BEMIDJI STATE UNIVERSITY

2010 Continuing Accreditation

SELF-STUDY REPORT

for the Higher Learning Commission of the
North Central Association Commission on Accreditation
and School Improvement (NCA CASI)
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INTRODUCTION

Bemidji State University shapes students who go out to shape the world. Alumnus Jeremy Fogelson, MD

Resident Physician, Rochester Mayo Clinic: Because of a full-tuition scholarship to Bemidji State provided by Joe Luken of Bemidji, Fogelson says he “was able to focus on my studies and really excel during school.” Fogelson recently performed surgery on Luken at St. Mary’s Hospital in Rochester. Horizons Spring/Summer 2008 Page 15
1. PROFILE

Time and Place

Minnesota's state legislature chartered Bemidji State University as Bemidji Normal School in 1919. The intent was to train public school teachers for rapidly expanding communities in northern Minnesota. Initial enrollment was 38 students. Today the university offers approximately 65 baccalaureate and 14 masters' degrees and enrolls an average of 5,000 students annually, including in teacher training programs. Service to the Bemidji area and the northern tier of Minnesota continues to be a focus of the university even while it extends its reputation statewide, nationally and internationally. Affiliated with the Minnesota State Colleges & Universities, a system of seven universities and 25 two-year colleges, Bemidji State shares many administrative services with Northwest Technical College, also located in the City of Bemidji. Situated near the fledgling Mississippi River, just 41 road miles (62 river miles) from the Headwaters, the city of Bemidji serves a population of nearly 15,000 and provides educational, medical, commercial and governmental services to a regional population of over 30,000. Three American Indian tribal communities, Leech Lake, Red Lake and White Earth, lie within a 75 mile radius of Bemidji. Canada lies one hundred miles to the north, Minneapolis-St. Paul two hundred miles to the south. Wisconsin and North Dakota are approximately one hundred miles to the east and west, respectively.

Special Qualities

For visitors, the most immediately compelling feature of Bemidji State is its location on the shores of Lake Bemidji. Loons are commonplace, eagles unremarkable, save for their innate splendor. The impression is apt: the university has dedicated itself to stewardship of this land. The university’s commitment has been made tangible through plans and actions, including the following:

- The university’s mission, Engage. Embrace. Educate, exhorts us to embrace responsible citizenship.
- One of the university’s Signature Themes highlights environmental stewardship.
- The University Plan Strategies for 2008-2013 promises to “Explore means and methods to model responsibility toward the land and other natural resources” (D.6).
- The Environmental Studies and Biology programs support environmental study and research; environmental themes are woven into the broader curriculum.
- The Student Senate initiated an effort to fund a Sustainability Coordinator position and levied a student fee to help fund it. That coordinator works with the university community to promote effective and innovative means to stewardship.
- Students for the Environment, an official student organization, holds events in support of environmental stewardship.
- In its planning and actions, the university supports innovative community projects, such as the renovation of neighboring Diamond Point Park and the construction of a bicycle path that serves the university and the city.

Bemidji State’s active stewardship of the land and environment is indicative of its capacity for partnership. This capacity extends to awareness of the university’s community relationships, as evidenced by a growing network of internal and external partnerships. These infuse the operation of the university and include the following:

- Off-campus
  - Educational partnerships with other institutions
  - Partnerships with governments and tribal communities
  - Economic partnerships
  - Cultural partnerships with ethnic communities and in the arts
  - Grant partnerships
Introduction

- On-campus
  - Faculty-Student Collaborations
  - Increased campus communication, especially regarding the functioning of the university, in forums, conversations and related activities.
  - Inter-college and inter-departmental collaborations.
  - Partnerships between Academic Affairs, Student Development, and Finance and Budget

Distinctive Programs

Bemidji State offers students preparation in traditional liberal studies programs, such as those in the College of Arts & Sciences, and in its select professional programs, such as those in the College of Business, Technology & Communication and the College of Health Sciences & Human Ecology. Program distinctiveness is discussed in Chapter Three, Criterion Three no one program dominates the academic landscape at Bemidji State. Rather, each of the three colleges is home to several distinctive programs.

By way of example:
- College of Arts & Sciences: Bachelor of Fine Arts in Creative and Professional Writing, the first BFA in writing in Minnesota and recipient of a MnSCU award “in recognition of outstanding educational achievement 2006 Excellence in Curriculum Programming.”
- College of Business, Technology & Communication: 360 Degrees, a MnSCU Center of Excellence in Manufacturing and Applied Engineering.
- College of Health Sciences & Human Ecology: Nursing four-year degree, built on extensive need assessment and collaboration with community health partners.

Distinctive Institutional Relationships

As noted above, Bemidji State is a member of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) system. Local policies and procedures are shaped and sometimes mandated by the MnSCU system and the Minnesota State Legislature. The university works within system and state guidelines while maintaining its unique character as northern Minnesota’s university.

Northwest Technical College (NTC) in Bemidji also falls under the MnSCU banner. Bemidji State and NTC benefit from various shared administrative functions. For example, Bemidji State offers NTC learners reserved seats in certain designated classes, resident housing, health care, and access to campus events. Administrative systems, such as Records, Financial Aid and Purchasing, are operated primarily from the university campus but are shared across the two institutions. Bemidji State’s president serves as president of NTC. NTC, however, remains a separately accredited college.

2. SIGNIFICANT CHANGES SINCE 2000 SELF-STUDY

Strengths

Bemidji State has identified four areas of significant progress since 2000.

- Focused Identity through College Reorganization: Perhaps the most visible organizational change since 2000 is the reorganization of the university’s colleges. This is described in the feature story College Reorganization and is also discussed extensively in Chapter Two, Criterion Two under Planning Processes.
- Student Development & Enrollment: The 2006 opening of this new division, headed by a vice president, marks another significant change for the university. It is described in the feature story Student Development & Enrollment.
- Liberal Education: This program, which constitutes Bemidji State’s version of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum, represents both a significant change and a challenge for the university. When the self-study process began at Bemidji State, most people in the university community anticipated that a new curriculum would be in place by the time of the site-team visit. This is not the case. A feature story on Liberal Education explores the events that led to the current situation and additional information may be found in Chapter Three, Criterion Three under Liberal Education and Honors.
Introduction

- Center for Extended Learning (CEL): As noted in the feature story Center for Extended Learning and the HLC-CEL Summary Report, CEL has grown significantly over the past ten years: programming and services have both been expanded.

Challenges

The university has also identified three areas as Priorities for Improvement.

- Civic Engagement: As noted in Priority for Improvement: Civic Engagement, assessments indicate a need for the university to consolidate and develop support and resources for civic engagement.
- Graduate Studies: As noted in Priority for Improvement: The School of Graduate Studies, there is a need for the university to develop and enhance elements of its graduate programs.
- Professional Education: As noted in Priority for Improvement: Professional Education, there is a need for change in the culture and practice of the Department of Professional Education.

In addition to these formalized priorities, the university recognizes that the reorganization of its colleges and the new iteration of its identity pose challenges for the campus community as it learns how the changes affect decisions and practices. These challenges and proposed means to address them are discussed in Profile: The Identity Challenge.

3. ACCREDITATION HISTORY

In its 90 year history, Bemidji State has evolved from a teacher-training institution to a university:

- 1919 Bemidji Normal School
- 1921 Bemidji State Teachers College
- 1957 Bemidji State College
- 1975 Bemidji State University

Its first North Central Association (NCA) accreditation, as a baccalaureate-granting institution, was awarded in 1943. In 1957 it was accredited at the master’s level. Beginning in 1970, comprehensive self-studies and accreditation visits have occurred every ten years, with accreditation continued in each instance.

In 1994, a focus visit was conducted regarding institutional planning and the budget decision-making processes. The focus team also addressed NCA's recent requirement for a university assessment plan. In 1995 the university submitted both a plan to integrate budget with planning and a university assessment plan. In 1996 it was granted unrestricted accreditation until the next self-study in 2000.

The 2000 self-study and campus visit resulted in continuing accreditation with a monitoring report assigned for 2002 on assessment and planning. As noted below, this report was accepted and accreditation was continued to the 2010 self-study.

In 2004, the Higher Learning Commission conducted a Focus Visit on the university's Center for Extended Learning (CEL). Subsequently, three online programs were approved. Additional CEL online programs were approved in 2005.

4. THE SELF-STUDY PROCESS

All areas of the Bemidji State community were represented in the self-study process. The process itself ranged from a promotional campaign for the university's new mission to in-depth study and review of university processes and offerings. Evidence of participation and activities is available on the self-study web site. The self-study co-chairs especially recommend the following pages:

- On the site’s home page:
  - “My BSU Moment”: an essay contest for students.
  - President Quistgaard’s message, “The HLC Process: A Litmus Test.”
Introduction

- Time Line: Detailed notes on activities and committee goals.
- Committees: Steering Committee and Criterion Committee pages include committee membership rosters and postings of minutes and documents.
- Campus-wide Activities: Includes a report on focus groups conducted to ascertain students’ understanding of mission.
- Master Data Site: A repository of documents referenced in the self-study.
- Self-Study Report: Includes a self-study draft and an invitation and time line for response to the document.

Selected Highlights of the Process

- Fall 2007 Self-Study Committees formed. Spring 2008: Blizzard disrupted air travel and prevented most of the self-study team from attending an HLC conference. Campus site visit moved from fall 2009 to spring 2010.
- Fall 2008: Visit by HLC’s John Taylor to present on and answer questions about accreditation and the self-study process.
- Fall 2008: Visit by Karen Kirkendahl for presentation on mission.
- Fall 2009: Visit by Susan Hatfield for presentations on assessment. Dr. Hatfield also served as a preliminary reader of the self-study document.
- Spring 2009: Panel of MnSCU experts on accreditation hosted at Bemidji State for Steering Committee and Criterion Committees.
- February 2010: Mock Site Visit.

5. MAJOR ISSUES FROM 2000 SELF-STUDY RESPONSE

2002 Monitoring Report

Although Bemidji State met all criteria for continuing accreditation based on its 2000 self-study, a 2002 monitoring report was required on assessment and planning. The staff analysis of the monitoring document noted that “The Report is a comprehensive document in that it definitively addresses each of the focal issues, and it is supported with documentation of objectives, both achieved and planned.” The letter accompanying the analysis stated that the report was accepted and that no further reports were required.

Since 2000, assessment and planning at Bemidji State have continued to evolve and develop:

- Assessment: As is evident from documentation in the current self-study, a culture of assessment has emerged at Bemidji State. It includes assessment at the university level and assessment systems that assist with and monitor assessment at the departmental level. An HLC evaluation team, following its 2003 Focus Visit for the Center for Extended Learning, commented in its 2004 report (page 11) that “A range of high quality institutional initiatives with respect to assessment have been institutionalized in the last several years. It is apparent that the entire institution has created a culture of assessment where close attention is given to the assessment of student learning or through the attention given to the assessment of student attitudes. Each of the online and hybrid programs offered through the Center for Extended Learning is subject to the same departmental, college, and University approvals and evaluations as are on-ground programs. . . . Moreover, the proposed programs are closely aligned with related on-ground programs that already enjoy a high standard of quality and effectiveness as evidenced by data from multiple outcome measures.”

- Planning: As explained in the self-study, the Experimental Planning process that was reported on in 2002 has given way to a more flexible and effective planning system. The evolution of the change is described in the self-study, as is current planning structure.
6. SELF-STUDY PURPOSES AND AUDIENCE

The primary audience of the self-study is the university itself, with the additional value of providing an assessment of the university to its external constituents and to the Higher Learning Commission. The university identified seven goals for the process.

The purposes of the report include the following:

- To help assure that the university is meeting the promise of its mission and that its actions and programs are of an appropriate quality to sustain the mission.
- To identify appropriate institutional and program needs for improvement.
- To provide evidence to the Higher Learning Commission that the university continues to meet the Criteria for Accreditation.

7. ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

The 2010 Bemidji State University Self-Study Report is organized in the conventional fashion, with an introduction plus a chapter for each criterion. The report also contains four feature stories highlighting significant accomplishments of the university over the last ten years. These follow the introduction and precede the criterion chapters. Three Priorities for Improvement are also identified. These are placed at the end of the report. Additionally, a cross-reference table is included at the end of each criterion chapter.

The criterion chapters themselves are organized by the dominant themes of each criterion, although all five chapters begin with a discussion of mission and mission documents in order to illustrate how the university has woven its new mission and identity into every element under discussion. The Core Components are not used to organize the chapters. However, these are referenced at beginning of major sections of each chapter and the Summary of Evidence at the end of each chapter is organized by the components.

Sidebars throughout the document provide supplemental information, often in the form of links to external documents. Vignettes at the beginning of each chapter present alumni profiles. Student profiles are presented at the end of each chapter.

8. CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

As noted in the HLC Handbook, the five Accreditation Criteria are holistic and integrated, and it is plausible to arrange self-study commentary and evidence in other ways, including four cross-cutting themes identified in the Handbook. Bemidji State acknowledges the relevance of the four themes. By way of cross-reference:

- Theme One, Future-Oriented: Since the 2000 continuing HLC accreditation visit, Bemidji State has made tremendous progress toward planning for the future. It has completed two University Plans (2002-2007, 2008-2013); has a new vision and mission; and has shifted from annual budgets to long-range three- and four-year budgets. Details of the University Plan accomplishments are primarily discussed in Chapters One and Two, budget in Chapters Two and Four.
- Theme Two, Learning-Focused: Bemidji State has continued to develop its capacity for assessment of student learning and for improvements based on evaluation of assessment. These efforts have been widely supported by the university (e.g., Assessment Coordinators; Academic Assessment Committee, Gaps & Trends Committee), as evidenced by wide-spread participation in five-year program reviews (academic and non-academic). Assessment systems are introduced in Chapter One, Criterion One. Details of processes and accomplishments are primarily reported in Chapters Three and Four.
- Theme Three, Connected: As noted above, Bemidji State came into existence when local citizens responded to a local need for trained teachers. This acknowledgement of a common good remains a force within the university and in the university’s relationships with its larger communities. These relationships are introduced in Chapter One, Criterion One. Details are especially reported in Chapter Five, Criterion Five.
Introduction

- Theme Four, Distinctive: Over the last several years Bemidji State grappled with its identity. The results of the work were a new mission and a refined identity. As reported primarily in Chapters One and Two, this work and its results indicate the university’s commitment to diversity, accountability, self-reflection and continuing improvement.

10. COMMISSION STATEMENTS

Bemidji State is highly attuned to the three areas in which HLC has chosen to provide special guidance through Commission Statements.

- General Education: As noted in the feature on Liberal Education and in Chapters Three and Four, the university is dedicated to review and re-visioning of its Liberal Education Program.
- Diversity: Bemidji State broadly acknowledges the concept of diversity, understands that it extends beyond race and gender, and embraces varied interpretations of human experiences and values. The commitment is evidenced in part through the university’s Signature Themes: International/Multicultural Understanding; Civic Engagement; and Environmental Stewardship. It is also evidenced in the university’s myriad academic and co-curricular offerings and services. These are introduced in Chapter One, Criterion One and further defined in Chapters Three and Four.
- Assessment: As noted above in Cross-Cutting Theme Two, Learning-Focused, Bemidji State is committed to improving student learning, including through the allocation of resources based on assessment.

11. REQUESTS FOR CHANGE

The university is not seeking any requests for change.

BEMIDJI STATE UNIVERSITY VIDEOS

Students for the Environment
2009 Lake Bemidji shore cleanup

No More Peace

Madrigal Dinners
Feature Stories

Center For Extended Learning (Cel)
College Reorganization
Liberal Education
Student Development & Enrollment
Feature

**Fiscal Year Time Line & Allocation of Resources**

- **2004**
  - HLC approval, three online degree programs
  - Instructional Designer
  - Desire2Learn course system
- **2005**
  - HLC approval, additional online programs
  - Five-Year Program Review
  - Online Course Evaluation Rubric and Checklist
  - Noel-Levitz Priorities Survey, Online Learners, MN Online Pilot
  - Assessment Coordinator (page 4)
- **2006**
  - CEL Assessment included in Academic Program Review Guidelines
  - IFO Advisory Board
  - Distance learning scholarship
  - Concurrent enrollment, area high schools
- **2007**
  - New CEL website
  - SmarThinking online tutoring services
  - CEL Student Satisfaction Survey, all distance learners
- **2008**
  - Educational Technologist
  - Dean of Distance Learning salary line redirected to Associate Vice President for Extended Learning & Library in response to increased role of Distance Learning
  - Online 101 course for faculty
- **2009**
  - External marketing consultant
  - Online faculty orientation revised
  - Online orientation for adjunct faculty
  - Systems/Distance Learning Librarian
- **2010 Planning**
  - Review, revise mission
  - Quality Matters peer review
  - CEL website revision
  - Additional Instructional Design staff
  - Seek National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) accreditation
  - Regional advisory board

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**CENTER FOR EXTENDED LEARNING**

**Mission:** The Center strives to be a leading provider of high quality distance learning programs regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Program Summary, 2000-2010

**Center for Extended Learning (CEL)**

Soon after it opened in 1973, the Center achieved statewide recognition for its pioneering efforts with delivery of classes through interactive television (ITV). Today, it is a leader in the development of online offerings within the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) system. Working in partnership with higher education institutions, K-12 school districts, and business and industry, the Center delivers courses and programs regionally, nationally and internationally. Delivery modes include off-site, online, correspondence, and blended technology (online plus classroom time) options. Offerings include stand-alone courses and undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

**Motivation for Change**

Since 2000, the Center's credit generation has increased by more than 128 percent and now accounts for 17 percent of Bemidji State's overall credit generation. During that time, the Center engaged in two primary means of assessment: external review and student surveys. While overall the assessments were positive, several areas for improvement were identified, including the need for direct assessment of student learning and support services for students and faculty.

