

**DRAFT—Chapter Two, Criterion Two  
Bemidji State University-HLC 2010 Reaccreditation Self-Study Report**

Below is a draft of Criterion Two of Bemidji State’s 2010 HLC self-study document. The self-study writing team invites you to comment freely on the content and to provide information regarding notes that are shaded in gray.

The writing team thanks the five criterion committees for their ongoing work. They are providing content and evidence for the document and are commenting on drafts. To view their work, visit the self-study web site <<http://www.bemidjistate.edu/hlc/>> and click on Committees in the left column. Other information about our self-study process is also available on this site.

Please send your comments to Marty Wolf (mwolf, # 23, 2825). We would like them by November 6 so that we may consider them as we complete the document. Questions may also be addressed to Marty.

**Self-Study Deadlines**

<b>Due Dates</b>	<b>Actions</b>
10/16/09	Draft to campus.
11/06/09	Comments due to writing team.
12/01/09	Completed copy to Production Office.
01/22/10	Self-study due at HLC offices.
02/15/10	Mock visit.
03/22-24/10	HLC team campus visit.

**READING & COMMENTING ON THE 10/16/2009 DRAFT**

*On weird things in the text:*

- Gray highlighting indicates that the text is in progress. Comments and suggestions are especially welcome regarding these passages.
- A tilde (~) indicates a link, even if it is not yet active. Please feel free to provide URLs.
- In Chapter One, double letters (MM, etc.) indicate placement for sidebar pieces.

*Regarding your comments:*

- Notes written on hard copy are preferred.
- If you provide your comments in an email, please point to the relevant text by including four or five words from the beginning of the nearest paragraph, so the writing team can easily locate the section you are critiquing.
- Send comments to Marty Wolf, mwolf, # 23, 2825.
- Questions may also be addressed to Marty.

*Regarding previous Criterion Committee comments:*

- Some Criterion Committee comments delivered to the HLC co-chairs are not yet incorporated into this draft. To the committees: please assured that we have your comments, that we will address them in subsequent iterations of the document, and that you will have a chance to review the edits.

*Regarding the Core Components*

- The criterion chapters are not organized by core components. Rather, the core components are embedded in an organization suited to our story. Core components will be identified throughout the finished document and in the summary at the end of the document.

HLC Writing Team

Elizabeth Dunn, HLC Co-chair (Interim Dean, College of Arts & Sciences)  
Marty Wolf, HLC Faculty Co-chair (Math & Computer Science Department)  
Susan Hauser, Writer (English Department)

**Shaping Potential/Shaping Worlds**  
**Story here...**

**Criterion Two: Preparing for the Future**

The organization's allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

- Core Component 2a: The organization realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends.
- Core Component 2b: The organization's resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.
- Core Component 2c: The organization's ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement.
- Core Component 2d: All levels of planning align with the organization's mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission.

**Organization of Criterion Two**

Introduction

1. Consistent Mission, Refined Identity (Core Components 2a, 2d)
2. Societal and Economic Trends (Core Component 2a)
3. Planning Documents (Core Components 2a, 2d)
4. Planning Processes (Core Components 2a, 2d)
5. Resource Base (Core Components 2b, 2d)
6. Assessment Systems (Core Components 2b, 2c)
7. Funding Follows Planning: Closing the Loop (Core Components 2a, 2d)
8. Priorities for Improvement

Summary of Evidence

**Graphic Banner Here (narrow, to distinguish between single column above and double column below) – repeat at end/beginning of double columns.**

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Comments?  
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**Core Component 2a: The organization realistically prepares for a future shaped**

Introduction

Bemidji State University utilizes embedded planning to guide decision-making, assess outcomes, determine actions, allocate resources and prepare for the future. In fulfillment of, and guided by, its mission, the university continually adapts its processes in order to assure the quality of its education, its capacity to fulfill its mission, and its ability to respond to anticipated and unanticipated challenges and opportunities.

1. Consistent Mission, Refined Identity (Core Components 2a, 2d)

Over the past twenty-five years, since 1985, the university has had four mission statements. While they

by multiple societal and economic trends.

Core Component 2d: All levels of planning align with the organization’s mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission.

**Vision: Shaping Potential, Shaping Worlds**

Bemidji State University is a catalyst for shaping the potential of those it serves who, in turn, shape the worlds in which they live and work.

**Mission: Engage, Embrace, Educate**

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.

vary in form and detail, they are consistent in emphasis:

**Mission Statements**

1985-1988~ Excerpts	1988-1996~ Excerpts	1996-2008~ Excerpts	2008- <u>Present</u> <u>Statement</u>
“a sound liberal education”	“a broad liberal education complementing academic specialization”	“new ideas and new skills ... grounded in shared human values”	Engage in new worlds of thought
“responsible, free citizens in a democratic society”	“function responsibly as members of an interdependent, international community”	“enhance student access to leadership roles and encourage responsible citizenship”	Embrace responsible citizenship
“instill in each student the spark of intellectual pursuit”	“support continuing inquiry”	“lead its students into the twenty-first century”	Educate for a future we can only imagine

The core of Bemidji State’s mission is thus clear and is economically expressed in its current statement.

