, and a Campus-cookout. With a decrease in retention rates in 2013, the Committee changed focus while other groups around Campus (Student Life and Student Services) took the lead on FYE and First Week Activities. As indicated in the Employee Handbook, the primary responsibility of the Retention Committee is oversight and guidance of retention-related entities at DCB. The Committee developed specific goals centered on this charge during the January 2018 Committee meeting. The Retention Committee:

> Holds retention-related entities accountable for quarterly reporting,
> Guides and assists these entities,
> Provides advising and retention training, and
> Composes a year-end report.

Year-end reports in 2018 and 2019 summarize findings from the Dean's Office, as well as the TRiO Program, and offer cumulative, big-picture insight. As noted in the 2018-2019 Retention Report, the Retention Committee in its current role is redundant with other areas around Campus. Advising is led by Student Services and Academic Support Services, and assessment and reporting should be conducted through the Outcomes Assessment Task Force (OATF). Given the current retention, persistence, and completion rates at DCB, it is obvious that the Retention Committee is still needed, but the goals, initiatives, and activities need refining.

Three members of the Retention Committee attended a webinar on the HLC Academies in May 2019. HLC Quality Services staff leading the webinar recommended not applying for an Academy during a Comprehensive Evaluation year, but the Retention Committee intends to apply to a Student Success Academy to join the Fall 2020 cohort. If this application is accepted, the Retention Committee will serve as the Student Success Academy members, and will identify a retention-related project.

During Fall 2019, the Retention Committee met to discuss goals prior to applying to an HLC Academy. The Committee looked at IPEDS retention rates for all two-year-colleges in the North Dakota University System (NDUS). DCB's retention rate is the lowest of the five two-year-colleges in North Dakota, with an average retention rate of 45.5%, compared to 66.0% for all two-year-colleges in the NDUS. The Committee set a retention rate goal of 56.5%, representing a 2.5% increase from the latest reported year. In order to facilitate this increase in retention, the Committee identified several Campus-wide strategies, including hosting bi-monthly "Connection Events" and increased faculty and staff attendance at student events, including home athletic games. At the completion of the Fall 2019 semester, 43 faculty and staff submitted Connection Event Forms noting

connections that ranged from attendance at athletic events to hosting DCB students for Thanksgiving. Additionally, coaching staff were charged with monitoring class attendance for all football and men's basketball student-athletes during Fall 2019.

Fall 2019 Retention-Related Program Change

DCB's low rate of retention is understandably concerning, especially given the connection between retention and completion. The retention efforts that began during 2012 emerged due to a growing concern over the retention of students coming from areas outside of the Midwest, especially football student-athletes. In 2013, the Assistant Athletic Director was hired as a Retention Coordinator specifically charged with retaining football student-athletes from fall to spring. The TRiO Program was added during 2015 to further assist in improving the retention and graduation rates of football student-athletes. A Head Football Coach was hired in 2016 with a charge to increase the academic success of the team. A new advising model was implemented Fall 2018 to help improve retention by developing stronger interpersonal relationships and targeted advising, especially with student-athletes. This initiative was based on student-athlete data from 2010-2016, which was reviewed and analyzed as part of DCB's participation in the HLC Persistence and Completion Academy. This type of targeted retention continued through Fall 2019 with the previously mentioned class attendance monitoring. While this monitoring was successful for basketball student-athletes, this initiative had very limited impact for football student-athletes. Despite all these efforts, football student-athletes had the lowest GPAs and completion rates compared to other athletic teams and DCB non-athletes, and DCB retention rates were generally higher when football student-athletes were not included. Discussions regarding the future of the DCB Football Program occurred throughout Fall 2019, and the announcement to discontinue the Program was made to the Campus and community on November 18, 2019.

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TRiO Grant Award Notification
TRiO Grant Narrative 2015-2020
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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

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 is gaining momentum.

Although assessment is part of the culture at DCB, a continuous improvement mentality encourages innovation. For instance, hiring a part-time Director of Assessment demonstrates the level of commitment administrators have for continuous, assessment-driven improvement. This new Director facilitates much needed change in DCB's assessment process by establishing clear connections between student learning competencies and course-level objectives, and implementing assessment of co-curriculars.

DCB faces retention, persistence, and completion challenges but actively seeks to raise these numbers by implementing a variety of initiatives over the course of the last eight years. Many of the initiatives undertaken to improve these rates have resulted in an overall better learning environment for students, especially the addition of the TRiO Program, the implementation of the new advising model, and the emphasis placed on under-prepared students pursuing a certificate in College Studies. Although these efforts helped many students, DCB football student-athletes continued to struggle, negatively impacting the College's retention, persistence, and completion rates. DCB demonstrated its commitment to quality programs by discontinuing the Football Program Fall 2019.