**Processes for Change**

Based on assessment outcomes, the Center’s actions include the following:

- **Direct Assessment:** Assessment of student learning outcomes for CEL programs is required in five-year plans and reviews for departments offering CEL degrees.
- **Student Services:** Advancements have been made in the Center’s web presence, access to library materials, and processes for admissions, registration, graduate studies, tutoring and similar services.
- **Faculty Services:** CEL supports curriculum development and provides technical assistance and instructional design services, including a Faculty Orientation, media studio, eLearning support website and Online 101 course.

**Current Status**

From the Higher Learning Commission 2004 Focus Team Report (Page 15): Certain hallmarks generally accepted by the academic community accompany higher quality distance delivery of higher education programs. Such hallmarks include an engaged, well-trained, and supported faculty; responsive and agile administrative structures; a robust e-learning platform that allows opportunity to build high levels of learner interaction and online community building; evidence of attainment of learning outcomes, and excellent learning resources and support services to include access to electronic library resources and technical support services. Given Bemidji State University’s long, well-regarded history and strong reputation for quality distance delivery, it was apparent to the Team that these hallmarks are evident in the institution’s operations.

**Relevance to the University Mission**

CEL supports the university’s mission to Engage. Embrace. Educate by providing and facilitating student access to a high quality educational environment empowered through technology. The Center also supports the Master Academic Plan by providing leadership in technology training and support and in educational collaborations; addressing educational needs and quality of life concerns of external constituents; and contributing to university recruitment and retention efforts.

**Contact:** Center for Extended Learning, 218-755-2068.

www.bemidjistate.edu/academics/distance/
COLLEGE REORGANIZATION

University Mission: 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. University Plan 2008-2013

Academic Affairs, Colleges and Departments
In July 2008 Bemidji State reorganized its college structure to bring focus to its identity as an arts and sciences university with select professional programs and to better support an integrated liberal education, goals and priorities of academic departments, enhanced external fundraising and focused enrollment growth.

Motivation for Change
The impetus to review and change the university’s college structure was informed by several planning processes underway between 2005 and 2008:

- A 2005-2007 university Scenario Planning group identified two primary characteristics that could shape the university’s future: a culture of innovation and change, and a focused identity.
- The 2007-2010 budget realigned resources to improve support for direct instructional costs, included recommendations to combine some small departments with larger ones, and proposed the possibility of restructuring the colleges.
- The 2008-2013 University Plan promoted the Scenario Planning characteristics in Strategy C Innovate for a Changing World, including C.5. Strengthen and sharpen communication of the university’s identity.

Processes for Change
In the fall of 2007, the administration proposed adjustments to the existing college structure. This proposal was supported by the following:

- Goals of the university as expressed in the 2002-2007 University Plan.
- Scenario Planning recommendations.
- Priorities in the emerging 2008-2013 University Plan.

In response to the proposal, the Bemidji State Faculty Association encouraged a comprehensive approach to reorganization: a review of the overall structures of colleges and departments. A committee of faculty and administrators was formed and two models for college reorganization were proposed, along with guidelines for department redefinition. University constituents provided feedback to the Academic Vice President and a new structure was implemented July 2008.

Current Status
The new college structure sharpens and consistently presents Bemidji State’s identity as an arts and sciences university with select professional programs. It honors the university’s heritage as a liberal arts school and supports, through professional programs, regional health services, social services, businesses and industries. Working together, faculty and administration forged this new organization which supports the university’s mission.

Relevance to the University Mission
The new structure supports the university’s mission to Engage. Embrace. Educate., and the Signature Themes, International/Multicultural Understanding, Environmental Stewardship and Civic Engagement. It also significantly reflects the spirit of the University Plan, especially in Strategy C Innovate for a Changing World, Strategic Imperative: Accommodate change through an organizational culture of creativity, innovation and planning. Value Statement: Bemidji State values flexibility and adaptability as means to change. The new structure also reflects Initiative C.4 Support creativity and innovation at all levels of the organization while setting a common direction for the university. Value Statement: Consider ways to mobilize people in a common direction.

Contact: Vice President for Academic Affairs, 218-755-2015
www.bemidjistate.edu/academics/affairs
LIBERAL EDUCATION

Liberal Education Mission: To create an environment where students of diverse backgrounds and abilities can acquire the knowledge, the skills, the values, and the confidence necessary for effective and responsible participation in our changing global society. Bemidji State University Catalog, 2008-2010

Liberal Education Program

As with most general education programs, Bemidji State’s is, necessarily, in flux. As the needs of individuals and society change, the machinery of institutional change keeps up through revision and sometimes through radical reorganization. The process is rarely tidy and is sometimes controversial. At an American Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) Institute in 2004, a team from Bemidji State learned that most general education overhauls take seven to eight years.

Motivation for Change

In October of 2004, the Faculty Association Senate empowered the Liberal Education Committee to pursue the creation of a university-wide task force charged with proposing and pursuing revisions to the Liberal Education Program. The decision was based in part on the results of extensive assessment of the program: It is clear to the Liberal Education Committee, from its study the past two years ... that there are other models for general education that could better meet the needs of our students than does the current model. The Task Force took AAC&U’s 2002 Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College as a foundational text for change.

Process for Change

In the spring of 2008, the Faculty Association Senate and the Student Senate approved a “new Lib Ed” as proposed by the Task Force. However, methods for implementing the program were not complete, and some were contested, as were some elements of the program itself. Also at issue was the perceived relationship between the new program and the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC). In September 2009, while a plan for implementation was still in progress, a Faculty Association referendum overturned the Senate’s approval.

Several factors were critical to the faculty’s reluctance to move forward with the new program, including the relationship between curriculum and budget; the influence of transfer students on curriculum; the influence of the MnSCU system on local versions of MnTC; and the implications for curriculum of Bemidji State’s 2008 college reorganization.

Benefits of the pause in Liberal Education reform include increased faculty engagement in and understanding of curriculum issues and processes; consideration by administration of faculty concerns and issues, especially regarding implementation of the new program; understanding and consideration of the Liberal Education curriculum, especially regarding its relationship to majors and budgets, department credit capacity and college reorganization; and awareness of national standards and practices, and of MnTC rules and guidelines.

Current Status

A schedule for review and assessment of the current program is under development and will be implemented by Fall 2010. The Faculty Association Liberal Education Committee (see Article V, Subsection 8) is responsible for review and recommendations regarding the program.

Relevance to the University Mission


Contact: Director of Liberal Education, 218-755-2853, www.bemidjistate.edu/academics/liberal_education
STUDENT DEVELOPMENT & ENROLLMENT

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

Student Development & Enrollment (SD&E): In 2006, the SD&E division was opened to provide leadership in planning, developing, executing and evaluating a shared university mission for student development and a focused enrollment management approach. The vice president serves as the Chief Student Affairs Officer (CSAO) of the University, serves on senior staff along with the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Vice President for Finance and Administration, and is an advocate and voice for the students in policy discussions.

Prior to the development of the SD&E division, Bemidji State student development and university services were administered jointly by Academic Affairs and Finance and Administration. Now under one roof, they have an articulated mission (see left) that informs SD&E’s master plan, the J-Plan (Learning Journey, 2008-2013).

Motivation for Change

In a May 10, 2005 memo to Bemidji State bargaining units and the Student Senate, President Jon Quistgaard addressed the need for an SD&E office: The challenges associated with meeting student development needs and University management goals are becoming increasingly complex. Both student service expectations and the service expectations from within our own campus continue to increase. Central to many of the student and University needs that are brought forward to my attention as well as those identified in my own reading are:

1. What can we do to more effectively work with students in identifying, clarifying and achieving their overall education goals?
2. How can we continuously improve the quality of on-campus student life?
3. What should be the focus of our student development non-credit bearing educational experiences?
4. How can we best prepare students for success in our interdependent society?
5. How can we improve student access to, and retention in, the University?
6. Finally, how can we best use our resources in meeting student needs and student expectations?

Process for Change

Based on the above concerns, President Quistgaard redirected the salary line for the Vice President for External Affairs to one for a Vice President of Student Development & Enrollment. This was followed by the charging of a strategic planning/screening committee to develop goals, make recommendations for an SD&E organizational model and conduct a search. An Interim vice president was appointed early fall semester 2006. A permanent vice president was appointed summer 2007.

Current Status

SD&E is home to more than 30 areas managed by fourteen directors. Building on student development theoretical frameworks, the directors have identified five Communities of Practice (Etienne Wenger, see left) that are utilized to carry out the J-Plan. Progress with implementation of the J-Plan is assessed through a Balanced Scorecard approach.

Accomplishments of SD&E include the opening of the Advising Success Center (ASC) in 2007-2008. The ASC team works individually with students helping them find their place at Bemidji State University and make the most of their experiences. ASC coordinates advising and tutoring services, the First-Year Experience program, New and Transfer Student Orientation, and a fall convocation for new students.

Relevance to the University Mission

SD&E’s mission supports and is informed by the university’s mission to Engage. Embrace. Educate., and the Signature Themes, International/Multicultural Understanding, Civic Engagement and Environmental Stewardship. Student development services are addressed specifically in primary mission documents, including University Plan Strategy A, and in foundational mission documents, including the SD&E J-Plan (master plan).

Contact: Vice President for Student Development & Enrollment, 218-755-2075.
www.bemidjistate.edu/offices/development_enrollment
CHAPTER ONE
Criterion One

Bemidji State University shapes students who go out to shape the world.

Alumnus Benjamin Tsang, Chemistry

Senior Scientist, Ottawa Health Research Institute; Professor in Obstetrics and Gynecology, University of Ottawa: “People like [my professor] got me going on my studies in chemistry... He engaged us—didn’t look down on us—and tried to develop us as individuals, maximizing our capacity to learn and ultimately our potential.”

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Criterion One: Mission and Integrity

The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.

Core Component 1a: The organization’s mission documents are clear and articulate publicly the organization’s commitments.

Core Component 1b: In its mission documents, the organization recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.

Core Component 1c: Understanding of and support for the mission pervade the organization.

Core Component 1d: The organization’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the organization to fulfill its mission.

Core Component 1e: The organization upholds and protects its integrity.

Organization of Chapter One

Introduction
1. Primary Mission Documents (Core Components 1a, 1b)
2. Foundational Mission Documents (Core Components 1a, 1c)
3. Mission Integrity (Core Components 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e)
4. Priorities for Improvement

Summary of Evidence
Strengths and Challenges
INTRODUCTION

In its mission documents, Bemidji State University clearly and consistently articulates its mission, including core values, goals, and commitments to internal and external constituents. The documents identify processes for accomplishing the mission in fair and balanced ways; embrace complex and broad notions of diversity; provide for academic quality and continuous improvement; accommodate innovative response to unanticipated change; and encourage collaborative decision-making. Further, the university’s mission is evident in strategic documents at all levels, including master, college and department plans and student development and university services plans. It is also manifest in the actions of the university from its academic programs to its physical plant. Mission documents are readily available to the public.

1. PRIMARY MISSION DOCUMENT: THE UNIVERSITY PLAN (Core Components 1a, 1b)

The 2008-2013 University Plan defines Bemidji State’s mission and provides guidance for decision-making. Reflecting the complexity of the university’s overall mission, the University Plan has five integrated components:

- Vision
- Mission
- Signature Themes (values)
- SCOT analysis
- Strategies

At the time of the 2000 continuing accreditation self-study, the university did not have a comprehensive strategic plan. The first one was implemented for 2002-2007, indicating significant progress in developing a culture of planning. The evolution of the current University Plan and its elements are discussed and documented in Chapter Two, Criterion Two Preparing for the Future, especially in 1. Consistent Mission, Refinement of Identity and 3. Planning Documents.

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.

The vision statement articulates the university’s understanding that it operates in a vast arena, from the personal and imaginative world of individuals to the greater world in a global sense. The statement also articulates the understanding that university study changes the lives of individuals and, in turn, they change the worlds they live in. The term “worlds” is intentional in the statement: it is manifold in meaning and application, as is the potential of the university educated citizen and of human endeavor.

Vision, Mission or Mission, Vision?

Traditionally, Bemidji State has placed its vision statement first in its documents, followed by its mission statement. The vision is taken as a larger perspective that encircles the mission, thus preceding it.

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.

The university’s mission statement identifies the actions that carry out values expressed in the vision. It explains the ways in which the university shapes individuals and thus shapes worlds: we engage students in thinking and creativity; we embrace notions of responsible citizenship, from the personal world to the global world; and we educate students for thinking toward the future—a collective act of the imagination. The use of verbs in the mission statement is intentional: we are a university of action.
Recently, Bemidji State has made a renewed effort to think about its mission, to clarify it and to discover how to use it to drive the organization. During the building of the current University Plan, discussions were encouraged among students, faculty and staff that contributed to the development of the new mission. Those discussions continue in lively dialogues about mission statements in general and Bemidji’s mission in particular and contribute to connecting ground-level planning to university-wide goals and objectives through a framework of multiple assessment feedback loops.

The new mission has begun to resonate throughout the university. It is reflected in areas as diverse as budget priorities, the curriculum, recruiting materials for faculty, staff and students, and college, academic department and university service missions.

**Signature Themes**

Bemidji State’s Signature Themes support the university’s mission and help focus efforts to move toward a more intentional university culture.

Students, through the sum of their educational experience at Bemidji State, will have multiple opportunities to learn about, experience, and reflect on the university’s Signature Themes. The themes represent core values that guide curriculum and services. Not tightly defined, they invite interpretation and discovery.

- International/Multicultural understanding
- Civic engagement
- Environmental stewardship

The university values diversity in myriad forms: it values actions by individuals who shape the worlds they inhabit and for which they are responsible; it values the Earth we live on and accepts responsibility for its health and well-being.

These values fire the imagination and lead to action. They are the passion that fuels change, that shapes potential and worlds.

**SCOT Analysis: Internal Strengths, Internal Challenges; External Opportunities, External Threats**

In the context of its vision and mission, the SCOT analysis scans the internal and external environments in which Bemidji State operates. Some items are oxymoronic: both favorable and unfavorable, blessing and curse. For example, “University Planning” appears under Internal Strengths and Internal Challenges, as does “Information and Support Technology.” “Service to Student Populations” appears under External Opportunities; “The Changing Societal Landscape of Northern Minnesota,” i.e., student demographics, appears under External Threats.

University planning, both a strength and a challenge, is, as it should be, a work in progress, as is information and support technology. The changing societal landscape of northern Minnesota, which includes the movement of our student base away from the region, is ameliorated by the potential of a broadened, worldwide student base made available to Bemidji State as students here and abroad come to see the world as their home.

**Strategies for 2008-2013**

The institutional goals and priorities in the Strategies for 2008-2013 complete the University Plan. The evolution of the strategies, as well as the other components of the plan, is discussed in Chapter Two, Criterion Two Preparing for the Future, 3. Planning Documents.
The plan has four strategies. Each is followed by a Strategic Imperative that gives direction to the strategy and a value statement that identifies the values that inform the strategy.

**Strategy A: Engage Students for Success in Careers, Communities and Life**
Strategic Imperative: Create opportunities for student success through high quality programs and services.
Value Statement: Bemidji State recognizes the value of higher education as a public good, provides student-centered access to learning, meets the needs of our diverse, rural and nontraditional students, and promotes lifelong learning.

**Strategy B: Promote Vital Communities through Involvement**
Strategic Imperative: Support and promote community vitality through Bemidji State’s commitments within our local, regional, national and world spheres.
Value Statement: Bemidji State values the supportive relationships between the university and its communities.

**Strategy C: Innovate for a Changing World**
Strategic Imperative: Accommodate change through an organizational culture of creativity, innovation and planning.
Value Statement: Bemidji State values flexibility and adaptability as means to change.

**Strategy D: Optimize Resources to Achieve the University’s Vision and Mission**
Strategic Imperative: Effectively manage and increase enrollment and resources in support of the university’s vision and mission.
Value Statement: Bemidji State recognizes and honors the role of the university in the stewardship of its resources and the importance of accountability.

Each strategy also contains a Goals and Measurements component. As noted in the plan, “Goals and Measurements evaluate achievement of the University Plan and of related items in MnSCU’s Strategic Plan. They are numbered consecutively throughout the Plan.”

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

The strategies are implemented through initiatives. As noted in the plan, the initiatives “are accounted for in Annual Work Plans and Work Plan Reports.”

Evidence of the mission documents permeating university structures and actions follows in 3. Mission Integrity.

### 2. FOUNDATIONAL MISSION DOCUMENTS (Core Components 1a, 1c)

The five components of the University Plan comprise the primary mission documents of Bemidji State. Those documents are developed through and supported by the foundational mission plans:

- Master Plans
- College and Department Plans
- Student Development and University Services Department Plans

The relationship of these documents to the University Plan, and especially to the Strategies for 2008-2013, is discussed and documented in Chapter Two, Criterion Two. That discussion provides evidence that the foundational master, college and department plans give shape and meaning to the University Plan.

Mission evolves at the foundational level. Mission integrity is promoted when the stated mission is congruent with foundational actions.
3. MISSION INTEGRITY (Core Components 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e)

As noted above, mission permeates planning at Bemidji State: it is consistently articulated and referenced in its primary and foundational mission documents. Proof that mission permeates the organization lies in the application of the mission to everyday operations.