The primary elements of the university’s identity have also remained constant throughout the years as expressed in the university’s past vision and mission statements:

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1985-1988	1988-1996	1996-2008
Mission: “comprehensive university with a balance of professional and	Mission: “a broad liberal education complementing academic specialization”	Mission: “has grown into a comprehensive university”

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<p>vocational programs and with a strong commitment to the liberal arts”</p>	<p>(Vision statements were not utilized at this time.)</p>	<p>Vision: “our guideposts are clear: excellence in liberal education and career preparation”</p>
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This identity was further clarified in the University Plan: Strategies for 2002-2007, Five-Year Goal Statement:

- To be the Midwest’s premier student-centered university integrating liberal arts with career development to prepare students for life-long learning and leadership in a global society.

If we do an official Identity Statement, this could be revised to include it in the table above.

In the several years leading up to the 2008-2013 University Plan, Bemidji State continued to reflect on its institutional identity. In colleges and departments, at campus meetings and at other venues, the meanings, values and implications of a “comprehensive” versus “arts and sciences” university were considered. The discussions led to a watershed reorganization of the university’s colleges and academic departments. (See Reorg Feature Story)

- [Press release, August 8, 2008](#): “... The reorganization will support the University's goal of ... a more-focused identity as a university of arts and sciences with select professional programs...”

The current vision and mission statements do not directly declare the university’s identity. This is standard practice today. However, both vision and mission support self-identification as an arts and sciences university with select professional programs.

2. Societal and Economic Trends  
 (Core Component 2a)

The university is keenly aware of societal and economic trends that affect its operations and the educational opportunities of its students. By way of example, in its 2008-2013 University Plan, Bemidji State identified external forces that posed particular challenges for the university:

[University Plan 2008-2013 Strengths, Challenges,](#)

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Opportunities, Threats (SCOT) External Threats  
External Threats:

Bemidji State University is a member of the [Minnesota State Colleges and University System](#).

[MnSCU Strategic Plan 2008-2012](#)

Strategic Direction 1:  
Increase access and opportunity

Strategic Direction 2:  
Promote and measure high-quality learning programs and services

Strategic Direction 3:  
Provide programs and services that enhance the economic competitiveness of the state and its regions

Strategic Direction 4:  
Innovate to meet current and future educational needs

The Changing Landscape of Education: Higher education in the United States faces a number of issues in a constantly shifting landscape. Funding for higher education is gradually shifting from public to private sources. Students and their families are up picking more of the costs, and state governments are funding less and less. This shift in costs brings with it new concerns for growing levels of student debt as well as concerns for how the university will replace lost resources to continue to meet its commitment to the region.

In addition, there is a greater call for accountability at all levels. MnSCU is transitioning to performance based measures for student success and learning. Conversations at the federal level have recently centered on student access and affordability, and institutional accountability. Bemidji State University must be able to articulate clearly ways in which students succeed and learn. This means that the university needs to continue to develop in data gathering and interpretation.

The Changing Societal Landscape of Northern Minnesota: As the university moved through an 18-month strategic planning process known as scenario planning, it identified external societal drivers that will impact the university’s environment. The first was the changing demographics of our region and the state. As mentioned earlier, the northern Minnesota region will experience a decline in the traditional college-aged student. Second, traditional students coming to the university have a new set of educational expectations, including new expectations related to technology and course delivery. Third, changes in technology will continue to impact university operations in ways we cannot fully imagine. Combined, these represent societal changes in our external environment which the University must address.

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The Student Development and Enrollment Strategic Plan 2008-2013, known as the J-Plan (Journey Plan, reflecting the division’s mission), in its SCOT, identified similar challenges:

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Student Development & Enrollment Master Plan,

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### External Threats

Student Development and Enrollment continually works to overcome the exigencies of changing student demographics; of unfunded external regulations and mandates; and of the challenges of obtaining external funding. It does this in the context of a rapidly changing educational landscape that includes shifts in funding (from public to private), a call for greater institutional accountability, and a stressed student population. Many of today's students struggle to balance study, work and family, and also struggle with health and well-being difficulties. Their determination to attend the university is underwritten by a sense of hope that through their effort they will find a way to a more satisfying and secure life. Bemidji State strives to understand and meet that expectation.

The above SCOT statements were developed prior to the fragile state, national and international economic situation that precipitated out late in 2008 and continues into the present. The devastating effects of that phenomenon are ameliorated at Bemidji State in part because of its extensive overall planning and, specifically, because of a proactive, three-year budget, 2007-2010, developed prior to the economic collapse. This budget plan was written to respond to already tightened resources and to project in the future rather than mostly presenting short-term, stop-gap measures ((??Feature: Three-year Budget Plan~)) and resulted in a greater percentage of funds dedicated to direct instructional costs. While the three-year plan responded primarily to internal concerns, the current four-year, 2010-2014 budget plan responds primarily to the external pressures of state and national economies.

The Master Facilities Plan also recognizes the significance of demographic trends:

### Campus Initiatives

There are many projects that need urgent attention to respond to an aging infrastructure, challenging market trends and cultural forces that are changing the way higher education is delivered. These changes are occurring faster than public financing (General Obligation and Revenue Bonding) can respond to, and therefore, must be creatively addressed with college operating funds, as well as private resources. In many cases, these needs will expand into major capital projects as the immediate investment needs identified above are implemented. But until that time, a minimum level of investment must be implemented in order to provide

### Demographics and Growth

The demographic trends for the northwest region of the state and particularly for the eleven surrounding counties indicate projected population growth of approximately 28% between 2000 and 2020.