Sources

There are no sources.

5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

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

5.A - Core Component 5.A

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

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

Argument

Response to 5.A.1

Fiscal Resources

DCB is financially sound. The College's overall CFI of 5.92 for fiscal year (FY) 2018 was the highest in the North Dakota University System (NDUS).

Although the College is currently in a stable financial position, it did face significant financial challenges during the years 2014-2019 due to two factors. The first of these major challenges was the drawdown of the College's cash reserves because of inadequate budget management and oversight by the College's new Chief Financial Officer from 2012 to 2014. This was due to insufficient knowledge of the NDUS accounting system, as well as inexperience in budget management in a higher education environment. DCB's appropriated cash balances at year end were reduced from $983,293 in 2012 to $89,409 in 2015. Upon hiring a new Chief Financial Officer in 2014, the College addressed the reduction in reserves by placing a freeze on equipment and travel and by reducing other non-personnel expenses. College reserves of $1,450,403 at the end of FY 2019 now exceed the 5-7% requirement established by the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) as noted on the reserves report.

The second major challenge was a reduction in state revenue due to declining oil and commodity

prices in 2015. This led to a reduction in appropriations to all state agencies, including DCB. The College was required to reduce its appropriated budget by 4.05% or $399,594 for 2015-2016 and another 2.5% or $246,663 for 2016-2017 as part of the allotment process. During the 2017 North Dakota Legislative Session, DCB's appropriation was reduced by approximately $1 million, or 11.7% from the 2015-2017 biennium. The size of these cuts did lead to personnel reductions across the College as well as across the entire NDUS. However, while some delivery modes were changed, no academic programs were eliminated. Although DCB has approximately 10 fewer FTE positions than it had in 2015, the College maintains and supports its programs and services for all delivery sites and modes by reassigning responsibilities, reducing certain services, and eliminating selected non-essential services.

The NDUS system was spared further cuts for the 2019-2021 biennium. While DCB received a reduction of $233,523 for the two years of the 2019-2021 biennium, the College had planned for this and is able to cover the reduction with the increased tuition revenue from current and previous years. The College's current budget is essentially a hold-even budget from the previous biennium and anticipates no further state reductions. Because of growing enrollment, DCB anticipates an increase in state appropriations in the 2021-2023 biennium based on formula funding adjustments.

The College's primary sources of revenue in 2018-2019 were state appropriations (38%), tuition and fees (20%), grants and contracts (20%), auxiliary enterprises (15%), and other (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 2016, FY 2017 and FY 2018. Enrollment has increased over the past five years from a 692 headcount of students in Fall 2015 to 1006 students in Fall 2019. Similarly, full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment increased from 459 to 595. 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. In accordance with a SBHE initiative, all course fees were eliminated with the start of the 2019-2020 academic year. DCB received approval to increase tuition by an additional 4.4% beginning Fall 2019 to offset the loss of course fees. The College does assess required fees of $34.05 per credit for wellness, student activities, and technology at the college and state-level. Students enrolled in online courses are assessed a distance education fee of $39.66 per credit to support the delivery and on-going development of online courses and programs.

While grants and contracts contributed close to $2 million to College revenues during FY 2019, almost all of these funds went directly to personnel, operations and equipment needed to fulfill the grant and contract requirements. A major federal grant of $1.1 million was received in 2015 to establish a TRiO Program and services on the Bottineau Campus. The College employs a full-time grant writer, who contributes to DCB's success in receiving grant funding, particularly in the areas of horticulture, specialty crops, farmers markets, and food safety.

Human Resources

DCB currently employs 31 full-time faculty members and 79 part-time or adjunct faculty. Full-time staff members number 46, with an additional 50 part-time staff. The College has an additional full-time position allocated for the DCB Nursing Department, but due to a late resignation, this position is being filled with part-time faculty during the 2019-2020 academic year. Although faculty positions were reduced by about 3.5 FTE in the years 2016-2017 (primarily in low enrollment areas or programs), the College has reallocated resources to fund four additional full-time nursing positions and one new position in agriculture. Overall full-time staff employment at the College has been

reduced by approximately 3.5 FTE since 2015. Part-time faculty numbers have increased from 69 to 79 during this same time period. DCB's organizational chart provides an overview of the College's administrative structure and key functional areas that support the College Mission.