The examples that follow are offered as evidence that mission permeates both the letter and the spirit of Bemidji State’s actions. The proofs are organized according to the three promises of the mission:

- Engage
- Embrace
- Educate

Attention is also drawn to the university’s Signature Themes, which include broad concepts of diversity:

- Signature Themes
  - International/Multicultural understanding
  - Civic engagement
  - Environmental stewardship

E1 Engage in New Worlds of Thought (Core Components 1b, 1c)

“New worlds of thought” is a relative concept. For a traditional freshman, it might mean introduction to the philosophy of Plato. For a graduate student it might mean the integration of learning into a focused, innovative thesis. For a faculty member it might mean new knowledge generated through scientific research or the creation of a work of art. For the university it might mean diversity in academic programming. For a business in Bemidji it might mean ongoing education for employees.

Internal Constituents

Bemidji State’s promise to “engage in new worlds of thought” is evidenced in faculty, staff and administration credentials and professional development, and in curriculum, program and assessment planning and processes.

Qualified Faculty, Staff, and Administration

Bemidji State assures that its faculty, staff and administration have preparation and credentials relevant to its mission. This is accomplished primarily through two processes: hiring and professional development.

Hiring Processes

Hiring processes at Bemidji State reflect the university’s mission, including diversity interests. Appropriate credentials are required for hiring in all positions and protocol is utilized for writing and advertising job descriptions and for search advisory committees. The protocol requires that position descriptions include the university’s mission statement and Signature Themes and an affirmative action statement. Affirmative action policy is utilized to determine search advisory committee membership.

Bemidji State utilizes NeoGov, an electronic application management system, for faculty and staff position applications. The system was initiated in September 2009.

Career Opportunities at Bemidji State University are advertised on the university’s web site and as noted in the 2008-2010 Affirmative Action Plan University and College, Chapter 11 Recruitment Plan. The university participates in the Upper Midwest Higher Education Recruitment Consortium (HERC). Bemidji State uses NeoGov electronic application system for all of its positions. This system saves paper and allows search advisory committees to work more conveniently. In the past, application files had to be reviewed in secured offices where they were kept. In addition, NeoGov accommodates pre-screening filters (determined by the committees) that save time in vetting the applications.

Affirmative action documents, including nondiscrimination and reasonable accommodation policies, and a complaint procedures flowchart are available online.
Professional Development: Professional development processes are in place for faculty, staff and administration.

For faculty, the process is defined in and regulated by the Inter Faculty Organization/MnSCU Master Agreement. It requires regular professional development plans and reports based on five criteria:

I. Demonstrated ability to teach effectively or perform effectively in other current assignments
II. Scholarly or creative achievement or research.
III. Evidence of continuing preparation and study.
IV. Contribution to Student Growth and Development.
V. Service to the University and Community.

The plans and reports are commented on by department faculty and chairs and are commented on and used by deans and the academic vice president to advise faculty members on appropriate professional development. The documents also contribute to decisions on faculty promotion and tenure. The IFO/MnSCU Master Agreement addresses professional development evaluation in Appendix G.

Directors and staff in all divisions of the university are also evaluated on a regular basis as provided by bargaining unit agreements.

By way of example:
MSUAASF employees utilize an Evaluation Planning Form and an Evaluation Records and Notes Form in their evaluation process.

Complementing annual staff review, the strategic plan for the Office of Student Development & Enrollment, the J-Plan, provides for professional staff development:

J-Plan Strategies to Achieve the Mission
6. Promote and support staff professional development. Hallmarks of a strong, unified and successful staff include collaboration and collegiality; scholarship, participation in conferences and knowledge of professional literature; the framing of work in a common language of learning; and the modeling of learning and growth.

The Human Resources Office contributes to professional development by offering seminars for directors, managers and staff.

By way of example:
- 2000 We Are the Key: Keys to success in personal life as well as professional.
- 2002 Catch and Release the Energy: Feel good about your job, yourself. Personal wellness, stress management, pride in doing a good job.
- 2006 Surviving and Thriving: Change.
- 2009 Performance Management: Focus on Development, March 2009, for Supervisors
- 2009 Engaging Conversations, for Supervisors

Deans develop annual plans and goals, submit annual reports, attend professional seminars, and are evaluated by faculty through a formal process. Faculty evaluations are shared with other deans and contribute to further goal development.

Vice presidents and the President of the university are evaluated annually according to processes established by Human Resources, Office of the Chancellor, MnSCU Board of Trustees. Divisional and individual goals in alignment with the university’s strategic plan are established each year with outcome measurements.
Evaluations are based on six areas:

- Strategic university leadership
- Communication
- Resource management
- Innovation/creativity
- Leadership development
- Personal attributes

**Curriculum Integrity and Vitality**

The university’s curriculum processes and documents support Bemidji State’s mission to “Engage in new worlds of thought.” Assessment systems are also in place to further assure the integrity of the mission, including statement of learning goals (Dimensions of Student Learning), high academic standards and assessment of achieved learning. These are discussed at length in Chapter Two, Criterion Two.

The Dimensions of Student Learning, instituted in the 1995 University Assessment Plan (updated in 2009), state learning outcomes that students are expected to attain by graduation. They are listed in the MAP (Master Academic Plan) and the J-Plan (The Learning Journey; Student Development & Enrollment Master Plan) and are referenced in the Master Facility Plan. Academic Department five-year assessment plans are based on the Dimensions of Student Learning. The dimensions, including further description and examples of objectives, are included in Guidelines: Five-Year Academic Program Planning and Review Cycle (Page 32, April 2008).

The dimensions roughly parallel the three points of the university’s mission and Signature Themes and thus contribute to mission continuity:

- **Dimension 1 Intellectual Development**
  - Mission: Engage in new worlds of thought
  - Signature Theme: International/Multicultural understanding

- **Dimension 2 Understanding of Self and Relating to Others**
  - Mission: Embrace responsible citizenship
  - Signature Theme: Civic engagement

- **Dimension 3 Participation in an Emerging Global Society**
  - Mission: Educate for a future that can only be imagined
  - Signature Theme: Environmental stewardship

Integrity of mission is further supported by the university’s internal curriculum development and approval process. (New programs are also approved at the state level.) The process provides evidence that curriculum is developed in a cooperative atmosphere, a sharing of leadership and authority that promotes and models the university’s mission.

As designated in the Curriculum Proposal Approval Process proposals move through the following stages:

- Faculty member (originator) and/or department chair/program coordinator (originator) (in consultation with the faculty Curriculum Liaison, as appropriate)
- Department, for approval
- Dean, for approval, in consultation with Academic Affairs Vice President
- Academic Affairs, for tracking
- Curriculum Coordinator, for tracking
- Curriculum Committee, and Teacher Education, Graduate and Liberal Education Committees, as appropriate, for recommendation
- Faculty Senate, for recommendation
- Vice President for Academic Affairs, for approval
- MnSCU approval, as necessary
Curriculum proposals are logged into a web-based document so their progress through the process can be readily ascertained. This feature is new since the 2000 self-study and was developed in response to concerns about fair notice to the campus regarding proposals and about faculty and department ability to track proposals.

Program Diversity, Vitality, Accreditation
Bemidji State’s select professional programs support the university’s mission by providing students with additional undergraduate study and career options, including online programs.

By way of example:
- **Bachelor of Applied Science in Applied Engineering**: An on-campus, “2 + 2” degree program in engineering, designed to build on an individual’s certificate, diploma or 2-year technical degree.
- **Bachelor of Applied Science in Technology Management**: An on-campus, “2 + 2” degree program in technology management designed to build on an individual’s certificate, diploma or 2-year technical degree.
- **Bachelor of Fine Arts in Creative and Professional Writing**: On-campus, offers students the opportunity to “write for the love of it, write for a living,” to follow their passion and shape it into a career.
- **Bachelor of Science in Nursing**: Responds to a societal and regional need for more health care professionals. Blended format, on-campus and online, including collaboration with Anoka-Ramsey Community College, Coon Rapids, Minnesota.
- **Bachelor of Science in Business Administration**: This program, offered on-campus and online, prepares students in entrepreneurship, small business management, finance, international business, management, marketing and general business administration.
- **Bachelor of Science, Associate of Science in Criminal Justice**: An on-campus or online generalist program that prepares students for careers in law enforcement and corrections, and with public and private agencies concerned with the prevention and investigation of crime.
- **Bachelor of Science in Teacher Education (DLITE)**: The Distributed Learning in Teacher Education program is a blended program (online and on-campus) in K-8 Elementary Education for rural and urban students who cannot attend a campus-based teacher education program.

**Portfolio Teaching Certification (FasTrack)**: The Professional Education Department offers courses online that assist in alternative teacher certification (portfolio) through the State of Minnesota.

Mission integrity is also evidenced in Bemidji’s program accreditations:
- **Undergraduate Programs**: Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
- **Graduate Programs**: Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
- **Accounting and Business Programs**: International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education
- **Chemistry Program**: American Chemical Society
- **Industrial Technology Programs**: The Association of Technology, Management, and Applied Engineering (formerly National Association of Industrial Technology Board of Accreditation)
- **Music Program**: National Association of Schools of Music
- **Nursing Program**: Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education
- **Social Work Program**: Council of Social Work Education
- **Teacher Education Programs**: Minnesota Board of Teaching (currently seeking NCATE accreditation)
**Signature Theme—International/Multicultural Understanding**

While the three Signature Themes cut across the three mission elements, International/Multicultural understanding is an especially natural fit for “Engage in new worlds of thought.” Numerous programs at Bemidji State engage students in awareness of diverse cultures, opinions, fields of study, career opportunities and other worlds that might be utterly new to them or that they might have deemed to be out of their own reach. The following programs especially address international/multicultural understanding and are evidence that Bemidji State broadly acknowledges the concept of diversity, understands that it extends beyond race and gender, and embraces varied interpretations of human experiences and values.

**Academic Programs**

While most programs at Bemidji State teach and model diversity in their curricula, some programs are especially designed to broaden students’ awareness and understanding of diversity. These include the following:

- International Studies
- Indian Studies
- Languages and Ethnic Studies
- Professional Education, Special Education
- Women’s Studies

**Student Development and University Support Services**

The university also recognizes the diverse needs of its student body and addresses those needs through student development and university services and programs, including the following:

- American Indian Resource Center (AIRC)
- International Program Center
- Campus Childcare
- Counseling Center
- Disabilities Office
- Math Help Room
- Outdoor Program Center (OPC)
- PIER 9: Prevention Intervention Education Referral
- Responsible Men, Responsible Women
- TRIO Student Support Services
- Upward Bound
- Veterans Services
- Women’s Center
- Writing Resource Center

**Student Organizations**

In general, student organizations reflect the diverse interests of the university’s student body. In addition, some serve specific student groups, promote certain cultures or address diversity issues. These include the following organizations:

- American Indian Science and Engineering Society
- Council of Indian Students
- German Club
- Habitat for Humanity
- International Student Organization
- Lifestyle Educators
- Phoenix of BSU
- Social Work Club
- Spanish Club
- Students for the Environment
- Students’ Today Leaders Forever
- Women’s Club Hockey
- Women’s Rugby
BEMIDJI STATE UNIVERSITY

Criterion One

Bemidji State Internal Constituents Include:
- Current students
- Faculty and staff
- Departments and units within the university

Bemidji State External Constituents Include:
- Potential students
- Alumni
- Businesses
- Organizations
- University Foundation Donors
- Other MnSCU schools
- P-12 area schools
- Minnesota State Legislature
- Accrediting bodies
- Granting agencies
- Local, regional and state governments and communities
- American Indian governments, communities and schools

External Constituents
Bemidji State fully appreciates its role as an institution of higher learning in its local, regional, national and international communities. These relationships are discussed in Chapter Five, Criterion Five.

University Plan
In its strategic plan, one of four strategies is wholly devoted to external relationships: Strategy B, Promote Vital Communities through Involvement. Initiatives within the plan address those that support the mission component “Engage in new worlds of thought,” including the following:
- B.1 Support and promote educational vitality.
- B.3 Support and promote cultural and recreational vitality.

Offerings
Examples of university offerings that especially accommodate the promise to “engage in new worlds of thought” for external constituents include the following:
- 360 Degrees: Manufacturing and Applied Engineering Center of Excellence
- Corporate and Custom Training
- Post-secondary Education Options
  - Concurrent high school enrollment
  - Campus enrollment
- Honors Council lectures
- Art exhibits
  - Regional, national and international artists and lecturers
  - Hands-on workshops and conferences
- Music performances
- Theatrical performances
- Literary publications
  - Dust & Fire: Writing and Art by Women
  - New Voices: Fiction & Poetry by Minnesota High School Students
  - Rivers Meeting: Writing and Art by Bemidji State University Students

E2 Embrace Responsible Citizenship (Core Components 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e)
The notion of responsible citizenship is bred into Bemidji State. The university was formed in 1919 as Bemidji Normal School when the citizens of the region implored the state to help them provide licensed teachers for their ever-growing student population. Today the notion of civic responsibility is more complex and far-reaching than it was early in the last century and even early in this century. Bemidji State models responsible citizenship, guides students and faculty in civic engagement opportunities, serves diverse populations and cultures and maintains significant relationships with external constituencies.

Internal Constituents
Bemidji State’s promise to “embrace responsible citizenship” is evidenced in its collaborative decision-making, policies and practices, its recognition of and service to diverse populations and cultures, and in its “Civic Engagement” signature theme.

Collaboration, Consultation, Communication
Bemidji State benefits from and models decision-making informed by campus collaborations and consultations, by open communication strategies. This approach was recommended as a “robust strategy” in the 2007 final report of the Scenario Planning Committee: “Focus on improved campus culture: communications, empowerment, civility.” The recommendation is included in the 2008-2013 University Plan:
Strategy C: Innovate for a Changing World

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.

In addition to the 2005-2007 Scenario Planning Committee, recent ad hoc collaborations include the 2007 Reorganization Work Group and the Liberal Education Task Force. Ongoing consultation occurs at Academic Forums for vice presidents, deans and department chairs.

Ongoing communication strategies include regular Meet and Confer sessions with bargaining units; frequent Budget Forums; topical campus conversations; regular newsletters and online news postings; and administrative meetings and retreats with vice presidents and directors.

By way of example:
October 2009 duty day devoted to the writing of academic department vision and mission statements. A presentation was made by the Dean of the College of Business, Technology & Communication, followed by department work sessions.

These collaborations, consultations and communication help inform university planning and action.

By way of example:
The outcomes of collaboration, consultation and communication strategies for the 2008-2013 University Plan are discussed in Chapter Two, Criterion Two.

Policies and Practices
Bemidji State, in compliance with federal, state and MnSCU regulations, conveys the rights and responsibilities of its constituents, including codes for conduct and acceptable behavior. In its consistent administration of these policies, the university models responsible citizenship, assuring that constituents are treated equally and fairly.

The university Code of Student Conduct provides an example of Bemidji State’s interest in honor, dignity, integrity and responsible behavior, congruent with the university’s mission. From the introduction to the code:

The BSU Student Code of Conduct and Student Conduct System are an integral part of Bemidji State University’s mission. The student conduct system contributes to the teaching of appropriate individual and group behavior and establishes behavioral expectations to foster a campus community free from disruption and harm. Students are expected to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct, and the Student Conduct System. The rights and responsibilities of students and the expectations of the University are described in this handbook along with grievance and other procedures. Behavior that is threatening to the safety or welfare of one’s self or others, or that is harassing or discriminatory in nature, will be reviewed promptly by the University, and appropriate action will be taken.

The code follows MnSCU practices and provides for appeals. For example, the Student Program and Admission (SPA) Committee reviews and acts on academic appeals by students.

Bemidji State demonstrates responsible citizenship through other means, as well, including the following:

- Bargaining unit agreements that address conduct and responsibility concerns such as equal opportunity, non-discrimination, affirmative action, and mediation of disputes.
- Responsible Men, Responsible Women, a training session on discrimination and harassment required for employees and students.
- Compliance with local, state and federal policies, procedures and laws.
- Delegation of authority through established internal systems, such as the curriculum review process described above.
Cooperative decision making across the levels of the university is described in Chapter Two, Criterion Two (4. Planning Processes).

Opportunities and services at Bemidji State are made available to external constituents based on established policies and processes, including the use of contracts and competitive bidding. Logs and records are kept utilizing, in part, an Event Management System, and procedures are in place for appeals. These help assure fair and equal treatment for internal and external constituents and contribute to the integrity of the university’s mission.

**Service to Diverse Populations and Cultures**

The university also models civic engagement through its attention to diverse populations and cultures. In addition to academic and service programs noted above in E1 Engage, Signature Theme—International/Multicultural understanding, the university encourages and supports diversity through its international studies programs, disability services, relationships with regional tribal, community and technical colleges and affirmative action hiring processes.

**Signature Theme—Civic Engagement**

Bemidji State’s commitment to civic engagement is demonstrated in student opportunities to participate in university practices and student organizations. Opportunities are supported in three general areas: university governance, student organizations and academic classes.

**Governance**

Student participation and representation is sought at all levels of university decision-making. The president and vice presidents meet regularly with student leadership and the Student Senate Cabinet meets with the President’s Cabinet. The president of the student body gives a monthly report to the university president and the Faculty Association Senate. The Student Senate is a member of the Minnesota State University Student Association.