Core Component 2a: The organization realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends.

Core Component 2d: All levels of planning align with the organization’s mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission.

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### 3. Planning Documents

(Core Components 2a, 2d)

Bemidji State University utilizes multiple layers of planning to guide its actions and the expenditure of its resources. These layers include mission-related documents and established and ad hoc planning committees, councils, task forces and work groups. Planning is aligned with resources and is conducted in the light of current societal and economic trends as identified in planning documents.

Bemidji State’s planning operates at three levels:  
Primary Mission Document:

- Level I University Plan

Foundational Mission Documents

- Level II Master Plans
- Level III College and Department Plans
- Level III University Services Plans

As noted in Chapter One, values and actions of Bemidji State University originate in academic departments. These are coordinated and framed by college plans which, in turn, inform the Master Academic Plan (MAP). The MAP informs other master plans.

The foundational mission documents inform the 2002-2007 and 2008-2013 University Plans which were developed in reference to the 1996-2008 vision and mission statements. However, as noted earlier, the new vision and mission statements are not contradictory to previous iterations. Rather, they reflect a focusing and honing of vision, mission and identity.

Bemidji State’s mission documents are compatible with the [mission documents of the Minnesota State Universities and Colleges](#) as noted in the HLC Crosswalk~. The crosswalk also aligns master and college strategic documents with MnSCU and HLC.

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#### Level I Documents

**Level C** Previous University Plan, Strategies for 2002-2007

In 2000, after its self-study, the university began development of a formalized strategic plan, [Strategies for 2002-2007](#). It was prepared by the Vice President for Academic Affairs in consultation and cooperation with other vice presidents, deans, and bargaining units and was adopted through formal processes. It included vision and mission statements, a five-year goal statement, a SCOT (Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Threats), and four planning strategies:  
Strategy A: Maintain, Expand, and Diversify Resources to Enhance Educational Excellence

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### Level II Master Plans

The University Plan’s Strategies for 2008-2013 promote integrated master plans as a means to creativity, innovation, and change:

Strategy C: Innovate for a Changing World  
Goal Seven Decentralize planning and decision-making through use of university master plans that invite interpretation and discovery, and support creativity and innovation.

C.3 Continue integration of plans across all levels and units of the university. [Value Statement:] Support a climate of institutional change through ongoing development, revision and integration of the Level I University Plan: Strategies for 2008-2013, Level II master plans, and Level III college and/or department strategic plans.

The university currently has four master plans:

- [Academic \(MAP\)](#)
- Facilities
- Student Development and Enrollment (J-Plan)
- Technology

The following discussions indicate the close integration of the master plans to the University Plan.

### Level C [Master Academic Plan \(MAP\)](#)

The relationship of the MAP to the University Plan is acknowledged in the introduction to the MAP:

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Planning Assumptions: The Master Academic Plan is based initially on the University Plan and incorporates the following assumptions derived from analysis of the university’s relative strengths and weaknesses vis-à-vis the university’s external and internal environments.” [Seven assumptions are listed.]

Desired Outcomes for the Master Academic Plan: As mentioned earlier, this Master Academic Plan coordinates and further develops those portions of the University Plan that are uniquely academic. In particular, it develops Strategy B of the University Plan and begins to answer questions posed in Strategy A. [Six outcomes are listed.]

BBB  
Excerpt: Facilities Master Plan SCOT  
University buildings, grounds, and other attributes are on a continuing schedule of

The relationship of the MAP to college and department planning follows in “Level III College and Department

maintenance, renovation, and innovation as directed by the Master Facilities Plan. Bemidji State University was recently recognized by the National Wildlife Federation for its sound environmental practices, and its Outdoor Program Center ranks among the most active such organizations in the country and includes as part of its facilities the university's 240-acre forest.

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CCC

Decision parameters for a Master Technology Plan include the following:

- Prioritizes technology initiatives.
- Develops multi-year funding and budgeting strategies for replacing and upgrading information technology equipment.
- Examines the strengths and weaknesses of the University's current academic and administrative computing environment.
- Identifies and evaluates new emerging technologies.
- Explores opportunities to better support scholarship of faculty,

Plans.”

**Level C** Master Facilities Plan~

The Master Facilities Plan, which is aligned with facilities planning for [Northwest Technical College](#), takes the Master Academic Plan as its primary reference:

**Master Facilities Plan Goals**

1. Support the respective institutional master academic plans: It is the primary goal of the Bemidji State University Master Plan aligned with Northwest Technical College master plan to create campus facilities that support the academic mission and goals of the institutions by providing instructional space that is well-organized and equipped, attractive and readily accessed.

The 2003 Master Facilities and Campus Plan was updated in 2007 and reflects the values and directives expressed in the 2002-2007 University Plan.

By way of example:

SCOT, Strengths: The University Campus Next to its academic and student-centered reputation, Bemidji State is perhaps best known for its compelling natural setting on the shores of Lake Bemidji. The University takes seriously its role in the stewardship of the land entrusted to it. It also recognizes that the physical environment of a campus contributes to its learning environment.