Physical Resources

The main campus of Dakota College at Bottineau 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 16 major 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 148,418 gross square feet (GSF), nine Type II buildings that total 13,083 GSF and three Type III residence halls that comprise 66,564 GSF. When the College's storage and concessions building are included, there are a total of 21 buildings on Campus with a total of 228,066 GSF and 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 2016 Master Plan, most of the Campus buildings had a facility condition rating of good to excellent. Nelson Science Center, one of the College's primary instructional centers, received an average rating. However, with a special state appropriation of approximately $1.1 million, a major upgrade was made to the building's HVAC systems, restrooms and chemistry lab during 2016-2017. Today the facility would likely be rated as good. The College's Old Main building has been vacant for over 10 years and received a condition rating of very poor. Planning is underway for a major capital campaign to raise $3.3 million in funding to renovate Old Main into a Center for Rural Health Education. Although it will take several years to raise the funds, it is anticipated the facility condition index will be rated as excellent upon completion of the major remodeling of all systems in the building. DCB's three residence halls (Gross, Mead, and Milligan) and the Knudson Student Center were rated as average in the 2016 Master Plan. There are significant concerns related to plumbing, electrical and accessibility that need to be addressed in these buildings. To help address this issue, the College requested and received bonding authority in the 2019 legislative session to remodel the Knudson Student Center and also add a new dining center to the complex. This $2.5 million project is anticipated to be completed during the 2021-2022 academic year. Plans are underway to begin a suite by suite remodeling of Milligan Hall. It is anticipated that this project will take four years to complete. While a detailed timetable has not been established, Gross Hall is slated for a complete remodeling of its restrooms, exterior window replacement and cladding of exterior concrete surfaces. A study of the plumbing, electrical, and mechanical systems in Mead Hall is planned for 2020 to determine whether it may be more economical to demolish and build new.

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 is 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 but instead find ways to reconfigure existing facilities to meet current and future needs.

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 is provided 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 over 800 megabits, while the three Campus residence halls have 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 316 desktops and laptops, 18 servers (both physical and virtual), running Windows server software, and 14 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 administration 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.A.2

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 2018 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	36.5%	39.7% (range of 22.9 to 45.3%)
Academic Support	5.2%	5.46% (range of 1.7 to 11.5%)
Student Services	11.5%	9.54% (range of 6.0 to 13.6%)
Institutional Support	14.6%	13.52% (range of 11.6 to 14.6%)
Physical Plant	10.4%	7.48% (range of 5.1 to 10.4%)
Scholarships	3.1%	3.0% (range of 1.3 to 4.2%)
Auxiliary Services	14.5%	13.44% (range of 9.7 to 21.4%)

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 4.2% of its overall budget, compared to the average of 7.88% (range of 4.2 to 13.7%). Based on this analysis, DCB's various expenditures are reasonable and consistent with its peers in the University System. 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.

Response to 5.A.3

DCB's Mission and Goals continue to be relevant and realistic for a comprehensive community college. The College's Mission underwent a comprehensive revision in 2008 (as noted in 1.A.1). The Mission was reviewed in conjunction with the College's Strategic Plan in 2018-2019. As part of this review process, the College's Faculty, Student, and Staff Senates and the Dean's Council approved the updated Mission, Goals and Priorities, and Strategic Plan, indicating that the Mission continues to be appropriate and reasonable for DCB. The final step in this process was approval by the College's president. The College's Mission, as well as Goals and Priorities are stated below.

Institutional Mission

Dakota College provides students with a quality education in a caring environment. The institution values diversity and personal enrichment by promoting engaged learning for employment and university transfer. With the help of a supportive community, Dakota College emphasizes nature and technology to accomplish its mission through an array of curricula, programs, and services.

> *Liberal arts education provides students the knowledge and tools to continue their education, to serve as good stewards of the environment, and to function as responsible citizens.*
> *Career/technical education provides students with the knowledge and skills required to succeed by utilizing natural, human, and technological resources.*
> *Distance delivery provides students increased access to education and career opportunities.*
> *Community education provides diverse life-long learning experiences.*
> *Support services provide opportunities for individual growth and success.*
> *Campus activities provide for interpersonal development.*
> *Campus outreach provides area schools and groups access to college resources.*
> *Workforce training and development provides the human resources for economic development.*
> *All programs provide a greater understanding of human diversity.*

Dakota College's curricula, programs, and services take students beyond nature and technology and leaves them with an ethic of concern and care for the natural world.