The Student Senate provides representation for established committees, councils and related groups, such as the following:

- Gaps & Trends Committee
- Futures Council
- Environmental Advisory Committee
- Student Activities Fee Allocation Committee (SAFAC)
- Dining Services Committee
- University Conduct Board
- University Parking Committee

Student Senate also recommends representatives to various ad hoc committees and task forces, such as the following:

- Liberal Education Task Force
- HLC Self-study Criterion Committees
- Screening Advisory Committees for administrative positions

Student representatives also serve on other university and departmental committees, ad hoc groups and task forces, such as the following:

- President’s Student Commission
- College of Business, Technology & Communication Student Advisory Council
**Student Organizations**

These dynamic groups are evidence that civic engagement is valued by Bemidji State students. The organizations are initiated and maintained by the students themselves with appropriate guidance from faculty and student development services. There are currently 70 student organizations on campus. Students are invited to form new groups to fulfill needs not already met.

**Academic Classes**

Bemidji State has a history of encouraging civic engagement in its curriculum and in the community. Three recent surveys studied the kinds and levels of civic engagement at Bemidji State:

- 2005: *Inventory of Civic Engagement*, Dr. Elizabeth Dunn, History Department; Dr. Colleen Greer, Sociology Department
- 2008: *Campus Compact*, Dr. Lisa Erwin, Vice President for Student Development & Enrollment

The 2005 Inventory of Civic Engagement report recommends that Bemidji State undertake a systematic inventory of civic engagement activities at the university. The 2008 Campus Compact report recommends that the university pursue the opening of a service learning and civic engagement center.

Based on the results of the 2005 and 2008 reports, Bemidji State has identified civic engagement as one of its three major Priorities for Improvement. Civic engagement is discussed further in Chapter Five, Criterion Five.

**External Constituents**

Bemidji State's promise to “embrace responsible citizenship” is evidenced in its actions and practices with external constituents, especially at the local, regional and state levels, including those identified below. For discussions of services, collaborative projects, and needs and expectations shared by the university and its external constituents, see Chapter Five.

**E3 Educate for a Future that Can Only Be Imagined** (*Core Components 1c, 1d, 1e*)

Bemidji State has educated for the future since its inception as a teacher training college. The “future” of today, however, is utterly different than the future anticipated at the beginning of the last century: the speed at which life changes has increased wildly. Information—and misinformation—is available at the click of a computer mouse. Education today must be a blend of knowledge acquisition, critical thinking skills, a cultivated aptitude for change and the ability to make sound decisions based on reason and on past experience. This future includes not only human affairs, but the well-being and even the fate of Earth itself.

**Internal Constituents**

Bemidji State's promise to “educate for a future that can only be imagined” is evidenced in its preparation of students for learning throughout their lives, including preparation for adapting to and learning from new situations. Bemidji State teaches relevant skills through dynamic programming, responsive planning and implementation processes, and modeling a commitment to environmental stewardship.

**Lifelong Learning**

Bemidji State's diversified student population, relevant academic programs and civic engagement opportunities give students real-life experiences in living with change and expands their horizons even while they are still on campus. The university is intentional in presenting these experiential opportunities. See Chapter Four, Criterion Four and Priorities for Improvement: Civic Engagement for detailed discussions of civic engagement. Bemidji State also educates students for lives and careers in the immediate future by offering new and revised academic programs, such as those noted above in E1 Engage in New Worlds of Thought. By attending to the vitality of its offerings, the university models the value of responding and adapting to change in its social and cultural environment.
Active Planning Processes
In addition to providing students with a dynamic learning environment, Bemidji State, recognizing the unpredictable nature of societal and economic trends, models through its own planning processes the values of change and adaptation. For example, since the 2000 self-study, three significant changes have been implemented in administrative structures:

• The office of Student Development & Enrollment has been opened. (See Feature Story “The Learning Journey.”)
• The university’s college structure has been reorganized. (See Feature Story “College Reorganization.”)
• The Information Technology Services was reorganized and is led by a Chief Information Officer.

Signature Theme—Environmental Stewardship
Bemidji State recognizes that the future of human endeavor is tied to the future of Earth and that the tending of earthly gardens begins at home. In its academic programs and institutional planning, the university models appropriate stewardship of the physical environment in which it resides.

Academic Programs
In 1998, Bemidji State introduced People and the Environment, Category Ten, into its Liberal Education curriculum. The goals for the requirement are defined by the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum:

To improve students’ understanding of today’s complex environmental challenges. Students will examine the interrelatedness of human society and the natural environment. Knowledge of both bio-physical principles and socio-cultural systems is the foundation for integrative and critical thinking about environmental issues.

The university enhanced the model by creating a course structure with discipline-based breakout sections and interdisciplinary large group panel discussions, providing students with a common learning experience.

Bemidji State offers Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees in Environmental Studies. Other related programs include the following:

• Bachelor of Arts in Biology, including Ecology, Ethology, and Evolution; Wildlife Management
• Bachelor of Science in Aquatic Biology, including Aquatic Systems, Fisheries Biology, Wetlands Ecology
• Bachelor of Science in Geography, including Regional, Park, Recreational and Land Use Planning
• Bachelor of Science in Wilderness Management and Outdoor Recreation Planning
• Minor in Earth Science
• Earth and Space Science Specialty, Science Education Teacher Licensure

Courses related to environmental stewardship are offered in other programs, as well, most notably in Liberal Education Category Ten, People and the Environment.

Two student organizations are directly committed to environmental concerns:

• Society of Geology and Environmental Geo-Science (SEEGS)
• Students for the Environment
The university models environmental stewardship in its planning documents and its actions. For example, in addition to the environmental stewardship signature theme, the 2008-2013 strategies include the following:

Strategy B: Promote Vital Communities through Involvement

B.4 Promote environmental vitality. Work with partners to assure the environmental stewardship of our shared communities.

Strategy D: Optimize Resources to Achieve the University’s Vision and Mission

D.6 Provide stewardship of the campus physical environment. Explore means and methods to model responsibility toward the land and other natural resources.

Following from the University Plan, the Master Academic and Master Facility Plans address environmental stewardship concerns:

Master Academic Plan (MAP)

2. Hire and Support Excellent Faculty
   Decision Parameter: Encourages people who are hired to continue to build on the existing scholarship agendas and interests that support international, environmental, American Indian, natural resource, assessment, and civic engagement topics.

Master Facility Plan

Goals: 14. Improve the campus environmental quality: Environmental stewardship is one of the three core values of Bemidji State University. This plan promotes sustainability primarily through site development, and alignment with the mandated B3 Guidelines for sustainable development.

Differences from the previous Master Facility Plan: 6. Recommendations for environmentally sustainable site and building development.

Suggested improvements from Student, Faculty, Staff and Community Surveys: [Item k] Encourage a campus wide environmental ethic.

In the top ten capital improvement projects for the next ten years: Improve the campus environmental quality.

As further evidence that a commitment to environmental stewardship pervades the campus culture, the Student Senate initiated and passed a bill requiring students to pay a five dollar “green fee” each semester. This fee contributes to the salary of a Sustainability Coordinator, matched by university funding. The position is operational.

External Constituents

As part of its mission “to educate for the future,” Bemidji State supports educational opportunities for its external constituents. These outreach programs serve a broad range of constituents, from other educational institutions such as high schools and two-year colleges to Marvin Windows, a significant employer in northern Minnesota.

As noted above in E2 Embrace Responsible Citizenship, External Constituents, relationships with external constituents are discussed Chapter Five, Criterion Five.
CRITERION ONE PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Bemidji State University has identified three Priorities for Improvement. These are described in Priority for Improvement features and in the Priorities for Improvement Criterion Summary. Supporting documents and detailed plans for improvement are provided in the self-study resource room.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority for Improvement</th>
<th>Civic Engagement (Leadership Center)</th>
<th>School of Graduate Studies</th>
<th>Professional Education Department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criterion One: Mission and Integrity (Summary, All Criteria)</td>
<td>Signature Theme: Develop Leadership Center mission and structures and processes to assure integrity of service learning.</td>
<td>Develop Graduate School mission, improve structures and processes to assure integrity of school's and university's missions.</td>
<td>Develop department mission; improve structures and processes to assure integrity of department's and university's missions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CRITERION ONE: MISSION AND INTEGRITY
SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

Core Component 1a
The organization’s mission documents are clear and articulate publicly the organization’s commitments.

- The 2008-2013 University Plan defines Bemidji State’s mission and provides guidance for decision-making.
- The vision statement articulates the university’s understanding that it operates in a vast arena, from the personal and imaginative world of individuals to the greater world in a global sense.
- The university’s mission statement identifies the actions that carry out values expressed in the vision. It explains the ways in which the university shapes individuals and thus shapes worlds.
- The institutional goals and priorities in the Strategies for 2008-2013 complete the University Plan. Each of the four strategies is followed by a Strategic Imperative that gives direction to the strategy and a value statement that identifies the values that inform the strategy. (This contributes to ease of understanding for readers.)
- Primary and foundational mission documents are readily available to internal and external constituents.
- The university’s curriculum processes and documents support Bemidji State’s mission to “Engage in new worlds of thought.” Assessment systems are also in place to further assure the integrity of the mission, including statement of learning goals (Dimensions of Student Learning), high academic standards and assessment of achieved learning.
- The university regularly reviews its mission documents and evaluates its processes and progress. (Discussed at length in Chapter Two, Criterion Two.)

Core Component 1b
In its mission documents, the organization recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.

- The university values the fathoming of diversity; it values actions by individuals who shape the worlds they inhabit and for which they are responsible; it values the Earth we live on and accepts responsibility for its health and well-being.
- The University Plan 2008-2013 provides several strategies for addressing diversity, including the Mission, the Signature Themes, and the Strategies.
• The university models civic engagement through its attention to diverse populations and cultures. In addition to academic and service programs noted above in E1 Engage, Signature Theme—International/Multicultural understanding, the university encourages and supports diversity through its international studies programs, disability services, relationships with regional tribal, community and technical colleges and affirmative action hiring processes.
• Numerous programs at Bemidji State engage students in awareness of diverse cultures, opinions, fields of study, career opportunities and other worlds that might be utterly new to them or that they might have deemed to be out of their own reach.
• The university recognizes the diverse needs of its student body and addresses those needs through student development services and programs.
• Student organizations reflect the diverse interests of the university’s student body. In addition, some serve specific student groups, promote certain cultures or address diversity issues.
• The university Code of Student Conduct provides an example of Bemidji State’s interest in honor, dignity, integrity and responsible behavior, congruent with the university’s mission.
• Bemidji State supports educational opportunities for its external constituents.

Core Component 1c
Understanding of and support for the mission pervade the organization.

• Mission permeates planning at Bemidji State: it is consistently articulated and referenced in its primary and foundational mission documents. (The relationship of foundational documents to the University Plan is discussed and documented in Chapter Two, Criterion Two and provides evidence that the foundational master, college and department plans give shape and meaning to the University Plan.)
• Mission also permeates the everyday operations of the organization.
  • Bemidji State’s promise to “engage in new worlds of thought” is evidenced in faculty, staff and administration credentials and professional development, and in curriculum, program and assessment planning and processes.
  • Bemidji State’s promise to “embrace responsible citizenship” is evidenced in its collaborative decision-making, policies and practices, its recognition of and service to diverse populations and cultures, and in its “Civic Engagement” signature theme.
  • Bemidji State’s promise to “educate for a future that can only be imagined” is evidenced in its preparation of students for learning throughout their lives, including preparation for adapting to and learning from new situations. Bemidji State teaches relevant skills through dynamic programming, responsive planning and implementation processes, and modeling a commitment to environmental stewardship.

Core Component 1d
The organization’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the organization to fulfill its mission.

Leadership collaboration is discussed further in Chapter Two, Criterion Two.

• Professional development processes are in place for faculty, staff and administration.
• Bemidji State benefits from and models decision-making informed by campus collaborations and consultations, and by open communication strategies.
• Student participation and representation is sought at all levels of university decision-making.
• Collaborations, consultations and communication help inform university planning and action.
• Ongoing consultation occurs at Academic Forums.
Core Component 1e
The organization upholds and protects its integrity.

Bemidji State upholds and protects its integrity from two vantage points:

- **Mission Integrity**
  - As noted above in Core Component 1c, mission permeates planning at Bemidji State: it is consistently articulated and referenced in its primary and foundational mission documents.
  - Also as noted in 1c, mission also permeates the everyday operations of the organization.

- **Integrity through Processes**
  - Bemidji State, in compliance with federal, state and MnSCU regulations, conveys the rights and responsibilities of its constituents, including codes for conduct and acceptable behavior. In its consistent administration of these policies, the university models responsible citizenship, assuring that constituents are treated equally and fairly.
  - The university also models civic engagement through its attention to diverse populations and cultures.
  - By attending to the vitality of its offerings, the university models the value of responding and adapting to change in its social and cultural environment.
  - The university models environmental stewardship in its planning documents and its actions.

**CRITERION ONE STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES**

**Strengths**
Cross-Cutting Themes—Future-Oriented; Learning-Focused; Connected; Distinctive.

**Challenge**
Profile: The Identity Challenge

SENIORS TO WATCH
Horizons Fall 2009, Page 19

Nicole Haugen, Grygla, MN  
*Mathematics and Biology*

Mitch Lattimer, Little Falls, MN  
*Business Administration*

Matt Goinz, Bemidji, MN  
*Music*
CHAPTER TWO

Criterion Two

Bemidji State University shapes students who go out to shape the world.

Alumna Michelle “Shelley” Ford, Mathematics

NASA Vehicle Manager, Space Shuttle Endeavor: “People [at NASA] go above and beyond to get the best work done and make sure it’s the best possible. There’s just so much pride that comes with being in the space program.” Horizons Spring/Summer 2008 Page 13

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 Chapter 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

Strengths and Challenges
INTRODUCTION

Bemidji State University utilizes integrated planning to guide decision-making, assess outcomes, determine actions, allocate resources and prepare for the future. Guided by its mission, the university continually reviews and adjusts its planning 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)

One of the many ways that Bemidji State prepares for the future is by honoring its heritage while adjusting its mission, vision and identity for present realities and impending scenarios.

By way of example, since 1985, the university has had four mission statements. While they vary in form and detail, they are consistent in emphasis:

- **2008-Present:** “Engage in new worlds of thought” builds on these earlier statements:
  - 1996-2008: “...new ideas and new skills ... grounded in shared human values....”
  - 1988-1996: “...a broad liberal education complementing academic specialization....”
  - 1985-1988: “...a sound liberal education....”

- **2008-Present:** “Embrace responsible citizenship” builds on these earlier statements:
  - 1996-2008: “enhance student access to leadership roles and encourage responsible citizenship....”
  - 1988-1996: “...function responsibly as members of an interdependent, international community....”
  - 1985-1988: “...responsible, free citizens in a democratic society....”

- **2008-Present:** “Educate for a future that can only be imagined” builds on these earlier statements:
  - 1996-2008: “...lead its students into the twenty-first century....”
  - 1988-1996: “...support continuing inquiry....”
  - 1985-1988: “...instill in each student the spark of intellectual pursuit....”

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

The university currently identifies itself as an “arts and sciences university with select professional programs” (Press Release, August 8, 2008). As with the university’s mission, the primary focus of its identity as a liberal arts and career studies institution has remained constant for many years:

- 1996-2008: Mission—“...has grown into a comprehensive university...”; vision—“...our guideposts are clear: excellence in liberal education and career preparation....”
- 1988-1996: Mission—“...a broad liberal education complementing academic specialization....” (Vision statements were not utilized at this time.)
- 1985-1988: Mission—“...comprehensive university with a balance of professional and vocational programs and with a strong commitment to the liberal arts....” (Vision statements were not utilized at this time.)
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.

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 contributed to a watershed reorganization of the university’s colleges and academic departments. (See Feature Story: Reorganization.)

The relationship of the university’s mission to planning is discussed widely in Chapter One, Criterion One.

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, Opportunities, Threats (SCOT)**

**External Threats**

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 picking up 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 its data gathering and interpretation capabilities.

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

**Student Development & Enrollment Master Plan, Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Threats (SCOT)**

**External Threats**

Student Development & 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 emerged 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 created to respond to already tightened resources and to project in the future rather than mostly presenting short-term, stop-gap measures 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, 2010-2013 budget plan responds primarily to the external pressures of state and national economies.

The Master Facility Plan also recognizes the significance of economic and 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 basic support for the facilities and programs.

**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 2030. However, neither institution will be able to rely on an expanding school age population base as a resource for future students since the overwhelming trend in Minnesota is for a much older population with a stable population predicted for the 25-44 year old category and only a slight increase in the 15-24 year age group. Each institution will need to work hard at attracting students from outside the region, improving the attendance rate of the regional population, and encouraging the movement of students at the certificate and associate degree levels to “ladder” to higher levels of education.

These challenging market and cultural trends along with a difficult financial environment require that the university be flexible in its approaches for renovating facilities as primary uses will change faster than they have in the past.
3. PLANNING DOCUMENTS (Core Components 2a, 2d)

With increasing effectiveness, 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, Department Plans
  • Colleges
  • Academic Departments
  • Non-academic Departments

As noted in Chapter One, Criterion One, values and actions of Bemidji State University originate in departments. These are coordinated and framed by college and master plans. The foundational mission documents informed the development of the 2008-2013 University Plan, including the new vision and mission statements.

As noted in Chapter One, Criterion One, Bemidji State’s mission documents are compatible with the mission documents of the Minnesota State Universities and Colleges as noted in the Bemidji State-HLC-MnSCU Crosswalk. The crosswalk also aligns master and college strategic documents with MnSCU and HLC.