BBB

**Mission Statement (excerpt)**

Offer a pleasing and safe campus community enriched by native heritage and world cultures; united by human values centered on civility and mutual respect; and underpinned by facilities necessary for education in the twenty-first century.

The 2007 Master Facilities Plan also complements the University Plan Strategies for 2008-2013.

By way of example:

- A.1 ...enhance on-campus housing facilities....
- A.3 Encourage facilities' planning that supports learning and community. Provide welcoming spaces on campus that promote an ambiance for learning, and opportunities for interaction and community.
- D.6. Continue to integrate all planning efforts.

- staff, and students.
- Explores opportunities to better support the internal functions of the Bemidji State website.
- Reviews and develops new technology policies governing use of campus technology resources.
- Develops opportunities for greater communication and collaboration with the campus, local and regional employers, tribal colleges, and other peer institutions.
- Aligns with system technology planning efforts.

**Level C** Master Student Development and Enrollment Plan (The Learning Journey, J-Plan, 2008-2013)

Developed in 2008, the J-Plan acknowledges the 2008-2013 University Plan as a source for its planning assumptions:

The Learning Journey Plan (J-Plan) ... also acknowledges trends and needs identified in the University Plan: Strategies for 2008-2013, including changing student demographics, a shifting financial base, and an increased emphasis on preparing students for uncertain futures, personal, national and global.

The J-Plan also echoes the goals of the University Plan's Strategy A: Engage Students for Success in Careers, Communities and Life.

By way of example:

J-Plan 2008-2013 Mission: We're here for the journey, investing in our students' success through excellent programs and services focused on learning and development.

Desired Outcomes [Excerpt]:

1. Support and promote students' personal well-being.
2. Challenge and support, i.e., empower, students as they navigate their journey.
3. Ensure ease of access to the university and to campus services and programs.

The university supports the J-Plan through funding and other resource allocations. See Feature Story: Student Development and Enrollment.

**Level C** Master Technology Plan~

The Master Technology Plan, which is aligned with facilities planning for [Northwest Technical College](#), is predicated on the University Plan:

Our strategic plan for technology will create a framework to support the vision, mission, strategies, goals, and signature themes of our institutions. As the needs of our University, technical college, and our respective constituencies evolve, the implementation of technology and technology support structures will also evolve in order to meet the ever changing demands of higher education.

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The plan also supports technology needs identified in the Master Academic Plan. By way of example:  
**MAP Outcome 2G: Technology Training and Support:**  
As technology advances, the role of the Center for Extended Learning in support of faculty development will be critical. Through the Online Services Office, the Center for Extended Learning provides support for faculty and prepares them to meet the challenges of delivering technology-enhanced learning opportunities.  
CCC

**Academic Department Five-year Plans** are discussed at length in Chapter Three: Criterion Three

Level III College and Academic Department Plans

As noted above, college and academic department plans are foundational to the university's mission. The plans are coordinated through the Master Academic Plan (MAP). The 2005 MAP expresses six designated outcomes:

1. High quality programs (Provide high quality educational programs and services that support students' professional, personal, and citizenship development.)
2. Excellent faculty (Hire and support excellent faculty.)
3. Secure future for Northern Minnesota (Help build the future of Northern Minnesota.)
4. Diverse student, staff and programming (Enhance diversity.)
5. Excellent teaching and learning environment (Support the teaching and learning environment.)
6. Financial stability (Secure financial stability through appropriate growth and program development.)

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The outcomes have additional sub-categories. By way of example, the first outcome, High Quality Programs, is divided into A. Core Values and Signature Themes, B. Curricular Philosophies, C. Assessment of Student Progress.

To assist colleges, departments and faculty, each sub-category also has Decision Parameters. As noted in the MAP document, they may be applied in several ways:

- They provide a basis for the authoring of initiatives by the colleges and departments.
- They provide a basis for college and academic affairs decision-making with regard to initiatives.
- They invite interpretation and discovery. For example, review of the parameters might suggest a different frame or approach to an activity already built into an initiative, and might also provoke consideration of new approaches and activities.

(Larry Hirschhorn and Linda May, “The Campaign Approach to Change: Targeting the University’s Scarcest Resources,” *Change*, June 2000)

By way of example, there are three Decision Parameters for 1A Core Values and Signature Themes:

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- As appropriate, intentionally incorporates experiences that reflect the Signature Themes.
- As appropriate, promotes opportunities for students to confront or engage in experiences that reflect the Signature Themes.
- As appropriate, helps ensure that every graduate will have had opportunities to learn about, experience and reflect on the Core Values expressed in the Signature Themes.

To further guide implementation of the MAP, each sub-category clearly states expectations specific to colleges, departments and programs. These are identified with the heading “To this end.”

By way of example, for 1A Core Values and Signature Themes:

To this end:

- The Liberal Education Task Force is encouraged to consider carefully these core values and signature themes as it proceeds with the redesign of the Liberal Education program.
- College Strategic Plans are expected to address the inclusion of these core values and signature themes in Department Plans.

