



## **HLC Update #5**

Vol. 1 No. 5 March 15, 2010

*As northern  
Minnesota's  
university,  
we engage in  
new worlds of  
thought,  
embrace  
responsible  
citizenship, and  
educate for a  
future that can  
only be imagined.*

### Info on BSU's Continuing Accreditation Process

*This is the fifth of five newsletters, each highlighting one of the criteria.*

#### **Digging Deeper into the Self-Study: Criterion 5**

Criterion 5 focuses on the broader community beyond the bounds of campus. HLC is interested in how an institution identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways that both value and are consistent with its mission. The second strategy in the University Plan directly addresses this criterion. The self-study identifies civic engagement as a priority for improvement and highlights plans for pursuing the opening of a leadership center.

#### **\*\*HOT TOPIC!\*\***

#### **A Master Data Site Deep Dive**

Bemidji State has a long history of meeting the region's needs. The Criterion 5 Committee identified the myriad ways our BSU community engages people in the broader world. Check out their collection at: [http://www.bemidjistate.edu/hlc/process/master\\_data/criterion/five](http://www.bemidjistate.edu/hlc/process/master_data/criterion/five)

#### **Process Recaps**

*Self-Study Process Started in 2008.* Over 50 students, staff, administrators and faculty have contributed to the self-study process since it began in spring 2008.

*Self-Study Document Completed.* The self-study document was completed and sent to HLC and the consultant evaluators on January 25, 2010.

*Site Visit Set for March 22-24.* During the visit, the campus community will have one or more opportunities to meet with consultant evaluators. Watch for the site visit schedule.

*Criterion 1 Components Met.* BSU clearly and consistently states, articulates and lives its mission and vision.

*Criterion 2 Components Met.* BSU's planning process demonstrates its capacity to improve education while responding to challenges and opportunities.

*Criterion 3 Components Met.* BSU demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission by providing evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness.

*Criterion 4. Components Met.* BSU demonstrates its commitment to life-long learning for all campus constituencies by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice and social responsibility.



# BEMIDJI STATE UNIVERSITY



**Criterion 5: Engagement and Service** *As called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.*

## General Findings:

The university has meaningful, productive and enduring service relationships with its external constituents, as evidenced by the breadth, depth and success of its collaborations with communities of interest. Its mission documents recognize the broad community of external constituents and acknowledge the value of these relationships. Starting with its mission, vision and Signature Themes, Bemidji State acknowledges the larger world in which the university operates and the importance of civic action in a diverse world. The university's actions, which are guided by those documents, put its plans into play, thus closing the loop.

## Core Component 5a

*The organization learns from the constituencies it serves and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations.*

Bemidji State has a symbiotic relationship with its communities, its neighbors. It is a north-country tradition that assures not only survival, but also quality of life, including access to services, resources and opportunities, and preservation and enjoyment of cultural heritages. Its mission documents clearly state that the university operates within a broad community of external constituents and that it values those relationships. The second of four strategies in the University Plan is dedicated to the university's relationships with external constituents. Academic outreach programs, such as online master's degrees, are assessed through academic department five-year reviews, as described in the discussion of Criterion 3 in the self-study.

## Core Component 5b

*The organization has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities.*

The university models civic engagement; conducts surveys to ascertain community needs and its position in the community; contributes to its communities through student, faculty and staff actions; and is judicious in developing programs and activities for its external constituents.

## Core Component 5c

*The organization demonstrates its responsiveness to those constituencies that depend on it for service.*

Based on relationships with its communities of interest and knowledge of those communities gathered through research and involvement, Bemidji State provides educational opportunities to those communities, from elementary school through higher education and customized training. BSU serves its external constituents through course and program offerings to individuals and through collaborations with other post-secondary institutions. Promoting cultural vitality through its relationships with these communities, the university provides arts and entertainment venues open to the public and in collaboration with area artists. Through collaborations between the area and the university, BSU provides athletic and recreation opportunities that are open to the public.

## Core Component 5d

*Internal and external constituencies value the services the organization provides.*

The university's relationships with the City of Bemidji, Beltrami County, American Indian communities and the northern tier of Minnesota are manifold. Through its Center for Research and Innovation, the university offers services to area businesses and industries. Bemidji State is committed to environmental stewardship on its campus and beyond.

## Criterion 5: Strengths and Priorities for Improvement

### STRENGTHS

- Cross-Cutting Themes—Connected
- Center for Extended Learning

### PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Civic Engagement

**More information on Criterion 5, see the Self-Study:**  
<http://www.bemidjistate.edu/hlc>

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