Level I Documents
Previous University Plan, Strategies for 2002-2007: After the 2000 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 established institutional processes. It included vision and mission statements, a five-year goal statement, a SCOT analysis (Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Threats), and four planning strategies:

• Strategy A: Maintain, Expand, and Diversify Resources to Enhance Educational Excellence
• Strategy B: Support Excellence in Learning Programs and Services
• Strategy C: Align Resources with Priorities Identified in Five-Year Goal Statement
• Strategy D: Enhance Institutional Decision-Making and Shared Governance

The strategies included action steps and value statements (in italic).

By way of example:

Strategy B: Support Excellence in Learning Programs and Services, Action Step 1
Through Liberal Education and Honors, prepare students for life-long learning and leadership in a global society. Identify and support excellence and innovation in the Liberal Education curriculum....
To operationalize the strategies, a Work Plan was developed that identified directors and interested parties and set forth specific tasks to be addressed.

*By way of example*, a selection from the Work Plan for Action Step 1, above:

**Work Plan 26A**
Liberal Education and Honors Curriculum and Assessment  
Work Plan Director: Dean of Arts & Letters; Director of Liberal Education  
Time Line: 2004-2005 and ongoing

Continue curriculum development and further increase the use of learning outcomes assessment of the liberal arts curriculum delivered through Liberal Education and through the Honors Program.

Task 1 [of five tasks]  
Continue to develop and implement assessment measures of the Liberal Education and Honors curriculums. Suggested Participants: Liberal Education Committee, Honors Council, Academic Affairs Committee. 2004-2005

The Work Plan was followed by an annual report on each Work Plan item.

*By way of example*, the report for Work Plan 26A, above:

**2003-2004 Status Report Summary**

Discussions continued with the Liberal Education Committee, Liberal Education Director, and Dean of CAL on assessment of Liberal Education outcomes. The Liberal Education Director attended a national conference on Liberal Education assessment. A BSU proposal to the AAC&U Institute on General Education in Newport, Rhode Island, was accepted, and a team of five faculty and staff (three faculty members from Liberal Education Committee, the Liberal Education Director, and the Dean of CAL). The BSU proposal focused on Liberal Education assessment and identification of a unifying theme for Liberal Education reform. The outcome of this retreat will become part of the work for next year.

An NEH grant to provide resources for faculty to develop the civic responsibility component of Liberal Education was submitted (by Dr. Colleen Greer and Dr. Elizabeth Dunn); it was unsuccessful but was revised and will be submitted again [to NEH or elsewhere].

The anticipated MnSCU-wide Conference on the Liberal Arts, to be held in conjunction with the MnSCU Center for Teaching and Learning, was not held. With regard to other MnSCU sponsored faculty workshops, eight Bemidji State faculty members participated in four or more MnSCU Discipline Workshops during 2003-2004. An additional 11 faculty participated in Weekend Seminars or Conferences.

**Work Plans and Annual Summary Status Reports (2002-2007)** were made available campus-wide. The current University Plan (2008-2013) will be reported out annually through the University Plan Annual Report. The first plan is due spring 2010 and will include an introduction/summary, progress on strategies and goals, summaries of master plan/vice presidential annual reports and summaries of significant accomplishments and priorities for improvement.

Current University Plan, Strategies for 2008-2013: The four strategies of the 2008-2013 University Plan, roughly parallel to the strategies in the 2002-2007 plan, indicate a refinement of focus toward student success, engagement, innovation and mission:

- Strategy A: Engage Students for Success in Careers, Communities and Life  
- Strategy B: Promote Vital Communities through Involvement  
- Strategy C: Innovate for a Changing World  
- Strategy D: Optimize Resources to Achieve the University’s Vision and Mission
The 2002-2007 plan was developed in consultation with the university community; the 2008-2013 plan was developed cooperatively with the university community. Increased participation was encouraged by five years of open campus discussions that encouraged input and feedback. Venues included the following:

- Scenario Planning
- Campus Forums (Budget, Faculty, Provost, All-Campus)
- Academic Forums (vice presidents, deans, chairs)
- Faculty Conversation on Curriculum, Enrollment and Workload, October 13, 2006

The 2008-2013 University Plan reflects these many voices. By way of example, an excerpt from Closing the Loop: Campus Conversation with Crosswalk to Strategies for 2008-2013:

**Strategy C: Innovate for a Changing World**

- Number of tables discussing issue: 16 (of 22)
- Issue: Recognize unique, individual student needs and have the flexibility to meet students where they are
- Location of Related Item in Strategies for 2008-2013: A.1 Support students' professional and personal development through high quality educational programs and services. Prepare students for careers, citizenship, community service, life-long learning and leadership:
  - through engaged, academic preparation in the Liberal Education and Honors Programs and the majors;
  - through student-centered programs and services that assure access and success.

The university’s new vision and mission statements were developed concurrently with the 2008-2013 plan and were presented to the university in draft form at Campus Conversations (September 2007, January 2008) and similar venues. Feedback on the statements was sought and received through established channels, including bargaining units. The tight foci of the new vision and mission reflect a national trend toward concise statements.

**Level II Master Plans**

The University Plan’s Strategies for 2008-2013 promote integrated master plans as a means to creativity, innovation, and change, as well as a means to align with the university’s vision and mission:

**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) (2005)
- Facility (2007)
- Student Development & Enrollment (J-Plan) (2008)
- Technology (update in progress)

Two additional master plans are in progress:

- Sustainability
- Affirmative Action
The following discussions demonstrate the close integration of the master plans to the University Plan.

**Master Academic Plan (MAP):** The relationship of the MAP to the University Plan is acknowledged in the introduction to the MAP:

Planning Assumptions: The Master Academic Plan ... 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.]

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

**Master Facility Plan:** The Master Facility Plan, which is aligned with facilities planning for Northwest Technical College, takes the Master Academic Plan as its primary reference:

**Master Facility 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 2007 Master Facility Plan also complements the University Plan Strategies for 2008-2013.

**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.

**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 Facility 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.

**Master Student Development & 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 (new in 2006) for the Office of Student Development & Enrollment and the SD&E vice president and through projects such as the Advising Success Center. See also the Feature Story: Student Development & Enrollment.

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.

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 Elearning Support, the Center for Extended Learning provides support for faculty and prepares them to meet the challenges of delivering technology-enhanced learning opportunities.

Level III College, Department Plans
Level III plans include college and academic plans, and non-academic plans, such as student development (e.g., Counseling Center and Residential Life), university services (e.g., Records and Registration, and Financial Aid) and administrative services (e.g., Human Resources and Purchasing).

Colleges and Academic Departments: 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.)

The outcomes have additional sub-categories. For 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, the Decision Parameters 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:

- 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.

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 college visions and missions (with particular dates for the College of Arts & Sciences):

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

Non-Academic Departments: As noted above, these include offices for student development (such as the Counseling Center and Residential Life), university services (such as Records and Registration, and Financial Aid) and administrative services (such as Human Resources and Purchasing). Plans for non-academic departments are guided by an appropriate master plan which, in turn, is coordinated with the University Plan.

By way of example, the J-Plan, which is discussed further in Chapter Four, Criterion Four:

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”)

4. PLANNING PROCESSES (Core Components 2a, 2d)

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.
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 Introduction, Monitoring Report Update.) A moratorium on the process was recommended on December 8, 2003 by the Faculty Association Senate. A consultant, Dr. Dan Rice, University of North Dakota, was brought in to review and evaluate the planning situation at Bemidji State. In his report, Dr. Rice 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.

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.

PROFILE: THE IDENTITY CHALLENGE

Bemidji State continues to evolve and progress in meaningful ways, honoring its mission and fulfilling its promise as a learning-centered community. But change rarely occurs without lively, though loyal, opposition or without emotional as well as financial costs, and the university faces the usual stresses and strains that indicate a concerted effort by all constituents to be heard as we shape Bemidji State’s future. That the faculty and administration have recognized differences among themselves should come as no surprise. In 2001, when the university began to focus its identity and adjust its curriculum, Bemidji State initiated a difficult journey that continues today.

Conflict emerged most clearly during two recent and significant efforts to realize our new mission and identity: college reorganization and Liberal Education (general education) reform. The following profile provides a background for the situation as it stands today and our plans to address it.

The first decade of the new century has been one of significant change for Bemidji State. With the inauguration of a new president, Dr. Jon Quistgaard, in 2001, the university began a reexamination of its focus and mission.

Dr. Quistgaard began by convening focus groups both on campus and in the Bemidji community. He asked the following questions, based on Jim Collins’ Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap ... And Others Don’t (2001):

- what can we be the best at?
- what are we passionate about?
- and what drives our economic engine?
At the conclusion of these conversations, in 2005, Dr. Quistgaard proposed three Signature Themes that articulate core values of Bemidji State and its community. They are:

- International/Multicultural Awareness
- Civic Engagement
- Environmental Stewardship

Although the themes have been widely endorsed and integrated into student experiences, at this juncture, the university began to strain against its older identity as a comprehensive university. Bemidji State remained too small, at 5,000 students, to fully claim that identity, yet strong programs had emerged in both the traditional arts and sciences and in professional preparation areas. Dr. Quistgaard’s initial efforts led to a new initiative using Scenario Planning, a method suggested by the BSUFA in 2005. The final report called for a more focused identity for the university, and culminated in new vision and mission statements in support of that identity.

In 2006, the faculty initiated a long-term examination of the Liberal Education Program through a special Task Force. The 2007-2010 budget realignment inevitably affected the work of the Task Force since the budget plan initiated changes that generated significant anxiety among the faculty. Key concerns included faculty cuts, proposed elimination of a few majors, funding of athletic programs, and structural reorganization. Considerable conversation ensued, particularly regarding underlying curricular philosophy and the structure of academic units.

A number of suggestions from the Faculty Association (BSUFA) to the administration ultimately led to a reconsideration of the proposal to cut majors and to formation of a work group to study reorganization of the colleges and departments. As with the evolution of the Signature Themes and Liberal Education reform, the evolution of reorganization featured university-wide discussions.

While, by a handful of votes, the BSUFA Senate did not support the reorganization plan that grew out of those discussions, in the end, the administration felt the benefits of the change outweighed the concerns, and the president adopted a model that has propelled the university toward its identity as an arts and sciences university with select professional programs, rather than as a comprehensive university, a liberal arts college, or a professional studies/career institution.

The new college structure supports the university’s re-shaped identity:

- Liberal arts programs are brought together in the College of Arts & Sciences (CAS), home to approximately 50 percent of the university’s faculty. The CAS charge is:
  - to serve its own excellent majors and programs;
  - to provide foundational courses for the Liberal Education Program and other majors across the university;
  - to serve the surrounding community in multiple venues.

- Professional studies programs are aligned in two smaller colleges, Health Sciences & Human Ecology, and Business, Technology & Communication. They have multiple charges:
  - to obtain national accreditations for their programs, where appropriate;  
  - to maintain and strengthen robust external relationships and advisory boards;  
  - to become increasingly high quality, destination majors.

The College of Arts & Sciences curriculum, and particularly its Liberal Education curriculum, constitutes the heart of the university experience: all Bemidji State students will graduate with a strong liberal arts foundation as well as with either a liberal arts degree or a career-oriented degree in one of the select professional programs. The three Signature Themes continue to promote the university’s values across all three colleges.
In 2008, as the reorganization discussions ended, the campus received recommendations from the Liberal Education Task Force to restructure Bemidji State’s version of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC). Their comprehensive proposal was approved by an overwhelmingly positive vote in the Faculty Senate. It was also endorsed by the Student Senate, supported by the administration, and was generally well-liked by officials at the MnSCU Chancellor’s Office, which oversees the MnTC.

The earlier close vote in the Faculty Senate on college reorganization, however, foreshadowed a pattern that re-emerged during latter part of the Liberal Education reform effort, and in September 2009, a BSUFA referendum over-turned Senate approval of the new program. As the faculty voted on both of these university-wide changes, they divided at a little more than one third against, one third for, and about one third not voting. Failure to implement the new “Lib Ed” was dispiriting to faculty and administration alike. By a few votes, the Faculty Senate additionally approved a moratorium on consideration of any new Liberal Education structure until fall 2010.

The Liberal Education curriculum and college reorganization intersected along the lines of appropriate roles for professional studies versus the liberal arts departments. MnSCU policies that guide the MnTC exclude Business, Physical Education, Health, first year languages, and most Computer Science courses as well as “in general, any occupational courses or programs.” Bemidji State has often contested those guidelines. In implementing the proposed new curriculum, the Bemidji State administration, however, decided to exclude those departments teaching professional programs except in University Inquiry, a critical thinking course required of all students. Had the implementation occurred, Bemidji State would have been the only MnSCU university that had created a specific place for professional programs to participate—a feature not well known or understood by the faculty.

The discussion—the argument—continues with disagreements both among and between administration and faculty. With its University Plan, its new vision and mission, its Signature Themes, and an established practice of campus-wide communication in forums and related venues, the university is well poised for this new conversation, difficult though it may be.

To address the situation:

- The Liberal Education committee has created a review and assessment process for the current Liberal Education Program that can easily be transferred to the new program, should it be implemented at a later date.
- The administration will continue to fund activities with the Foundation for Critical Thinking in order to prepare faculty who wish to feature critical thinking in their Liberal Education offerings and to support reassigned time for the Director of Liberal Education.
- The Center for Professional Development will continue to facilitate discussions that focus on timely issues such as the Liberal Education program, curricular philosophy, and co-governance.
- The administration will continue to facilitate discussions that explore BSU’s mission and identity during campus planning days (held once per semester), academic forums, chair meetings, start-up days in fall and spring, and other timely venues.
- The faculty and administration together will continue to increase understanding of the relationship between the budget and curriculum management and will look for professional development opportunities that will increase expertise in these areas.
Current Planning Structure: Input, Feedback and Accountability Loops

The current, organically-evolved planning structure has benefits not readily available in the previous hierarchical Experimental Planning structure. The new version provides strong feedback loops and clarifies accountability for planning. At each level, specific individuals, committees, and offices are responsible for reporting progress, examining data generated by assessment, surveys, and other data gathering, all of which feeds the subsequent generation of plans. The process also aligns goals across planning Levels I, II and III, and guarantees inclusion from departments and units across the university.

Benefits of the new structure are already evident: written plans now exist at all levels, and departmental-level documents hold the key to how we move forward as an institution. As part of the self-study process, departments identify, understand and act upon their strengths and challenges. The most recent iteration of the Academic Program Five-Year Review Guidelines clearly ties assessment to departmental planning and the self-study cycle. This improves the viability of assessment feedback loops.

The planning concept map portrays the input, feedback and accountability connections of the new structure. This more fluid process encourages flexible and responsive planning in service to the university’s mission.

Committees and Councils

After the experimental process was discontinued, and while the new process was being shaped, 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.

The groups generally fell into one of two categories:

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

Established Committees and Councils: 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.

- Deans’ Council
- Leadership Council
- Futures Council
- Cabinet
- Academic Assessment Committee
- Gaps & 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
- Scenario Planning
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.

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. 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.]

This base reflects changes in funding trends that are now common across the country: as most states have reduced their financing of public higher education from 61 percent in 1999-2000 to 40 percent in 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, Criterion 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): Bemidji State partnership with eight two-year technical and community college partners; one of four plans funded by MnSCU
• Registered Nurse Baccalaureate Program, developed in consultation with regional health care providers
• A “green fee,” initiated by students, funds a Sustainability Coordinator

To assure that its resource base is adequate to meet 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; regular updates are provided at Meet and Confer, Student Senate Cabinet and President’s Cabinet meetings. 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 Feature: College Reorganization.) The original draft (see page 10) from the administration proposed realigning some faculty positions for 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,” a realignment of the colleges and redefinition (per IFO-MnSCU Master Agreement) 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.

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. 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.

The university’s budget planning process is 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 2010-2013 budget responds to the external threat of the national economic crisis while continuing to realign resources in support of internal, mission-driven priorities.

The budget is further discussed in Chapter Four, Criterion Four: The university has moved from one-year budget plans that addressed the situation of the moment to forward-thinking, longer-term planning.

**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 Degrees and the four-year nursing program. College reorganization and department redefinition also contribute to curriculum revision.

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:
Major Campus Initiatives (Selected)
- American Indian Resource Center completed
- Bridgeman Hall remodeled
- Sattgast Hall expanded
- Theatre equipment update; improved safety
- Nursing lab constructed
- Room improvements made in Hagg-Sauer Hall
- Smart Classrooms added and maintained
- Linden Suites residence hall renovated into suites
- New campus air conditioner chiller
- Moved to dual-boot computers for faculty laptops
- Completed redesign of campus web site
- Re-roofing of buildings

Campus Beautification & Utilization
- Shoreline Restoration: Native plantings help prevent erosion.
- Historic Fireplace Restored: In the summer of 2009, the fireplace was moved to a new central location near the Student Union.
- Bridgeman Hall Pergola and Sculpture (page 5)
- Diamond Point Park & Outdoor Program Center

University Heritage
- Behind the Building Names

Criterion Two

- Curriculum Liaison
- Liberal Education Director
- Liberal Education Task Force Director and Graduate Assistant
- People & the Environment Director (Liberal Education Category Ten)
- Center for Professional Development Director
- Honors Director
- International Studies Director
- Writing Resource Center Director
- Assessment Coordinators

The university also supports departments through its graduate assistant program: Fifty-four students held positions fall semester 2009. Thirty-four taught in academic departments. The remainder served in research or administrative capacities in other areas such as the A.C. Clark Library, Academic Affairs and Graduate Studies. Graduate assistantships promote enrollment in graduate programs and offer valuable experience to graduate students.