Departmental participation in the MAP is tracked in annual reports. By way of example, the English Department, College of Arts & Letters, prepared reports addressing each section of the MAP where “To this end” items included department plans: ((Link to SCH 02))

English Department Response, December 2006 (excerpt)

- I. Provide high quality educational programs and services that support students’ professional, personal, and citizenship development [MAP Outcome]
  - A. Core values and signature themes [MAP sub-category]  
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT: These are addressed in course and program curricula and anthology publishing projects (New Voices, Dust & Fire, Rivers

Meeting, Fire Ring Voices), and with the offerings of the Minnesota Northwoods Writers Conference. For example:

International/multicultural understanding: Courses in English Literature, Ethnic American Literature, and World Literature.

Civic engagement: Production of anthologies that publish the work of high school students, women, men, and Bemidji State students.

Environmental stewardship: Course offerings such as Nature Writing in the People & the Environment Liberal Education category.

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As noted previously, the university's colleges and departments were recently reorganized, effective July 1, 2008. The three new colleges engaged in inclusive processes for writing their mission statements.

By way of example, the time line for development of the College of Arts & Sciences (CAS) vision and mission:

- October 3: All-college (faculty and staff)work session on shared values among faculty.
- Notes distributed to chairs.
- December 10, 2008: Joint meeting of two colleges, HSHE and CAS, to workshop visions and missions with a facilitator.
- Draft to faculty for comment.
- February 18, 2009: Meeting with volunteers to refine statements based on feedback.
- New drafts to departments and individual faculty for final comment.
- February 29, 2009: Minor revisions by CAS chairs.
- Final version sent to faculty and taken to Deans' Council.

### Level III University Services Plans (Student Development and Enrollment)

These plans are guided by the master plans, especially the J-Plan~ which, as noted above, coordinates with the University Plan.

The J-Plan was developed by university services directors through a cooperative process, as noted in the plan: "During the 2007-2008 academic year, the division initiated a planning process that included exploration of the unit's identity and values, interviews with students and faculty, and reflection on student learning and success in the co-curriculum" (Development of the Learning Journey).

For further discussion of The J-Plan see Chapter Four, Criterion Four.

**4. Planning Processes**  
(Core Components 2a, 2d)

Core Component 2a: The organization realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends.

Core Component 2d: All levels of planning align with the organization’s mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission.

At the time of the last self-study, in 2000, the Experimental Planning Process~, a formalized system was newly in place. It featured three layers of committees, not unlike a three-dimensional chessboard with connections running both horizontally and vertically. An update on the process was required in a 2002 Monitoring Report~. That report was accepted by the [Higher Learning Commission/North Central Association](#).

As noted below and in Change in Plans~ in the 2002 Monitoring Report Update, the university continues to develop its planning processes.

MMM

Resources Allocation Supports Mission & Identity  
In response to State of Minnesota budget cuts, the university cut each of the three college budgets by \$250,000 over three years. The College of Arts & Science is twice the size of the other two colleges. The cut, therefore, favors CAS, preserving resources at the core of the university’s identity.

Change in Process

In theory, the Experimental Planning Process was a good idea. It provided communication and planning opportunities for students, faculty, staff and administration. In practice, however, it was logistically untenable. (See sidebar, The Experimental Planning Process.) It was suspended December 2003. A consultant, Dan Rice, was brought in to review and evaluate the planning situation at Bemidji State. In his report~, he recommended improved communication on campus among major constituents (administration, faculty and staff). This was also a recommendation of the Scenario Planning Committee and is reflected in the University Plan for 2008-2013, especially in Strategy C: Innovate for a Changing World.

Strategy C

Goal Seven: Decentralize planning and decision-making through use of university master plans that invite interpretation and discovery, and support creativity and innovation.

Initiatives:

C.1 Increase organizational capacity for a successful, compelling and collegial campus culture. Improve the success of the university through increased communication, and support for collaboration.

C.2 Continue to develop the university’s planning process. Guide decision-making in support of the vision and mission with an understanding of the nature and impact of uncertain and critical driving forces that affect the future.

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After the experimental process was discontinued, and while a new process was being considered, committees, councils, task forces and work groups were formed as needed. Some were ad hoc, some were intended to be permanent. All were guided by the University Plan and other mission documents.

During the early reflection stage of this self-study, the planning process was frequently discussed. At first there was concern that a new, formalized planning structure was not in place. But as the means for planning from 2006-2009 were reviewed, it became evident that, in addition to the planning documents, a structure was in place, one that had emerged organically. It has two primary facets:

- Established committees and councils
- Ad hoc committees, task forces and work groups

The new, more fluid process encourages flexible planning in service to the university's mission.

#### Established Committees and Councils

As noted above, the current planning process at Bemidji State evolved organically after its highly structured experimental planning process was discontinued. While the university explored other structured options, the administration, staff and faculty responded to needs as they arose and to the imperatives inherent in the University Plan.

Five established (ongoing) groups that evolved through that process are currently in place. Overlap in membership assures cross-communication among university constituencies, including faculty, students, staff and bargaining units.