Goals and Priorities

> *Provide quality experiences*
> *Ensure student success*
> *Use resources efficiently*

Response to 5.A.4

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 SBHE. These policies guide the hiring processes at DCB, along with additional procedural directions from the NDUS Human Resource Policy Manual. The 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 encourage continued professional development for faculty and staff, DCB established an additional pool of $30,000 be used exclusively for faculty and staff professional development. For FY 2020, $20,000 has been allocated for faculty professional development and $10,000 for staff professional development. Faculty and staff professional development committees have been established to determine guidelines for evaluating and funding professional development requests submitted to them. These funds are in addition to departmental travel budgets and the on-going employee training budget of approximately $6,000 that the College has maintained, even during the years of state budget reductions. During the past five fiscal years, an average of almost $35,000 per year has been spent on professional development and employee training. This figure is likely an under-representation of all funds spent on professional development as some professional development expenses have been coded to other cost centers or accounts.

Additionally, all benefited DCB employees (faculty and staff) 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% for courses taken at other NDUS colleges or universities.

All employees are required to attend the annual in-service sessions prior to the start of the fall semester in which numerous employee training activities are conducted. All employees are required to complete annual Title IX training. Additionally, the College began conducting online computer security training for College employees and students during the 2018-2019 academic year.

Response to 5.A.5

DCB has historically utilized an incremental budgeting process, meaning that 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 Business Manager (who serves as Chief Financial Officer at DCB). While this historical process has worked well for the College, it had the unintended consequence of allowing the Departmental Budget Managers to defer some of their budget oversight responsibilities back to the Business Office. Consequently, the current College Business Manager has, during the past two years, scheduled one-on-one and group meetings with various Departmental Budget Managers to review their budgets and to ensure that 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.

While an anomaly, the significant state budget reductions during the 2015-2017 biennium clearly impacted the College's traditional budgeting practices, as the first reduction of 4.05% occurred in February 2016, and the second round of 2.5% occurred during August 2016. With reductions

occurring outside of the normal budgeting process, numerous adjustments had to be made quickly, with the first being late in the budget year and the second occurring at the start of a new budget year. The College community was kept informed of the impacts of these budget cuts through memos and presentations at Campus Forums.

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 that was made by account code and fund. These reports provide timely information to the Departmental Budget Managers on the status of their budgets.

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5.B - Core Component 5.B

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

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

Argument

Argument

Response to 5.B.1

The North Dakota State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) is the governing board for Dakota College at Bottineau. The SBHE is responsible for the 11 public higher education colleges and universities in the state. The SBHE is comprised of seven North Dakota citizens appointed by the governor to serve four-year terms. Additionally, a student attending one of North Dakota's 11 public institutions of higher education is appointed for a one-year term by the Governor. The Council of College Faculties, a statewide organization representing North Dakota State University (NDUS) faculty, selects the non-voting faculty advisor, and the NDUS Staff Senate selects the board's non-voting staff. 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 and Campus Dean and DCB's Business Manager (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 5.B.2

The SBHE establishes policies and procedures for all 11 colleges and universities in the North Dakota University System. All NDUS institutions are required to follow a thorough set of System-wide policies (as mentioned in 5.B.1). 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 throughout the College's Employee Handbook and the College's Policies webpage. DCB has a defined policy development process. New policy proposals and policy revisions are directed to the College's Policy Coordination and Review Committee. The Committee reviews the policy submissions and determines which Senate(s) (Faculty, Student, Staff) are required to review and make recommendations on the proposals or revisions. The Committee also sets timelines for the policy reviews. Once the appropriate Senate(s) have made their recommendations, the Policy Coordination and Review Committee completes a final review, incorporates any additional revisions, and forwards the policy to the Dean's Council. The Dean's Council 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) that meet regularly to discuss items important to their members. Similarly, the College currently has 28 standing committees that address a wide range of activities related to various College functions.

Response to 5.B.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. Having one administrator for both academic and student services is another factor, although this has resulted in a position with a very heavy workload (the recent addition of Department Chairs helps address this concern). The College's committee structure also contributes to good collaboration and support for the College's academic requirements and standards.

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.

The College's Dean's Council meets weekly to address day-to-day operations and College-specific financial, personnel and policy issues. The Dean's Council is the final decision-making body at DCB and strives to incorporate input from the various College departments and committees. The minutes of the Dean's Council are posted regularly and all College staff are encouraged to view them.

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5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

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

Argument

Argument

Response to 5.C.1

DCB's Mission and Strategic Plan guide resource allocation decisions at the College. As per the College's Mission statement, *Dakota College provides students with quality education in a caring environment*. Embedded in the Mission 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.A.2, DCB's resource allocation is similar to the other two-year colleges in the North Dakota University System (NDUS). This is one indicator that resource allocations are consistent with the College's Mission and planning. DCB utilizes an incremental budgeting philosophy which reflects no major changes in departmental budgets from year to year. However, due to increased enrollment, conservative spending, and improved College reserves, the College has identified funding for improving programs and services as well as adding programs and services that are clearly Mission and Strategic Plan oriented. Examples of resource allocations that are DCB Mission and Strategic Plan focused are described below.