The Student Development & Enrollment division provides commensurate support for student development and university services programs and staff. The inauguration of this office in 2006 brought refreshed coherency and purpose to those offices. [See SD&E Feature.]

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

By way of example, the Facility Plan has led to the following projects:
- 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.

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.

**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, which dealt in part with assessment, consistent and meaningful evaluation has become a part of Bemidji's campus culture. Support for this culture through 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
  - Dimensions of Student Learning

- **Reassigned Time**
  - Assessment coordinators
  - Liberal Education director

- **Committees**
  - Established (ongoing)
    - Academic Assessment Committee
    - Gaps & Trends Committee
    - Liberal Education
  - Ad Hoc
    - Liberal Education Task Force
    - Data Work Group (department chairs 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 Feature: Liberal Education on AAC&U General Education Institute)
  - Center for Professional Development (classroom assessment instruments, classroom observation, workshops)

- **National tests**
  - CCTST
  - Standardized subject area tests used by some academic programs and departments, including Biology, Geography, Mathematics, Political Science and Psychology.
• National surveys
  • NSSE (National Survey on Student Engagement)
  • Noel-Levitz
  • Profile of the American Student
  • BCSSE (Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement)
• 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 this goal was noted in the HLC staff analysis of the university’s 2002 Monitoring Report: “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
• University-level assessments/testing
• Gaps & Trends Committee
• Research and Assessment Office

Assessment Systems, Planning Level II Master Plans
• Master Academic Plan
• Master Facility Plan
• Master Technology Plan
• Master Student Development & Enrollment Plan (J-Plan)

Assessment Systems, Planning Level III College, Department Plans
• Academic
  • MAP
  • Guidelines: Five-Year Academic Program Planning and Review
  • Dimensions of Student Learning
• Non-academic (Also other Master Plans, at Level II, above.)
  • J-Plan
  • Student Development and University Services Program Planning and Review

Data resources for assessment include the following:
• Advanced Class Schedule
• Bemidji State Data Book
• Course enrollments files
• IPEDS
• TaskStream Accountability Management System (Decision has been made to implement as a pilot program.)
• MnSCU Cost Study
• MnSCU Dashboard
Criterion Two

- MnSCU Graduate Follow-up Reports
- NCHEMS
- Voluntary System of Accountability (alternate “dashboard”)
- Classroom Space Utilization Reports
- Energy Benchmarking
- Facility Condition Index/Deferred Maintenance Studies

Guidelines: Five-Year Academic Program Planning, Review and Assessment Cycle

Assessment systems are reviewed and updated as appropriate. By way of example, academic program planning and review was updated in 2008, per the Assessment Summary Report for Distance Learning Programs 2007-2009:

In 2008, the University’s Guidelines for Academic Program Review and Assessment of Learner Outcomes were again revised. This revision updated and integrated the assessment guidelines with the guidelines for department Five-Year Plans and Self-Studies, creating the document “Guidelines: Five-Year Academic Program Planning, Review and Assessment Cycle.”

A main purpose of these revised guidelines was to further encourage the utilization of assessment data in department planning and program development. These guidelines also made the routing procedures for submitting assessment and planning documents and the procedures for providing administrative feedback to departments more explicit.

Moreover, these guidelines reflect a new oversight structure, including the newly established Academic Assessment Committee composed of University’s deans and assessment coordinators.

As before, the 2008 guidelines pertain to on-campus and distance programs alike.

Five-Year Reviews: Five-Year academic reviews are discussed in Chapter Three, Criterion Three. Five-Year student development and university services reviews are discussed in Chapter Four, Criterion Four.

7. FUNDING FOLLOWS PLANNING: CLOSING THE LOOP (Core Components 2a, 2d)

Bemidji State University closes the loop on assessment planning, implementation and evaluation by aligning resources with results in support of the university’s mission. Four exemplars of closing the assessment/funding loop are discussed here:

- Center for Extended Learning (CEL)
- College Reorganization
- Liberal Education
- Student Development & Enrollment: The Learning Journey

These four are also the subjects of feature stories in the self-study. Additional information is provided in those locations.

The exemplars address “access to resources—physical, financial, human—supported through budget allocations” (Core Component 2d, explanation).

Exemplar 1: Liberal Education

For additional information see Feature Story: Liberal Education.

Situation

Commencing in 2002, the Liberal Education Committee conducted significant evaluations of the Liberal Education Program. These evaluations resulted in a spring 2009 approval of a proposal for a new Liberal Education curriculum by the Faculty Association Senate. The Senate action was overturned by a Faculty Association referendum, fall 2009. The Liberal Education Committee is continuing its work on the program’s curriculum.
Allocation of Physical Resources
The Liberal Education Committee and the Task Force were assigned office space beginning in 2005.

Allocation of Financial Resources
Since 2002, funding for Liberal Education has included the following:
- Conference and institute expenses for the Committee and Task Force.
- Committee and Task Force retreats.
- Consultants for the Task Force.
- Consultants for faculty workshops on teaching critical thinking.
- Funding for testing (California Critical Thinking Skills Testing)

Allocation of Human Resources
Since 1998 (approximately) the following human resources have been provided to Liberal Education:
- Director, originally at three credits per semester, now at six credits per semester
- Graduate assistant for the Task Force (ended with completion of Task Force work).
- Student worker for the Committee (ongoing).

Exemplar 2: Student Development & Enrollment—The Learning Journey
For additional information see Feature Story: Student Development & Enrollment.

Situation
Responding to internal needs (enrollment, retention, administrative structure) and national trends, Bemidji State opened the division of Student Development & Enrollment.

Allocation of Physical Resources
An office suite was provided on third floor Deputy, near the office for Academic Affairs and the president’s office.

Allocation of Financial Resources
A salary line was redirected from the Vice President for External Affairs to the Vice President of Student Development & Enrollment.

Funds invested in 2008-2010 budget reorganization to establish the Advising Success Center to assist with retention efforts.

Allocation of Human Resources
As noted above, a salary line was redirected from the Vice President for External Affairs to the Vice President of Student Development & Enrollment. In addition, an administrative assistant and student workers were assigned to the office.

Exemplar 3, College Reorganization
For additional information see Feature Story: College Reorganization.

Situation
In response to curriculum considerations and the need to align its budget more closely with direct instructional costs, a reorganization of the colleges went into effect in 2008.

Allocation of Physical Resources
Offices of the three new colleges were redistributed across the campus.

Allocation of Financial Resources
A salary line was created for an Associate Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences for 2008-2009 and was moved to an Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs for 2009-2010. In budget reductions made necessary by unallotments from the State of Minnesota, the College of Arts & Sciences, home of most of the Liberal Education providers, was favored in order to protect the general education offerings.
Allocation of human resources: As noted above, positions of Associate Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, replaced by an Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs were created in support of reorganization. Support staff were also reassigned as appropriate to the colleges.

Exemplar 4, Center for Extended Learning (CEL):
For additional information see Feature Story: Center for Extended Learning.

Situation
Since 2000, the Center’s credit generation has increased more than 128 percent and now accounts for 17 percent of Bemidji State’s overall credit generation.

Allocation of Physical Resources
Office and training space for eLearning Support.

Allocation of Financial Resources
Dean of Distance Learning salary line redirected to Associate Vice President for Extended Learning & Library; funding dedicated to indirect assessment (Noel-Levitz inventories) and direct learning outcome assessment (see Assessment Coordinator, below).

Allocation of Human Resources
Assessment Coordinator assigned to distance learning; positions in the library and admissions partially dedicated to distance learning. Support staff added in the Center for Extended Learning and eLearning center.

Additional examples of Closing the Loop
For allocation of resources in response to assessment, see also Closing the Loop: Criterion Committee Examples (in sidebar) and Priority for Improvement items:
- Civic Engagement
- Graduate Studies
- Professional Education

CRITERION TWO PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Bemidji State University has identified three Priorities for Improvement. These are described in Priority for Improvement features and in the Priorities for Improvement Criterion Summary. Supporting documents and detailed plans for improvement are provided in the self-study resource room.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority for Improvement</th>
<th>Civic Engagement (Leadership Center)</th>
<th>School of Graduate Studies</th>
<th>Professional Education Department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criterion Two: Preparing for the Future (Summary, All Criteria)</td>
<td>Establish ongoing support for Leadership Center and its goals.</td>
<td>Establish and assure policies and practices that support advanced preparation for students, including attention to national standards.</td>
<td>Attain full state and national accreditation for teacher licensure programs, to assure the department’s future and student success.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Criterion Two

CRITERION TWO SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

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

- Bemidji State prepares for the future by honoring its heritage while adjusting its mission, vision and identity for present realities and impending scenarios.
- The university is keenly aware of societal and economic trends that affect its operations and the educational opportunities of its students [as evidenced in its Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Threats analysis].
- The devastating effects of ... [the 2008 national economic crisis] 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.
- The Master Facility Plan ... recognizes the significance of economic and demographic trends.
- With increasing effectiveness, 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.
- The 2002-2007 plan was developed in consultation with the university community; the 2008-2013 plan was developed cooperatively with the university community. Planning is aligned with resources and is conducted in the light of current societal and economic trends as identified in planning documents.
- 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.
- 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, Department Plans
- The current planning process at Bemidji State evolved organically after its highly structured experimental planning process was discontinued.
- The planning concept map portrays the input, feedback and accountability connections of the new structure.
- Budget transparency and discussions ... led to a fresh partnership between the administration and the faculty in the development of the 2007-2010 budget.
- One result of collaborative planning was reorganization of the colleges.

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

- 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.
- 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.
- The university has increased its utilization of endowments, community and alumni-based partnerships and other resources.
- The university continually works to align budget and program requirements.
- University budgeting has become more transparent and more open to campus input.
- The university’s budget planning process is similarly dynamic.
Criterion Two

- The university’s resource base adequately supports its educational programs.
- The university supports its educational mission through reassigned time for faculty directors of various committees, councils and centers.
- The university supports departments through its Graduate Assistant program.
- The new division of Student Development & Enrollment provides ... support for student development and university services programs and staff.
- The Facility and Campus Master Plan has assured adequate and innovative support for academic programs through ongoing development of campus facilities.
- The Technology Master Plan provides critical support to academic programming, as articulated in its mission.

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

- 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, and College, Department Plans.
- Meaningful evaluation has become a part of Bemidji’s campus culture supported through a wide variety of means.
- Assessment systems are in place at all three levels of university planning.
- Assessment systems are reviewed and updated as appropriate.
- Bemidji State University closes the loop on assessment planning, implementation and evaluation by aligning resources with results in support of the university’s mission.

- Closing the Loop: Feature Stories
  - Center for Extended Learning
  - College Reorganization
  - Liberal Education
  - Student Development & Enrollment

- Closing the Loop: Priorities for Improvement
  - Civic Engagement
  - Graduate Studies
  - Professional Education

- Closing the Loop: Examples from the Criterion Committees

- Assessment is further discussed in Chapter Three, Criterion Three: Academic Department Plans and Reviews
  - Student Development and University Services Plans and Reviews
  - Related University-wide Assessment Planning
  - University Level Assessments
  - Assessment of the Liberal Education Program
  - Assessment of the Honors Program
  - Assessment of undergraduate departments and programs
  - Assessment of graduate programs
  - Assessment of external studies programs

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

- As noted above in 2a: The devastating effects of the 2008 national economic crisis 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.
- Budget is further discussed in Chapter Four, Criterion Four.
Criterion Two

- The university has moved from one-year budget plans that addressed the situation of the moment to forward-thinking, longer-term planning. As noted above in 2a: The Master Facility Plan ... recognizes the significance of economic and demographic trends.
- As noted above in 2a: With increasing effectiveness, 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.
- As noted above in 2a: The 2002-2007 plan was developed in consultation with the university community; the 2008-2013 plan was developed cooperatively with the university community. Planning is aligned with resources and is conducted in the light of current societal and economic trends as identified in planning documents.
- Planning coordinated with mission is further discussed in Chapter One, Criterion One:
  - The 2008-2013 University Plan defines Bemidji State’s mission and provides guidance for decision-making.
- Planning is evident in operations, as noted in the following:
  - Feature Stories
    - Center for Extended Learning
    - College Reorganization
    - Liberal Education
    - Student Development & Enrollment
  - Priorities for Improvement
    - Civic Engagement
    - Graduate Studies
    - Professional Education
- The role of external constituents in planning, including feedback loops, is discussed in Chapter Five, Criterion Five, including the following:
  - The second (of four) strategies in the University Plan is dedicated to the university’s relationships with external constituents. Bemidji State models civic engagement through its community relationships.

CRITERION TWO STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES

**Strengths**
- Cross-Cutting Themes—Future-Oriented; Distinctive
- College Reorganization Feature

**Challenge**
- Profile: The Identity Challenge

SENIORS TO WATCH
Horizons Winter 2009, Page 13

Delana Smith, Maple Grove, MN
Early Childhood Education

Jane Erickson, Pine River, MN
Accounting

Robert Baril, Warroad, MN
Philosophy, Political Science
CHAPTER THREE
Criterion Three

Bemidji State University shapes students who go out to shape the world.

Will Antel, Professional Education

Minnesota Department of Education, American Indian education policy; Trustee, Minnesota State Colleges & Universities Board; American Indian Education Association: “That’s something I’ve tried to emulate: really caring about people. That was instilled in me from day one at Bemidji.” Horizons Spring 2006, Page 11

Criterion Three: Student Learning and Effective Teaching

The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

Core Component 3a: The organization’s goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.

Core Component 3b: The organization values and supports effective teaching.

Core Component 3c: The organization creates effective learning environments.

Core Component 3d: The organization’s learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.

Organization of Chapter Three

Introduction
1. Learning and Teaching: University-Level Planning, Support, Excellence (Core Components 3a, 3b, 3d)
2. Learning and Teaching Environments: Undergraduate (Core Components 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d)
3. Learning and Teaching Environments: Graduate (Core Components 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d)
4. Learning and Teaching Environments: External (Core Components 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d)
5. Priorities for Improvement

Summary of Evidence

Strengths and Challenges
Criterion Three

Bemidji State creates, for all of its constituents, a learning-rich environment that encourages intellectual curiosity and awakens the imagination.

INTRODUCTION

In fulfillment of its educational mission, the university clearly enumerates its student learning goals and outcomes, and supports effective teaching and learning environments. This mission is fulfilled in part through professional development for faculty, innovative pedagogy and environments, regular assessment that informs curriculum and teaching, services that stay abreast of evolving needs and technologies, the allocation of resources in support of learning and teaching, and student advising.

1. LEARNING AND TEACHING: UNIVERSITY-LEVEL PLANNING, SUPPORT, EXCELLENCE (Core Components 3a, 3b, 3d)

Bemidji State provides traditional and non-traditional learning opportunities for diverse audiences. Programs include master's level and undergraduate degrees, minors, fields of emphasis, certificates and non-degree education. Settings for these offerings include on-campus, online and remote site courses, classrooms and laboratories. The offerings are supported by the university through planning and assessment, and through the allocation of resources that assure faculty, curriculum and facility excellence.

Planning for Learning and Teaching

Support for learning and teaching effectiveness is embedded in Bemidji State's primary (Level I) and foundational (Levels II and III) mission documents and in related plans and processes.

Primary Mission Documents: Bemidji State's primary mission document (Level I) is the University Plan for 2008-2013. It includes the university's mission statement: Engage. Embrace. Educate. The desired outcomes for the mission are expressed in the University Plan’s vision statement: Shaping Potential, Shaping Worlds.

The intent of the vision and mission—to educate and to make a difference—are especially carried out in Strategy A of the University Plan. The Strategic Imperative and Value Statement provide guidance for carrying out the Initiatives which are also followed by value statements.

Strategy A: Engage Students for Success in Careers, Communities and Life

Strategic Imperative: Create opportunities for student success through high quality programs and services.

Value Statement: Bemidji State recognizes the value of higher education as a public good, provides student-centered access to learning, meets the needs of our diverse, rural and nontraditional students, and promotes lifelong learning.

Initiatives

A.1 Support students’ professional and personal development through high quality educational programs and services. Prepare students for careers, citizenship, community service, life-long learning and leadership:

- through engaged, academic preparation in the Liberal Education and Honors Programs and the majors;
- through student-centered programs and services that assure access and success.

A.2 Promote achievement and understanding through active learning opportunities. Foster active learning pedagogies, and opportunities that support volunteerism, student research, internships, and related activities.

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.
Criterion Three

A.4 Strengthen measurement of student achievement. Review and revise the University Assessment Plan and the Dimensions of Student Learning, including student learning outcomes, to assure that they support the university’s vision and mission.

The University Plan further supports learning, teaching and assessment in its Goals and Measurements. As noted in the plan, Goals and Measurements evaluate achievement of the University Plan and of related items in MnSCU’s Strategic Plan. These are reported in an Accountability Dashboard that is based on a set of data that all MnSCU institutions are required to collect. Bemidji State is also preparing to participate in the VSA, a voluntary accountability system.

By way of example:
Strategy A Goals and Measurements
Goal One: Improvement in student learning outcomes as stated in master and strategic plans and consistent with the Dimensions of Student Learning, e.g., critical thinking, global awareness.

Goal Two: Improvement in engagement and satisfaction as reflected in measures such as NSSE, Noel-Levitz.