- Leadership Council~
- Futures Council~
- Cabinet~
- Assessment Committee~
- Gaps and Trends Committee~

#### Ad Hoc Task Forces, Committees and Work Groups

In addition to its planning documents and established committees and councils, the university has increased its utilization of ad hoc groups to address timely projects. Membership is determined by the administration and appropriate bargaining units. By way of example, three such ad hoc groups have played significant roles in the sharpening of the university's vision, mission and identity:

- Liberal Education Task Force Reorganization Work Group~ link to Reorg Feature
- Scenario Planning~

#### The New Flow Chart

As noted above, the current planning process at Bemidji State evolved organically. The resulting interconnected processes...((introduce new flow chart here?))

Core Component 2b: The organization's resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

#### **5. Resource Base**

(Core Components 2b, 2d)

Bemidji State University has clearly identified its resource base, utilizes it in support of maintaining and strengthening its mission, and makes plans to continue support in the future.

Core Component 2d: All levels of planning align with the organization's mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission.

- The University's Resource Base
- The Resource Base Supports Educational Programs
- The Resource Base Supports Future Plans

#### The University's Resource Base

Bemidji State's current resource base is described in goals eight, nine and ten for Strategic Direction D: Optimize Resources to Achieve the University's Vision and Mission in the University Plan 2008-2013.

⇒ Evidence/Information Yet to Be Included

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⇒ Ideas?  
Comments?  
Corrections? Information?  
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By way of example:

*Strategic Imperative: Effectively manage and increase enrollment and resources in support of the university's vision and mission.*

Goals and Measurements [Italics and bracketed comments added.]

- Goal Eight Improve undergraduate and graduate enrollment, retention, and graduation rates. [I.e., *tuition revenue.*]
- Goal Nine Improve revenues from external funding, including *alumni giving, capital campaigns, and grants.*
- Goal Ten Address MnSCU efficiency measures and standards. [I.e., *increase state allotments separate from tuition.*]

⇒ Evidence/Information Yet to Be Included

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⇒ Ideas?  
Comments?  
Corrections? Information?  
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⇒ Evidence/Information Yet to Be Included

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This base reflects changes in funding trends that are now common across the country: as states have reduced their financing of public higher education from sixty-one percent in 1999-2000 to forty percent in

⇒ Ideas?

Comments?

Corrections? Information?

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2009-2010, individual campuses have increased their utilization of endowments, community and alumni-based partnerships and other resources.

By way of example, Bemidji State has developed the following partnerships and collaborations. See Chapter Five for additional examples and information.

- [Bemidji State University and Northwest Technical College](#)
- [Center for Research and Innovation \(CRI\)](#)
- [Small Business Development Center](#)
- [360 Degrees \(Manufacturing and Applied Engineering Center of Excellence\): MnSCU-funded, Bemidji State partnership with eight two-year technical and community college partners](#)
- [A “green fee,” initiated by students, funds a Sustainability Coordinator](#)

To assure that its resource base is adequate to its needs, the university continually works to align budget and program requirements (see University Plan 2002-2007, Strategic Direction C, Align Resources with Priorities)~. To this end, university budgeting has become more transparent and more open to campus input. The administration now holds budget forums~ several times a year and budget discussions are included in [Academic Forums](#) for vice presidents, deans and department chairs. This has led to greater understanding across campus of how budgets work and how the work of college, departments and other units affect budgets.

Budget transparency and discussions also led to a fresh partnership between the administration and the faculty in the development of the 2007-2010 budget. (~See Reorg Feature.) The original draft~ from the administration proposed realigning some faculty positions by cutting four programs: Economics, German, Theatre and Early Childhood Education. The Faculty Association objected to a piecemeal approach to realignment and requested that a more comprehensive approach be undertaken. This led to what became known on campus as “Reorg,” (link to Reorg feature) a realignment of the colleges and redefinition (per IFO-MnSCU master agreement language) of departments.

In addition to budget transparency and flexibility, several factors played into the reorganization. The possibility was set in place, in part, by Scenario

Planning,~ a project set forth by President Quistgaard after the 2000 HLC Self-Study and after the Experimental Planning Process was suspended. It included a Scenario Planning Committee and Campus Conversations where faculty and staff responded to the work done by the committee. The results of the conversations were fed into the University Plan, Strategies for 2008-2013 that was then being developed. (link to Closing the Loop document)

An important element of both Scenario Planning and Reorganization conversations was the identity of the university. Bemidji State started as Bemidji Normal School in 1919. Its mission was to train teachers for public schools in northern Minnesota. Over the years it progressed in name and function to Bemidji State Teachers College, Bemidji State College and Bemidji State University. Its mission was additive and the mission statement from 1996 to 2008 noted that it had “grown into a comprehensive university....”~

The discussions and consideration of what it is that Bemidji State does and how its programs are aligned, led to a revised stated identity of the university from “comprehensive” to “an arts and sciences university with select professional programs.”

Reorganization, the identity statement, the new university plan, the new vision and mission statements and the current budget did not develop in lock-step order. Rather, they grew in what can be called an organic fashion, each one an integral aspect of an interconnected whole, each contributing to and being affected by the development of the whole. The work of the Liberal Education Task Force is an example of one element that developed in connection with the others, even though the impetus to revise Liberal Education began several years before reorganization and before the discussions about Bemidji State as a comprehensive versus an arts and sciences university.((~ to Time Line and to Lib Ed Features)) It is likely that the discussion surrounding Liberal Education goals and purposes contributed to the opening of discussions about the university’s identity and mission and that those subsequent discussions contributed to a proposal for a new Liberal Education curriculum. As discussed in the Liberal Education feature and in Chapter Three, Criterion Three, a new Liberal Education curriculum has not yet been established.