Despite state budget reductions, the College has added new instructional programs. Resources have been directed to the DCB Nursing Department to add four new full-time positions since 2015. Major steps have been undertaken to improve the marketing of the College's academic programs. Student support services have been increased with the addition of the College's new TRiO Program in 2015, the implementation of a new academic advising model during 2018, and additional staffing for disability support services and tutoring. Significant facility improvements were made to Nelson Science Center, and funding is secured to enhance student life with the addition of a new dining center and for renovation of the existing Student Center.

Response to 5.C.2

The College has defined processes in place for the assessment of student learning (see Core Component 4.B.1), departmental improvement, institutional planning (see Core Component 5.C.3),

and budgeting (see Core Component 5.C.3). While DCB's processes for making these linkages may not be as extensive as those at larger institutions and at times are informal, they are in place and do intersect throughout the various planning and budgeting cycles that occur annually and biannually.

Through the assessment of student learning processes and the newly implemented assessment plans and reports, academic departments can request targeted funding to address priority items identified in their annual assessment activities. Likewise, non-academic units are able to request additional funding to improve program services or procure equipment that enhances their abilities to serve the College. A strength of the College is that its small size and flat administrative structure ensure that there is a good understanding of the various College needs and priorities. With the one exception of academic programs, all departmental units at DCB report directly to a member of the Dean's Council. Academic programs now report to a Department Chair, who then reports to a member of the Dean's Council. This flat reporting structure helps ensure that the day-to-day operational, staffing, program improvement, strategic planning, and key facility needs are well understood and communicated within the College's primary administrative decision body, the Dean's Council.

The current budgeting process has been developed and refined over the past several years. The process in use for the FY21 budget reflects the coordination of assessment, planning (system, College, and departmental) and day-to-day operational needs. The process ensures that budget needs and concerns are compiled from all areas of the college.

After all budget meetings have been conducted, the Business Manager compiles a summary of requested budget changes for consideration by the Dean's Council. The Dean's Council also identifies budget needs related to College and NDUS Strategic Plan priorities, as well as priorities identified in the DCB Master Plan and IT Plan. All requests and priorities are evaluated in relation to the projected budget revenue and expenditures to determine which requests are funded.

Examples of recent links between budget and planning include:

> The College implemented and funded a new advising model in FY18 based on planning work conducted by the HLC Persistence and Completion Academy committee.
> The College requested and received legislative authority to issue $2.5 million in revenue bonds to fund a new dining center and renovation of the current student center in FY19.
> The College allocated resources to fund four new nursing positions to accommodate student enrollment growth in the Practical Nursing (PN) and Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) programs
> The College approved financial resources for new programs in Agriculture Technology and Management, Human Resource Management, Hemp Production, and Diagnostic Medical Sonography in fiscal years 2019 and 2020.
> The College has dedicated a minimum of $50,000 per year of additional funding for College marketing in FY20 when compared to the baseline year of 2015.

Response to 5.C.3

DCB is engaged in integrated planning and budgeting in a variety of ways. Foremost is the College's overall Strategic Plan. This Plan was most recently revised during the 2018-2019 academic year, with review and input from the Faculty, Student and Staff Senates. The Plan was approved by the Dean's Council in March 2019 with final approval from DCB's President in August 2019 (after review from the NDUS Chancellor's Office). The revised Plan was undertaken to reflect the reality of reduced state funding. The previous plan, developed in 2015, was approved at a time when

state funding for higher education was at an all-time high. DCB's 2015 Strategic Plan was based on an assumption that the existing levels of funding would continue along with incremental increases from biennium to biennium. The current DCB Strategic Plan was purposefully aligned with the NDUS Strategic Plan. DCB's Strategic Planning is also influenced by its Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Plan, which is conducted annually as part of the NDUS ERM process. The State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) is currently engaged in the development of a new strategic plan which will likely be adopted in 2020. DCB plans to revisit its Strategic Plan when the new SBHE plan is implemented.

Departmental strategic plans were completed for DCB Athletics and the DCB Information Technology Department during the 2018-2019 academic year. The beginning work for a Marketing and Enrollment Management Plan was also undertaken during 2018-2019. Several academic departments are beginning their own strategic planning activities. Each academic department's annual assessment reviews serve as a planning tool for current and future budget and resource needs. With the College's academic assessment processes undergoing revision, it is anticipated that the results of these reviews will become an even more important component of the College's overall strategic planning processes.