Foundational Mission Documents
Foundational mission documents include Master Plans (Level II) and College, Department Plans (Level III). These are also discussed in Chapter One, Criterion One and in Chapter Two, Criterion Two.

Master Academic Plan (MAP)
The MAP arises from and reflects goals and values of the university’s academic colleges and departments. It helps inform other master plans and the University Plan. As noted above, it identifies six 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.)

The relationship of the MAP to the University Plan, other master plans, and college and department plans, including five-year academic program reviews, is discussed in Chapter Two, Criterion Two.

Planning for Student Learning and Teaching (Level III)
The university’s commitment to utilizing evidence of success for its educational mission is manifest in assessment components of its five-year plans and reviews. These plans and reviews are required of academic departments and programs, and of student development and university services departments.

Academic Department Plans and Reviews
Introduced in Chapter Two, Criterion Two, academic program planning and review is presented in Guidelines: Five-Year Academic Program Planning, Review and Assessment Cycle. Program participation is reviewed by the Academic Assessment Committee.

The assessment component of the Guidelines is informed by the university’s Dimensions of Student Learning.

Dimensions of Student Learning
Dimension 1: Intellectual Development
Outcomes:
- Higher Order Thinking
- Knowledge, Values, and Abilities Related to the Arts, Humanities, Sciences, and Specialized Fields of Study
Criterion Three

Dimension 2: Understanding of Self and Relating to Others
Outcomes:
- Values
- Communication
- Human Diversity
- Self Development

Dimension 3: Participation in an Emerging Global Society
Outcomes:
- Readiness for Careers
- Responsible Citizenship

The specifics of five-year assessment cycles are discussed below, including assessment of Liberal Education, Honors, undergraduate, graduate and external programs.

Five-Year planning at the department level is also discussed in Chapter Two, Criterion Two.

Student Development and University Services Plans and Reviews (Level III): Bemidji State’s student and university offices also engage in regular planning and review, including assessment. A Resource Manual with Guidelines was approved in 2000 and is currently under review. It calls for annual reports, mid-cycle reports and a five-year review and report. Additionally, the Student Development & Enrollment Master Plan (J-Plan) includes an assessment initiative: Carry out assessment in support of the Student Development & Enrollment mission and the mission of the university. Value Statement: Successful programs are guided, in part, by the analysis and use of intentionally gathered, rich, reliable, and accurate data that affirms or improves current practices; that informs decision-making, including the alignment of resources; that builds a culture of assessment; and that supports wise, creative and innovative initiatives.

By way of example, initiatives might include the following:
- Developing program assessment plans that fit into the structure of the five-year review process and the assessment needs of the university.
- Offering professional development opportunities that provide skill building in creating and implementing assessment plans; in assuring data integrity; and in analysis and utilization of data.

As noted in the Student Development & Enrollment, the various SD&E offices, working from theory within their disciplines, have organized themselves into Communities of Practice. A Balanced Scorecard approach is being used for review, evaluation and assessment.

The Office of Student Development & Enrollment maintains a Wiki for tracking assessment. SD&E is discussed further in Chapter Four, Criterion Four.

Related University-wide Assessment Planning: In addition to its emphasis on learning and teaching measures in its mission documents, Bemidji State monitors, evaluates and adjusts its academic planning through its University Assessment Plan, the Academic Assessment Committee and the Gaps & Trends Committee.

Assessment plan revised: A 2009 revision of the University Assessment Plan has been approved by the vice presidents and the Gaps & Trends Committee. It coordinates assessments that are carried out at various levels including university-wide with national surveys (such as NSSE and Noel-Levitz), national tests (such as the CCTST), and assessments conducted through five-year reviews of academic and student development and university services programs.
Criterion Three

Academic Assessment Committee Processes
The Academic Assessment Committee meets regularly to evaluate academic department five-year plans, including assessment plans and processes. It looks for evidence that departments are directly measuring learning and are using data appropriately to improve curriculum and teaching effectiveness.

By way of example:
• Academic Program Review Schedule (five-year)
• Academic Assessment Plans: Progress and Activities

Student Development and University Services Assessment Processes
The division of Student Development & Enrollment engages in regular planning and assessment.

By way of example:
• Student Development and University Services Program Planning and Review: Resource Manual with Guidelines
• History of program review tracking
• Current program review tracking

Gaps & Trends Committee
The Gaps & Trends Committee, initiated in 2009, considers various means to improve assessment at Bemidji State and to assure closure feedback loops (assessment followed by application of new knowledge and allocation of resources).

By way of example, Gaps & Trends projects include the following:
• Assessment of the effectiveness of the content required in academic departmental self-study documents, especially regarding its usefulness to departments.
• Software for managing and maintaining university-wide data such as TaskStream Accountability Management System.

Support for Learning and Teaching
Bemidji State supports learning and teaching at multiple levels, including in its planning documents, as noted above, and by the allocation of resources at planning and operational levels.

Support for Curriculum
Curriculum processes at Bemidji State are supported at several levels and include the allocation of resources.

By way of example:
• Curriculum development is assisted by a Curriculum Liaison who receives three credits reassigned time each semester. The liaison offers support to departments and curriculum committees, including a web site with information on best practices.
• The university has four Assessment Coordinators who work with department chairs and program directors in the evaluation of courses and programs. The coordinators each receive three credits of reassigned time per semester. In addition to their coordinator duties, they serve on the Academic Assessment Committee, contributing to uniformity in assessment across departments and colleges.
• The Liberal Education Committee is supported by a director and assessment coordinator who receives six credits reassigned time each semester. The director represents the committee on the Gaps & Trends Committee and the Academic Assessment Committee.
• The Honors Program director receives three credits of reassigned time each semester.
• People and the Environment, a required course in the Liberal Education Program, is coordinated by a director who has three credits of reassigned time per semester.
Criterion Three

Fulbright Scholar
Dr. Kit Christensen, Philosophy, has been awarded a Fulbright Research Grant for 2009-10 to serve as a guest scholar at the Center of Peace Studies on the campus of the University of Tromsø, Norway.

Center for Professional Development

Handbooks & Guides
- Faculty Handbook
- E-Handbook for New Faculty
- Guide for Department Chairs
- Adjunct Faculty
- Adjunct Supervisor Checklist

Publications
- Metamorphosis Newsletter
- White Paper Series

Evaluating Teaching and Classes
- Course Evaluations
- Department Chair Evaluations
- Help in Documenting Teaching Effectiveness
- Individual Teaching Consultation Service
- Peer Observation Form

Other Resources
- Academic Calendar
- CPD Annual Report
- CPD Meeting Minutes
- Copyright Considerations
- Discussion on FTEs
- Five-Year Review Guidelines
- Template for a Syllabus
- Undergraduate Teaching Associate Forms
- Curriculum Development at Bemidji State University

- The Center for Professional Development also contributes to curriculum development by providing assistance with assessment and related activities. The CPD director receives three credits of reassigned time each semester.
- In support of the Curriculum Committee (Article V Section A subsection 5), a Catalog Editor tracks proposals through the approval process. In addition, a faculty Curriculum Editor receives one credit of reassigned time per semester to vet proposals for accuracy.

Excellence in Learning and Teaching
Excellence in learning and teaching university-wide is accounted for through assessment, assurance of properly credentialed faculty, program distinctiveness and accreditations, and appropriate facilities. (Assessments at the course, program and department levels are accounted for in five-year planning, discussed below.)

University Level Assessments
The university continually assesses for learning and teaching success and for student satisfaction and engagement. Since 2000, approximately 15 academic and student surveys and studies have been conducted. Of these instruments, the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST) focuses on student learning outcomes. Starting 2010, the Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP) will be implemented as an additional gauge of student learning. The remaining assessments have focused on student, faculty and staff engagement and satisfaction.

Direct Assessment, Learning Outcomes
- 2005, 2008 California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST)
- 2010 (scheduled) Measure of Academic Proficiency and Progress (MAPP), in conjunction with the Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA).

Indirect Assessment, Engagement and Satisfaction
- 2005, 2009 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
- 2006 Educational Participation Survey
- 2008 Civic Engagement Survey (Campus Compact)
- 2008 Profile of the American Student Survey
- 2009 Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE)

These assessments have provided a basis for a number of changes in programs.

By way of example:
- The Priorities Survey for On-Line Learners has led to discussions on the implementation of Quality Matters guidelines for assuring best practices in teaching on-line courses through the University.
- The results of the California Critical Thinking Skills Test have been used to support curricular work in Liberal Education that has focused on the development of a new course that explicitly teaches these skills.
- One of the assessments in the Profile of the American Student focused on understanding of why more students are not involved in co-curricular activities. Among the top reasons for a lack of student involvement was a lack of understanding of how to get involved. This led to the addition of a new learning outcome in the First Year Experience course, specifically designed to provide information about how students can get involved in extracurricular activities.
- The results of the Noel-Levitz surveys indicated that safety and security were significant concerns for students on campus. This, along with other information, influenced the decision to expand the number of call boxes, security cameras, and other steps to enhance safety on campus.
Funding for these surveys generally came from institution-wide budgets, under the authority of the Vice President for Finance and Administration.

As with academic department assessments, university-wide assessments are reviewed by the Academic Assessment Committee and the Gaps & Trends Committee to insure quality and integrity in the assessment process, even assessment across the campus, and utilization of results to improve learning and teaching.

Credentialed Faculty: Bemidji State assures the quality of its faculty through various means. As noted in Chapter One, Criterion One, professional development is monitored through Professional Development Plans and Reports as required by the IFO-MnSCU Master Agreement. The Master Agreement also provides annual professional development funds for faculty, allocated through academic departments. Use is regulated by the agreement and includes conference fees and other professional study and travel. The Master Agreement provides further funding through Professional Improvement Grants allocated annually.

Sabbatical leaves support faculty professional development by providing focused time for scholarly and creative work. Sabbatical Reports (FY2001-2007) are filed with the dean, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and MnSCU.

The Center for Professional Development supports faculty excellence through its services. These include provision of mid-term and end-of-term course evaluations, observation of and feedback for instructors, programs, forums, and a library of higher education resources. The Center’s web site offers include white papers, a template for syllabi, instructor evaluation forms, guides for department chairs, and a handbook for adjuncts. As noted above, the university supports the CPD with three credits of reassigned time per semester for the CPD director and with an annual programming budget.

Bemidji State participates in faculty professional development opportunities provided by the MnSCU system. The Center for Teaching and Learning regularly offers programming on learning and teaching.

Program Distinctiveness and Accreditations: Bemidji State assures learning and teaching excellence through distinctive, excellent programs. As noted in Chapter One, Criterion One, the university’s curriculum process is rigorous, as are five-year program reviews and assessments, discussed below.

Also as noted in Chapter One, Criterion One, in addition to institutional accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission, seven of Bemidji State’s programs are accredited by national agencies:

- Accounting and Business Programs: International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education
- Chemistry Program: American Chemical Society
- Industrial Technology Programs: The Association of Technology Management, and Applied Engineering (formerly National Association of Industrial Technology Board of Accreditation)
- Music Program: National Association of Schools of Music
- Nursing Program: Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education
- Social Work Program: Council of Social Work Education

Programs that are especially distinctive in nature, previously described in Chapter One, Criterion One, include the following:

- Bachelor of Applied Science in Applied Engineering
- Bachelor of Applied Science in Technology Management
- Bachelor of Fine Arts in Creative and Professional Writing
- Bachelor of Science in Nursing
- Bachelor of Science in Business Administration
- Bachelor of Science, Associate of Science in Criminal Justice
- Bachelor of Science in Teacher Education, Distributed Learning in Teacher Education (DLiTE)
- Portfolio Teaching Certification (FastTrack)
Criterion Three

A.C. Clark Library
- Profile
- Data Summary

Advising Success Center (ASC)
Mission: To engage students by helping them shape their potential through the opportunity for academic and social support; to embrace students to help see things in new ways; and to educate students through academic and career planning for lifelong learning.
- Theory, Rationale, Transition, Advising
- Conceptual Framework, Activities
- Program and Student Learning Outcomes
- Free University Workshop Schedule

TRIO Student Support Services
Bemidji State is ranked in the top ten percent of TRIO Student Support Services in the country. Retention and GPA success of “at risk” students are impressive and set a standard nationwide.
- Profile

TRIO Upward Bound
A U.S. Department of Education program hosted by Bemidji State University.
- Profile
- Motivates participating youth to consider education beyond high school.
- Prepares participants to succeed in a program of post-secondary education.

American Indian Resource Center (AIRC)
“The model of service used at the center is informal. Its intention is to create a model of a family cohort.” Don Day, AIRC Director
- Services, Retention, GEM Scholar Program, AISES
- Work Plan 2006-2010
- History
- Catching a Dream Profile, Horizons Fall 2003 Insert

Campus Resources
At Bemidji State, the entire campus is the laboratory in which students learn. Learning and teaching are supported through services and with buildings, equipment, technology and related features.

Library Services
The A.C. Clark Library provides access to nearly 400,000 on-campus holdings and an estimated 35,000 electronic periodical titles. In 2009, Bemidji State patrons using interlibrary loan services received more than 3,000 items from other libraries, and more than 2,700 of the library’s holdings were loaned out to other libraries.

The library also provides on-campus and electronic services for its patrons. Some of these services have been recently expanded to better serve distance learners and patrons who wish to work away from campus.

By way of example, services include the following; recently expanded services are designated by italic font:
- Bemidji State Library Catalog
- Online Resources
- Interlibrary Loan & Distance Delivery
- Guides & Services
  - Using Online Library Resources
  - BSU Yearbooks 1951-1971 and Historical Photographs of the University
  - Library Instruction
  - Placing Items on Reserve

Use of facilities has also changed with the times: computers from library labs have been relocated to more visible, convenient venues and reading areas have been reconfigured to better fit student study preferences.
(See Library Profile for details.)

Advising Success Center (ASC)
Opened in February 2008, the Advising Success Center is the result of many years of efforts toward focusing advising services for students, especially for at-risk and undecided students. The goals of ASC are compatible with national research on the needs of such students, and support the university’s mission, Engage. Embrace. Educate.

The Advising Success Center team works individually with students to help them find their place at Bemidji State University and make the most of their experiences. In addition to advising them on registration for courses, ASC offers tutoring, workshops, new student orientation, basic skills assessment and related services. It is a department within the division of Student Development & Enrollment and is discussed further in Chapter Four, Criterion Four.

TRIO Student Support Services
TRIO/SSS provides comprehensive direct services to 350 eligible students through a student centered learning model. Direct services include developmental courses (College Orientation, Reading and Study Skills, Life Career Planning), counseling and academic advising, a computer and technology basics lab, tutoring, mentoring, and cultural activities. The services are based on a thorough analysis of each student’s unmet academic and personal needs.

American Indian Resource Center (AIRC)
The American Indian Resource Center (AIRC) is a source of great pride for Bemidji State University. Dedicated in 2003, the AIRC building is located in a central part of campus, dedicates itself to providing support services to Native American students and their activities and is as a resource for other Bemidji State students. Services provided include academic, career and personal counseling, advising; financial aid information and help with the forms for financial aid; cultural awareness programming and services honoring the heritage of the Native American people.
The center reports (April 2009) that there are 176 Native American students at Bemidji State and of that number 23 percent of them are in their first year. Of these students, 20 percent are at academic risk based on the national indicators of first generation, low socio-economic status, single parent, and academically under-prepared. These students receive high levels of attention from center staff. The center is staffed by the director, a retention counselor, administrative support personnel and five student workers.

**E-Learning, Desire2Learn**

D2L is a course management system that provides a password-protected environment in which students can interact online with each other and with their instructor. Faculty and students only need a computer, Internet access, and a browser to use the features provided in D2L.

**Academic Technology Center (ATC)**

ATC provides technologically advanced tools to enhance the learning experience, including the following:

- Smart Classroom (most classrooms)
  - LCD/plasma projectors/screens
  - Speakers, microphones, audio amplifier
  - DVD and VCR players
  - Document camera
  - Network connection or dedicated computer
- ITV classrooms
- Web page design and support
- Satellite downlinks
- PowerPoint presentation help
- Video production
- Video bulletin boards
- Brochure design
- Large-format inkjet printing
- Conference hosting
- Equipment setup
- Troubleshooting

**Computer Laboratories**

Open to all students, faculty and staff, new computer lab hardware is rotated in every two to three years; software is updated each semester; security upgrades are performed as needed.

**Buildings and Grounds**

Bemidji State's buildings and grounds also support learning and teaching excellence. The campus grounds are appealing and are well maintained. Building renovations are scheduled as needed. Recent activities include the following:

- Sattgast Hall: $9 million renovation and expansion of science building,
- Bridgeman Hall
- Linden Suites
- Recent roofing projects completed:
  - Bangsberg Hall
  - Cedar Residence Hall
  - Central Maintenance
  - Deputy Hall
  - Heating Plant
  - Lower Student Union
  - Memorial Hall
  - Pine Residence Hall
  - Sanford Hall
  - Walnut Dining Hall
2. LEARNING AND TEACHING ENVIRONMENTS: UNDERGRADUATE
(Core Components 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d)

Undergraduate study is Bemidji State’s raison d’être. It is how we “Engage. Embrace. Educate.” students. Since 1919, when the university was chartered, undergraduate education has been its primary means for “shaping potential and shaping worlds.” Of its approximately 5,000 students, 4,500 (90 percent) study for the bachelor’s degree. As an arts and sciences university with select professional programs, Bemidji State is dedicated to learning and teaching, to inquiry and creativity, to the acquisition of knowledge and critical thinking skills, and to the promotion of its Signature Themes: civic responsibility, environmental stewardship and global citizenship.