*Budget*

MMM

The university’s budget planning link to Budget sidebar has been similarly dynamic. The three-year 2007-2010 budget was developed primarily in response to internal changes and needs and increased the percent of dollars dedicated to direct instructional cost (based on IPEDS data). The current four-year 2010-2014 budget responds to the external threat of the national economic crisis while continuing to realign resources in support of internal, mission-driven priorities.

The Resource Base Supports the University’s Educational Programs

The university’s resource base, as described above, adequately supports its educational programs. In spite of the state, national and international economic climate, Bemidji State remains fiscally steady. It has achieved this impressive status through insightful planning over the last ten years. Partnership endeavors, also described above, have allowed the development of innovative programs such as 360° and the four-year nursing program. College reorganization and department redefinition also contribute to curriculum revision.

⇒Evidence/Information Yet to Be Included

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⇒Ideas?  
 Comments?  
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In addition to traditional support of educational programs, such as faculty lines in the budget, the university supports faculty professional development and curriculum development and management by providing reassigned time for faculty directors of various committees, councils and centers, including the following:

- Curriculum Liaison (link)
- Liberal Education Director and Graduate Assistant (link)
- Liberal Education Task Force Director and Graduate Assistant (200x-200x) (link to LE or to Task Force pages, if still there?)
- People & the Environment Director (Liberal Education Category Ten) (link?)
- Center for Professional Development Director (link)
- Honors Director (link)
- International Studies Director(link)
- Writing Resource Center Director(link)
- Assessment Coordinators (See also Assessment Feature and item three, below.~)

**2007-2010 and 2010-2014 Budget Plans Protect Faculty**

The university is proud to note that in spite of the economic challenges of the day, it has not utilized retrenchment to address its budget concerns.

⇒Evidence/Information Yet to Be Included

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⇒Ideas?  
 Comments?  
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The university also supports departments through its Graduate Assistant program(link to GA document): fifty-five students held positions fall semester 2009. Thirty-four teach in academic departments. The remainder serve in research or administrative capacities in other areas such as Liberal Education, Academic Affairs and Graduate Studies. Graduate assistantships promotes enrollment in graduate programs and offer valuable experience to graduate students.

The fall 2007 inauguration of the Office of Student Development and Enrollment, with a new position of Vice President, provides commensurate support for student services programs and staff. [See SD&E Feature.]

The Facilities Master Plan has assured adequate and innovative support for academic programs through ongoing development of campus facilities.

By way of example, the Facilities Plan has led to the following projects:

- American Indian Resource Center (AIRC): New building, completed 2003.
- Bridgeman Hall: New addition and complete renovation of the existing facility.
- Linden Hall Suites: Renovation of old-style residence hall into suite-style, state-of-the-art residence hall (Revenue Fund Bonding).
- Physical Plant: Boiler replacement.
- Keyless Entry System: Installed on all exterior doors on campus to enhance security.
- Memorial Hall: Renovation for new nursing program classrooms and state-of-the-art simulation labs.
- Sattgast Hall: New addition and renovation, completed fall 2009.
- Roof Replacements: Ongoing, with HEAPR appropriations.

Improvements to the campus grounds include beautification projects, such as the installation of a sculpture near the central campus pergola, the pergola itself, and the relocation of a outdoor stone fireplace from a peripheral location to the waterfront near the student union. photos in the sidebar of these three features?

The Technology Master Plan~ also provides critical

support to academic programming, as articulated in its mission: "...to provide the highest achievable quality of technology services and support to meet the academic and administrative needs of Bemidji State University and Northwest Technical College."

The mission is carried out in Strategy B Enhance the Teaching and Learning Environment:

Meeting the technology needs of students and faculty is critical to the success of our respective institutions. Equal access to computer labs, classroom technology, wireless, intranet, Internet, and other resources must be provided in order to support all educational objectives. We are committed to identifying, evaluating, and acquiring, when appropriate, new technology solutions that will meet the vision, mission, strategies, and goals of Bemidji State University and Northwest Technical College. Regular discussions through scheduled meetings with lab managers or other faculty representatives will help guide the direction of computer labs and classroom technology.

⇒ Evidence/Information Yet to Be Included

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⇒ Ideas?

Comments?

Corrections? Information?

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#### The Resource Base Supports Future Quality: A Culture of Assessment

In addition to ongoing planning, improved communication through all-campus participation in budgeting and planning, and professional development for faculty and staff, Bemidji State assures and maintains the quality of its educational programs through active assessment and evaluation at the three levels of planning: the University Plan, Master Plans, College and Department Plans. The support includes reassigned time for assessment coordinators, established and ad hoc committees, funding for projects, and the use of other resources. These are discussed below.

Since the 2000 Self-Study and the subsequent 2002 Monitoring Report, ((link to acceptance letter)) which dealt in part with assessment, consistent and meaningful evaluation has become a part of Bemidji's campus culture [see Assessment Feature]. Support for this culture by the university's resource base includes the following.