DCB's Master Plan was developed according to a framework specified by the NDUS and adopted in 2016. The Plan identified how the College has developed over time consistent with its Mission, current planning assumptions and drivers, and finally, a six-year outlook for facility and physical infrastructure goals. The College is also engaged in completing a new Emergency Operations Plan. It is anticipated that this will be completed during Spring 2020.

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.

Response to 5.C.4

Dakota College is very aware of factors that may affect its revenue from state appropriations and tuition income. With state appropriations and tuition income serving as the two primary drivers of DCB's revenues, the College carefully monitors information from the state of North Dakota and the NDUS. North Dakota state revenue relies heavily on commodities like oil and agriculture. Because of the cyclical nature of these commodities, the state can experience significant swings between surpluses and deficits. The collapse of oil prices during 2014 contributed to substantial reductions in state agency funding during the 2015-2017 biennium. These reductions were made permanent in the

2017 legislative session, with DCB experiencing a 12.1% decrease in its base state funding. DCB's 12.1% funding reduction in 2017 compares to a 6.4% increase in the 2011-2013 biennium, a 26% increase in the 2013-2015 biennium, and an 8.7% increase at the start of the 2015-2017 biennium. Overall, DCB's base state appropriations increased from $5,972,097 in 2009 to $8,703,616 in 2015, a total increase of $2,731,519 or 46%. In subsequent years, state appropriations were reduced from the high of $8,703,616 in 2015-2017 to $7,740,826 in 2019-2021, a decrease of $962,970 or 11%. Over the decade, the College still experienced an overall increase of almost 30% in state appropriations. Tuition rates remain stable. The State Board of Higher Education and the North Dakota state legislature have allowed colleges and universities to incrementally increase tuition rates which has softened the impact of the state reductions during the past two bienniums. Tuition and fees revenue for DCB increased from $1,787,195 in FY 2015 to $1,991,188 in FY 2019.

DCB is aware of the enrollment challenges that exist in a rural state like North Dakota. However, local K-12 school enrollments appear to be stabilizing. An analysis of ten nearby K-12 school districts shows that their enrollment has been holding steady or increasing slightly since 2010. This corresponds with statewide data showing a similar trend. While DCB does not anticipate enrollment reductions due solely to declining high school enrollment, the College does expect greater competition from other colleges in recruiting high school graduates. Consequently, DCB has increased its direct marketing expenditures from $16,175 in 2015 to $91,288 in 2019.

North Dakota's energy economy is currently stable. However, the state's agriculture economy is suffering from lower commodity prices due to factors such as the current trade war. A positive note for DCB is the College anticipates receiving a substantial increase in formula funding due to the enrollment increases attained during the past several years.

The College has demonstrated it can maintain financial viability in the face of financial adversity (see Criterion 5.C.1). Given the current stability in the College's finances, stability in the state of North Dakota's finances, steady high school enrollments, and increases in College enrollment that will contribute to additional formula funding, coupled with a conservative budgeting approach, DCB does have a realistic understanding of its current and future capacities.

Response to 5.C.5

DCB has evolved to meet the changing needs of students, the region, and the state. In keeping with the governor's strategic initiatives for the state of North Dakota, the College is developing strategies for programs and services that are consistent with his Main Street and Transforming Education initiatives.

One of the pillars of the Mainstreet Initiative is the development and maintenance of a skilled workforce in the state. DCB has been collaborating with the city of Minot, ND, and Minot State University for several years on strategies to deliver post-secondary career and technical education (CTE) in the community of Minot and the surrounding region. Minot is the largest community and one of only two major trade areas in the state without local access to post-secondary CTE programs. Having access to local post-secondary CTE programs is an important component to the city and region's continued economic vitality. The city of Minot has earmarked $1.5 million of funding for facility acquisition and/or renovation for a CTE Center. Discussions are underway for the location of such a facility, and it is possible a site could be announced by the end of the academic year. The College has identified this project as an important goal in its current Strategic Plan.

Based on the growing interest and success of dual credit enrollment at the high school level across

the state and country, the College has been a leader in the state in providing a college credential for students completing 24 credits of college-level coursework. The LEAP (Leading to Education and Advanced Preparation) Program has been successful during the two years in which it has been in place and currently has 39 high school students actively pursuing a certificate in College Studies through the LEAP Program. Similar programs are being replicated by two other NDUS colleges using the DCB model. The College anticipates increased interest in dual credit courses and programs and is developing a prescribed course schedule that would enable high school students to complete an associate degree while still enrolled in high school. DCB is in a unique position to accomplish this because of its extensive use of Interactive Video Network (IVN) classrooms for dual credit courses. This allows the College to place greater reliance on its College faculty rather than on the availability of high school instructors who meet the appropriate faculty qualifications.