#### Support for Assessment to Assure a Quality Future

- Planning Documents
  - [2008-2013 University Plan](#)
  - [University Assessment Plan~ \(revised 2009-2010\)](#)
  - [Master Plans~](#)

⇒Evidence/Information Yet to Be Included

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⇒Ideas?

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- Dimensions of Student Learning~
- Reassigned Time
  - Assessment coordinators (assist colleges and departments with five-year planning and assessment; review plans and make recommendations to deans; maintain Five-year Self-study Handbook)
  - Liberal Education director and graduate assistant
- Committees
  - Established (ongoing)
    - University Assessment Committee (acts on assessment plans presented by departments)
    - Gaps and Trends Committee~ (reviews department and other assessments to ascertain trends and to recommend measures to fill in gaps)
  - Ad Hoc
    - Liberal Education Task Force~
    - Data (reviewed and made recommendations for annual Data Book)
- Professional Development
  - Funding for faculty, staff and administration travel to conferences and institutes on assessment and related topics (See “Lib Ed” Feature on AAC&U General Education Institute)
  - Center for Professional Development (classroom assessment instruments, classroom observation, workshops)
- Testing
  - National tests
    - Academic Profile (((dates of use here)))
    - NSSE ((=xxx + dates))
    - CCTST (California Critical Thinking Standardized Test, used in Liberal Education assessment and program revision)
    - Standardized subject area tests (used by academic programs and departments ((examples here)))
- Academic Forums
  - Sessions on using data, assessment options, related topics
  - MnSCU cost study data
  - Dashboard and VSA

## 6. Assessment Systems

(Core Components 2b, 2c)

Since its 2000 Self-study and HLC site visit, Bemidji State has worked to establish a comprehensive, campus-wide culture of assessment. Progress toward

Core Component 2b: The organization’s resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and

strengthening their quality in the future.

Core Component 2c: The organization’s ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement.

this goal was noted in the HLC staff analysis (link) of the university’s 2002 Monitoring Report (link): “It is evident that a culture of assessment continues to evolve and grow” (page 2).

In 2009, assessment systems are in place at all three levels of university planning. As noted above in The Resource Base Supports Future Quality, the administration supports assessment with funding and other resources. The utilization of assessment to inform improvement follows in 7. Funding Follows Planning: Closing the Loop.

Assessment Systems, Planning Level I, University Plans

- Inclusion in the University Plan
- University-level assessments/testing
- Gaps and Trends Committee
- Institutional Research Office
- Data resources
  - Internal Data Book
  - MnSCU Dashboard
  - VSA (alternate “dashboard”)
  - IPEDS
  - MnSCU Cost Study
  - Other??

⇒Evidence/Information Yet to Be Included

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⇒Ideas? Comments? Corrections? Information? Please contact Marty Wolf, # 23, mwolf, 2825

Assessment Systems, Planning Level II Master Plans

- Inclusion in master plans
- Data resources ((at this level))
  - ?

Assessment Systems, Planning Level III College and Department Plans

- Academic
  - MAP
  - Five-year reviews and handbook
  - Dimensions of Student Learning (consistency of values)
  - Data Resources
    - CSV files, course enrollments files
    - 
    - Other:
- Administrative and University Services
  - J-Plan
  - Department five-year reviews and plans
  - Data Resources
    - ?
    - Other:

**7. Funding Follows Planning: Closing the Loop**  
(Core Components 2a, 2d)

Core Component 2a: The

organization realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends.

Core Component 2d: All levels of planning align with the organization's mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission.

⇒ Evidence/Information Yet to Be Included

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Bemidji State University closes the loop on assessment planning, implementation and evaluation by aligning resources with results in support of the university's mission. Three exemplars of closing the assessment/funding loop are discussed here: Liberal Education, Reorganization and Student Development and Enrollment: The Learning Journey. These three are also the subjects of this reports three feature stories and additional information is provided in those locations.

Elements:

- discovery,
- assessment,
- evaluation, and
- fruition

((Note-the exemplars address “access to resources-physical, financial, human- supported through budget allocations” (2d explanation), grounded in connection to the mission statement.))

**These examples will be developed after the Features are written.**

Exemplar 1:

Exemplar 2:

Exemplar 3:

## **8. Priorities for Improvement**

***Graphic Banner Here (narrow, to distinguish between single column above and double column below) – repeat at end/beginning of double columns.***

### **Summary of Evidence**

Core Component 2a: The organization realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends.

- Environmental scans are conducted and issues raised are addressed in planning documents (University Plan; master plans).

- Budget plans address economic realities.
- Recent budget plans are for longer periods of time (three and four years) propose long-range investment strategies rather than the stop-gap measures of traditional one-year budgets.

Core Component 2b: The organization's resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

- The university allocates resources for planning, assessment and reviews at the department level.
- MORE

Core Component 2c: The organization's ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement.

- As demonstrated in feature stories on Liberal Education, Reorganization and The Learning Journey (Student Development and Enrollment), the university closes the loop on planning, assessment, improvement and the allocation of resources.
- More?

Core Component 2d: All levels of planning align with the organization's mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission.

- The university recognizes three levels of planning. These are integrated and coordinator.