Dakota College has been on the forefront of developing online courses and programs. The College currently offers 19 programs which can be completed online. The College has been recognized as one of the top 20 most affordable online colleges offering associate degrees by the SR Education Group for the years 2017, 2018 and 2019.

The College has been a front-runner in developing collaborative programs with other NDUS institutions. The College is a partner in the Dakota Nursing Program in which curriculum, courses, and faculty resources are shared between DCB, Bismarck State College, Lake Region State College and Williston State College. The College partners with Lake Region State College, Minot State University, Turtle Mountain Community College, and Williston State College through the Northern Information Technology Consortium to facilitate the delivery of IT courses in a cost-effective distance delivery format. More recently, the College formed a partnership with Lake Region State College and Williston State College to offer distance delivery agriculture courses as part of the North Dakota Agriculture Consortium. Additionally, DCB collaborates with Valley City State University to offer the Bridges Program and with Minot State University to offer the Passport Program. Through its affiliate arrangement with Minot State University, DCB and MSU have developed a number of shared service agreements that provide DCB with financial management, human resources support, payroll services, Title IX support, institutional research services, and printing services.

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5.D - Core Component 5.D

The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

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

Argument

Response to 5.D.1

Dakota College reviews and documents evidence of its performance in numerous ways.

The College publishes a wide array of reports related to its student enrollment under the Institutional Research page on its website. Some examples of these reports are headcounts and FTE enrollment, student data statistics, headcounts by academic area, enrollment totals by state and county, IPEDS program enrollment, and enrollment summary of students by age. Similarly, DCB provides its IPEDS Data Feedback Reports on the Institutional Research (IR) webpage for the years 2005 to 2017. The College IR webpage also links to the NDUS Institutional Research webpage. This enables comparisons of DCB data to System-wide information.

DCB tracks SAM (Student Achievement Measure) data, as do all the colleges and universities in the NDUS. These data allow for a comparison of DCB to its peers in the University System.

The College, through its institutional research affiliation with Minot State University, has developed an annual student profile for the years 2016, 2017 and 2018. The profiles are posted on the College's IR webpage and enable year-to-year comparisons.

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 $1,450,403 in appropriated fund reserves. When comparing these reserves to the College's combined appropriated general fund and net tuition revenue of $6,074,185 for FY 2019, the College's reserves are at 24% of its appropriated budget. As noted in the reserves report, the required range for reserves for DCB is 5-7%, or $300,249 to $420,348.

DCB's CFI is calculated annually by the NDUS office and serves as another performance measurement for the College's finances. In FY 2018, DCB attained the highest CFI (with component unit) in the NDUS.

Through the Outcomes Assessment Task Force (renamed the Academic Assessment Committee in Fall 2019), the College annually documents assessment activities conducted during the previous year, as well as action plans for improvements. The reports for past years have included both academic disciplines and College service units, reflecting a College-wide approach to improvement.

DCB Policy F601.1 documents the process for the evaluations of faculty. Department Chairs and the

Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs conduct the evaluations of instructors for all courses with the exceptions of online and dual credit (early entry) courses. Online and dual credit course evaluations (performed by students) are reviewed by the Director of Distance Education. As DCB pursues external accreditation of its Dual Credit Program through the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP; see 4.A.4), the evaluation process for dual credit faculty will include teaching evaluations most likely completed by Department Chairs.

The College utilizes the NDUS SPOL (Strategic Planning Online) program to monitor its progress in meeting objectives identified annually for Enterprise Risk Management and also for the DCB Dean's Office. The objectives identified in the SPOL system are tied to both the NDUS and DCB strategic plans.

Response to 5.D.2

The College realized several years ago that it needed to improve its institutional research (IR) functionality. While the College has always had the ability to conduct standard queries and reports from the information systems used by DCB and the NDUS, it has lacked the resources to hire a dedicated institutional researcher. To remedy this situation, the College entered into a shared services agreement with Minot State University (MSU) in which the MSU Director of Institutional Research now provides IR support to DCB. This agreement has worked well for DCB and requests for IR services are completed quickly and precisely. One example of this is the development of an annual Student Profile document that was first posted in Fall 2018 (and retroactively created for 2016 and 2017) and will now be updated each year. The MSU Director of Institutional Research has responded to numerous College requests since the implementation of the shared services agreement, and there has been universal satisfaction with the services provided.

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 as well as a comparison to previous years. Data from these reports are used to determine where additional marketing efforts may be needed. Beginning Fall 2019, the College is now reviewing 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 2019. Although additional marketing efforts have been directed at these programs, the enrollment issues persist.

DCB recognizes the need to improve its retention and graduation rates, which lag behind the other two-year colleges in the NDUS. Consequently, during 2016, DCB applied to participate in the HLC Persistence and Completion Academy. Through the data review and analysis process conducted as part of the Academy, the College identified a need to improve its advising processes. An initiative was launched to restructure the College's advising model and philosophy. This culminated with the implementation of a new advising model during Fall 2018 and the appointment of a part-time Director of Advising. Through the Persistence and Completion Academy, the College also identified specific challenges in the retention and graduation rates for students in the DCB Football Program. Many football players enrolled only for the fall semester due to the one-semester football season. The DCB Football Team also had the lowest GPA of all of the College's sport teams, which further affects retention and graduation rates. A study of the retention rates of football students conducted as

part of the Persistence and Completion Academy showed that the College's overall retention rates would be higher without the DCB Football Program. In recognition of this situation, the College instituted a project during Fall 2019 in which the assistant football coaches monitored the attendance of their players and identified consequences for those students who had attendance issues. However, as the end of the fall semester approached, it became evident that the attendance monitoring efforts had no noticeable impact for football student-athletes. Given that the various strategies (outlined in 4.C) employed over a number of years were not showing success in improving the retention and graduation rates of football student-athletes, it was determined that the Program would be discontinued at the end of the fall semester. DCB is continuing to monitor retention and graduation and plans to apply for acceptance into the HLC Student Success Academy in 2020 and will allocate financial resources for both Academy membership and College-specific persistence and completion activities identified as a result of Academy participation.

The College reviews IPEDS retention and graduation rates to determine how it compares to its cohort group and also to the other NDUS two-year colleges. Although the IPEDS data are lagging indicators, they do provide the College with some feedback on how well retention and graduation efforts are working.

DCB Faculty Evaluation Policy F601.1 guides the performance review process for faculty. A recent audit identified areas in which the College needs to improve this process. The College has identified and implemented action steps to make these improvements. A major component in these actions is assigning a leadership role to Department Chairs to oversee the evaluation process for faculty in their units.

A recent performance audit also identified areas the College needs to address in its procurement processes and inventory management procedures. Action plans for ensuring the College is in compliance with these procedures have been submitted, and the College has made good progress in completing them. Similarly, a recent audit of system-wide Title IX procedures identified areas in which DCB (as well as other colleges in the University System) needed to improve processes, update policy, and make it easier for students and staff to find Title IX information. DCB's action plan to address these items has been submitted to the NDUS Office and almost all action items have been completed. As noted in Criterion 3.A.3, an internal audit noted concerns with the consistency of course syllabi. These deficiencies are currently being addressed.

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5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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

Summary

Dakota College at Bottineau has provided evidence that it fulfills the requirements identified in the Core Components of Criterion 5.

The College has demonstrated its ability to manage its finances by successfully overcoming two serious financial challenges during the past six years. While the College had to reduce staffing due to major state budget reductions, it has operated with stable employment levels during the past three years. The combination of reduced staffing costs and growing enrollment has enabled the College to improve its overall financial situation considerably since FY 2015. It is expected that the enrollment growth experience during the previous biennium will lead to a significant increase in the College's funding formula allocation in the next legislative biennium, further enhancing DCB's financial resources.

Despite reduced state funding, the College has devoted additional resources to new programs, new faculty positions in nursing, program marketing, professional development, and facility upgrades. The College has updated its Strategic Plan, its Master Plan, and is actively implementing them. It has also developed a Risk Management Plan and is in the process of completing a major revision to its Emergency Operations Plan. The College is making progress in addressing the facility upgrades needed in student dining and housing. A major capital campaign is underway to renovate the College's vacant Old Main building to provide much needed space to its growing nursing programs and to accommodate additional allied health programming. Planning is underway for the development of a Career and Technical Education Center in the community of Minot.

DCB recognizes it needs to improve its retention and graduation rates, particularly as measured by IPEDS reporting. While various strategies have been implemented during the past decade, limited progress has been made. One of the major factors affecting the College's success rates was the lack of persistence and completion by student-athletes in the DCB Football Program. Consequently, DCB discontinued the Football Program at the conclusion of the Fall 2019 season. The College has plans underway to recruit students in other programs and sports to help replace the enrollment that will be lost due to the discontinuance of football.

DCB has shown that it has adequate resources to meet its Mission. It has also demonstrated that it is continually improving its programs and services while implementing plans that are preparing it for the future.

Sources

There are no sources.