Liberal Education and Honors:

During the spring 2002 semester, Bemidji State reformulated its Liberal Education offerings to accommodate the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC) as mandated by the state legislature and the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system (MnSCU). The current format includes 11 topical or skill-based categories, the first ten also required in MnTC:

1. Communication
2. Critical Thinking
3. Natural Science
4. Mathematics
5. History and the Social and Behavioral Sciences
6. Humanities and the Arts
7. Human Diversity in the United States
8. Global Perspective
9. Ethical and Civic Responsibility
10. People and the Environment
11. Performance and Participation

Students may choose from a number of courses in each category, except Communication which requires completion of College Writing I & II, and Critical Thinking which requires completion of the Liberal Education curriculum. Students must take a minimum number of credits in each of the remaining categories and 42 credits overall. With a few exceptions, only freshman and sophomore level courses are included, and the driving logic is to maintain flexibility, allow for student choice, provide grounding in fundamentals, and encourage exposure to a variety of disciplines. The program is administered by a campus-wide Liberal Education Committee (LEC).

Liberal Education Task Force

In January of 2005, a Liberal Education Task Force was convened. It was “charged with proposing and pursuing revisions to the Liberal Education Program” (BSUFA Senate, October 2004). While the Task Force worked, the Liberal Education Committee continued to function: it acted on course submissions, student petitions, and directives from MnSCU, and carried out assessments in support of the work of the Task Force.

In the spring of 2007, the Faculty Association Senate and the Student Senate approved a “new Lib Ed” as proposed by the Task Force. However, at that point methods for implementing the program were not complete and some were contested by faculty as were some elements of the program itself. Also at issue was the relationship between the new program and the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC). In September 2009, a Faculty Association referendum of the Association’s membership overturned the Senate’s approval, with a little over one-third voting to overturn, one-third to uphold, and one-third not voting. In October 2009, the BSUFA Senate imposed a moratorium on consideration of new Liberal Education proposals until August 2010. See the Liberal Education feature for further discussion of issues and concerns related to the Task Force and the actions of the Senate and Faculty Association members.
Goals of Liberal Education

The mission of Bemidji State’s Liberal Education Program, as stated in the university catalog, is to “create an environment where students of diverse backgrounds and abilities can acquire the knowledge, the skills, the values, and the confidence necessary for effective and responsible participation in our changing global society.” Goals for the program are provided by the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum and include competencies in the eleven areas noted above. Courses are admitted to specific categories of Liberal Education based on their ability to meet the stated goals for those categories.

Assessment of the Liberal Education Program

Since 2002, the Liberal Education Committee has concentrated its assessment efforts in two areas: the overall value of the Liberal Education Program and the success of the program regarding student learning. Focus groups, surveys, and other means were used to look at faculty and student understanding of Liberal Education. The California Critical Thinking Skills Test was administered fall 2005 to all freshmen to establish baseline data for direct assessment of student learning.

Partly in response to the CCTST results, the Liberal Education Committee offered faculty professional development workshops in the teaching of critical thinking, summer and fall 2009 and of the establishment of a long-term relationship with the Foundation for Critical Thinking.

As noted in the Liberal Education feature, as a result of the assessments a Task Force was formed and a new program was proposed. During that process, direct assessment of the existing program was suspended. It has now been reinstituted: a schedule for review and assessment is under development and will be implemented for fall 2010. As with other academic assessment, it will address the university’s Dimensions of Student Learning and will also assess direct learning outcomes based on the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum.

Also as noted in the Liberal Education feature, the university demonstrates its commitment to Liberal Education and assessment thereof through the allocation of resources including reassigned time and funding for testing and for faculty professional development.

Support for the University’s Mission and Signature Themes: Through its mission and its course offerings, the Liberal Education Program supports Bemidji State’s mission, Engage. Embrace. Educate. It also supports the university’s Signature Themes, International/Multicultural Understanding, Civic Engagement and Environmental Stewardship.

By way of example:

- International/Multicultural Understanding: Courses in Category Eight, Global Perspective
- Civic Engagement: Courses in Category Nine, Ethical and Civic Responsibility
- Environmental Stewardship: Courses in Category Ten, People and the Environment

The Honors Program

Honors is an alternative general education program that may be taken in lieu of the Liberal Education Program. Students must meet grade point requirements for admission. The Honors Council advises a director who receives three credits of reassigned time each semester.

The Honors Program emphasizes innovative interdisciplinary active learning, service learning, and the “Reacting to the Past” (page 7) experience. From December 6, 2007 to May 1, 2008, Honors scholars completed and defended 15 theses across nine academic areas involving 14 different faculty advisors.

Assessment of the Honors Program is carried out through the Five-Year Program Planning, Review and Assessment Cycle. Its last review was in 2002. Student satisfaction and learning outcomes are assessed regularly through course evaluation.
In its 2009 Annual Report, the Honors Program notes the following accomplishments:

1. The Honors Council Lecture Series.
2. Retreat at Lake Bemidji State Park for all Honors students.
3. Upper Midwest Honors Council Conference participation and presentations.
4. Honors First Year Experience class.
5. Communication systems continued to improve.
6. Reception that recognized Honors Program graduates and their thesis advisors.
7. Completion and oral defense of 15 Honors theses.
10. Updated website and student manual.
11. Participation in each AAR session.

### Undergraduate Degree Programs

Six undergraduate degrees are offered through the university’s 22 academic departments:

- Associate in Arts
- Associate in Science
- Bachelor of Applied Studies
- Bachelor of Arts
- Bachelor of Fine Arts
- Bachelor of Science

These include 68 undergraduate majors with minors plus additional minors, specialized licenses, fields of emphasis and certificates, and pre-professional studies.

### Assessment of Undergraduate Departments and Programs

Undergraduate departments and programs participate in the Five-Year Program Planning, Review and Assessment Cycle. The cycle has three phases, each requiring a written report:

- Year One: Five-Year Plan and Assessment Plan
- Year Three: Mid-cycle Review
- Year Five: Self-study Report, Consultant Visit, Consultant Report

As noted in Chapter One, Criterion One, academic assessments are based on the university’s Dimensions of Student Learning. Assessment results are evaluated and contribute to ongoing department planning. The five-year reports are reviewed by the college deans, the Academic Assessment Committee and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Timeliness of reviews and reports is monitored by the Assessment Coordinators and, as noted above, a schedule is maintained.

Department self-studies include review of documents and an on-site visit by an external consultant who makes comments and recommendations that are incorporated into the next five-year cycle.

### Assessment Exemplar

Status of five-year reviews for all academic departments.

The following exemplar is for Year One of the five-year cycle for Computer Science. It will present a mid-year report in 2010 and a new self-study in 2012, the beginning of its next five-year cycle.
Criterion Three


Periodic review of academic programs is the responsibility of the college or university. The review shall encompass all instructional areas and be structured according to discipline, academic program or program cluster, department or other academic unit.

Subpart A. Review criteria. The review shall address:
1. mission and plans of the system college or university,
2. assessment of student learning outcomes,
3. academic program assessment,
4. accreditation, licensure or certification requirements where appropriate,
5. advisory committee or other appropriate industry or professional input as determined by the system college or university through established procedures,
6. labor market information when preparation for an occupation or a profession is a stated purpose of the program resources,
7. applicable system policy, procedures and guidelines,
8. Minnesota Transfer Curriculum requirements,
9. articulation agreements, where appropriate,
10. and other factors as appropriate.

Academic Assessment Committee Charge

- Approve assessment plans.
- Recommend on assessment funding requests.
- Review five-year plans for connections to assessment results and recommend to VPA.
- Provide summary of assessment findings to University Gaps & Trends Assessment Committee annually.
- Provide summary of what is learned from assessment results.
- Provide summary of what changes are moving forward.
- Summarize major findings and statement about modifications implemented to address deficiencies.
- Summarize findings from assessment results of learning outcomes.

Five-Year Plan (Year One) Assessment Exemplar

College of Arts & Sciences, Computer Science Plan

Excerpt from the plan, by way of example:

Dimension 1: Intellectual Development; Outcome A: Higher Order Thinking. We will demonstrate that students from a variety of majors have acquired problem-solving strategies and the ability to apply them to new problems, even when the strategies do not necessarily lead to a solution to the problem.

Mid-cycle Report (Year Three) Assessment Exemplar

College of Arts & Sciences, Chemistry Department, 2008 mid-cycle report:

“We have decided that the simple raw score of our ACS standardized exams is really not giving us much information. We have decided to convert the test to a Scantron answer sheet so that we can get an item analysis of each question and see if there are correlations. We can then identify areas that the students are weak in and try to modify/enhance our class materials in those areas.”

Self-study Report (Year Five), Assessment Exemplar

College or Arts and Sciences, English Department Five-Year self-study, 2008:

Report on curriculum changes based on assessment:
- Results of an assessment of literature students’ abilities with literary criticism that indicate students need more work in critical theory: Literature topics courses have been put in place that incorporate the study of critical approaches to literature.
- Growing student interest in careers in writing: An electronic writing minor and undergraduate and graduate certificates have been added to the curriculum.

Accredited Department Structured Interview (Mid cycle)

Programs with national accreditation are reviewed under a separate rubric that uses a structured interview process, thus avoiding the necessity of reproducing their accreditation in the five-year review format. Accredited programs are interviewed in the first year of their accreditation (taking the place of the five-year review) and midway through their accreditation cycle. Templates are utilized for the reviews.

Opportunities for Undergraduate Students

Bemidji State supports student learning by offering flexible program options, varied teaching pedagogies, and co-curricular education.

Flexible program and course options

Bemidji State recognizes the value of flexible education options for today’s students. Courses are delivered in traditional classrooms and through distance learning (remote site, online, blended classroom and online, self-study packets). High school students may take Bemidji State classes on-campus or in their high school classrooms (concurrent enrollment). The university also collaborates with other post-secondary institutions in the offering of courses and programs.
Criterion Three

The Academic Assessment Committee uses a review template to assure consistent reading of five-year reviews.

External Consultant Evaluators use a review template in responding to academic department five-year reviews.

Faculty Evaluation
Faculty are evaluated through Professional Development Plans and Reports, as required by the IFO-MnSCU Master Agreement.

Dimensions of Student Learning

Dimension 1: Intellectual Development
Outcomes:
- Higher Order Thinking
- Knowledge, Values, and Abilities Related to the Arts, Humanities, Sciences, and Specialized Fields of Study

Dimension 2: Understanding of Self and Relating to Others
Outcomes:
- Values
- Communication
- Human Diversity
- Self Development

Dimension 3: Participation in an Emerging Global Society
Outcomes:
- Readiness for Careers
- Responsible Citizenship

Concurrent Enrollment Schools and Courses

High Schools
- Voyageurs Expeditionary High School
- Bemidji District # 31
- Park Rapids Area High School
- Clearbrook-Gonvick Schools
- Badger High School (Not included in current data.)

Courses Offered
- ENGL 1101 College Writing I
- ENGL 1102 College Writing II
- ENGL 2355 American Literature
- PHYS 2101 Physics I
- MATH 1170 College Algebra
- MATH 1107 Introduction to Mathematical Sciences
- BUAD 1100 Introduction to Business
- CHEM 1111 General Chemistry I

Distance Learning Courses and Programs
Bemidji State offers individual courses through Distance Learning. These may be used to fulfill requirements for Liberal Education and for on-campus programs. More than 260 individual courses by 23 departments were offered fall 2009 (data does not include Badger High School). Distance Learning courses are offered online, at remote sites, and in self-study packets. Self-study (hard copy) packets continue to serve students who do not have ready access to online technology.

Bemidji State also offers select degree programs through Distance Learning, including Professional Education, Psychology, Business Administration, Technological Studies, Criminal Justice and Nursing.

Summer School: During the summer term, courses are available on-campus and through Distance Learning. Formats vary from full session schedules to intensified, short-term workshops. Assessment of summer offerings is included in departmental five-year plans.

Post-secondary Education Options (PSEO): Area high school students who have achieved a certain grade point average or rank in class and wish to begin college before they graduate from high school may take advantage of two programs at Bemidji State. They may attend classes on the Bemidji State campus (managed by the Admissions Office) or they may attend Bemidji State classes at their high school location (concurrent enrollment, managed by the Center for Extended Learning) if their school participates in the program.

By way of example:
Concurrent Enrollment (Does Not include Badger High School)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Year/Semester</th>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>Headcount</th>
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<td>15</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 Spring</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 Fall</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 Spring</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 Fall</td>
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<td>122</td>
<td>426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008 Spring</td>
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<tr>
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<td>10</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>840</td>
<td>3191</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On-Campus Enrollment: Other opportunities for high school students are discussed in Chapter Five, Criterion Five.

Collaborations with Institutions
Bemidji State collaborates with other Minnesota campuses in offering academic degrees to distance learning students.

By way of example:
- Associate of Arts Degree Collaborative Degree, Alexandria Technical College and Bemidji State University.
- Bachelor of Science in Nursing, some courses offered on Anoka-Ramsey Community College campus.
- Master of Science in Education or Master of Education, BSU/MSUM: An online collaborative program between Bemidji State University and Minnesota State University, Moorhead which allows students to complete cognate courses in Educational/Information Communications and Technology for in-service pre-K-12 and post-secondary teachers.
Bemidji State also maintains program articulations with numerous community and technical colleges, assuring seamless transfer for students. A MnSCU template is used for the agreements. Articulations, coupled with the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum, help students at two-year colleges plan for transfers to four-year schools.

**By way of example:**

Bemidji State has more than 270 program articulations with 17 Minnesota community and technical colleges.

The Professional Education Department, **Student Teacher Placement**, maintains the following partnerships (for on-campus programs):

- Urban Teacher Education Project (UTEP), St. Paul School District.
- Minnesota Common Market, available with Southwest Minnesota State University, Minnesota State University—Mankato, Winona State University, and Minnesota State University—Moorhead.
- Aldine, Texas, 15 miles north of Houston.
- Student Teaching Abroad, through Winona State University with Global Student Teaching, University of Minnesota Morris and Minnesota State University Moorhead.

The DLITE and FasTrack programs (online/off-campus) placed 46 elementary and secondary student teachers in 2008-2009 and 42 in 2009-2010. Ninety-nine percent of students are placed in Minnesota schools. The occasional other placements are in neighboring states.

**Classroom Pedagogies**

Classroom pedagogies at Bemidji State range from traditional to innovative. Traditional strategies include lecture, discussion, workshop/studio and lab.

**By way of example:**

- Interdisciplinary teaching in People and the Environment classes using lecture and breakout sections.
- Team teaching in Honors courses.
- Blended courses using multiple methodologies, including D2L.
- Reacting to the Past: An innovative classroom pedagogy (see left), required for Honors students.

Innovative pedagogies are described in *Metamorphosis*, a newsletter of the Center for Professional Development and occasionally in *Horizons*, the university's alumni magazine.

**By way of example:**

*The Evolving Curriculum: Collaborative Problem-Solving in an Online World*, *Metamorphosis* 2008 Volume XXIII, Issue I and Darwin article in *Horizons* (page 7)

**Faculty-Student Collaborations**

These are discussed below under Opportunities for Faculty: Faculty-Student Collaborations.

**Co-curricular Education**

Co-curricular learning opportunities for students include participation in student government and organizations, residential life programs, university committees, student union programming, health service initiatives, recreational programming, on-campus jobs and related activities. Qualified students may also experience the challenges and rewards of college teaching by working with faculty as Teaching Associates.

**By way of example:**

- **Student Senate**: Officers and representatives learn leadership skills and experience governance.
- **FYRE, First Year Residential Experience**: A learning and living community for freshmen and a career experience opportunity for upper class students, who return to the program to serve as Resident Assistants.
Criterion Three

- **PAA, Peer Academic Assistant**: Provide academic support to residents in the First Year Residential Experience program.
- **Lifestyle Educators**: Student peer educators learn leadership skills and are trained to give accurate and current health information to their peers.
- **Hobson Union Programming Board (HUPB)**: organizes social and cultural programs for the campus community.
- **On-Campus Employment**: Work Study and Regular Payroll positions are available in most areas of the university including academic and administrative departments, the library, grounds and maintenance, food services.
- **Undergraduate Teaching Associate Program (UTAP)**.
- **International Program Center**: Provides support for international students studying at Bemidji State and provides international and domestic study-travel opportunities for all students.

Student life is discussed further in Chapter Four: Criterion Four.

**Opportunities for Faculty**

Bemidji State supports teaching, research and creative opportunities for faculty. Faculty engagement in such activities contributes to an active learning environment.

**Curriculum Development**

The Center for Professional Development and the Curriculum Liaison provide support for curriculum development. As noted above, the university supports both with reassigned time for directors.

The MnSCU system also provides support through the Center for Learning and Teaching.

**Honors Lectures**

The Honors Council lecture series promotes scholarly discourse among the faculty and cultivates new intellectual interests among students. As noted above, the Honors Program director receives three credits of reassigned time per semester.

**Committee and Council Service**

Faculty are encouraged to serve on university committees and councils, including the following:


**Faculty-Student Collaborations**

Faculty at Bemidji State recognize the value of faculty-student collaborations such as community activities, research projects, creative work and events. In many majors the curriculum is structured to require these kinds of experiences at the upper levels in the form of seminars, internships, labs, and theses. Students are mentored through the process of conceptualizing, developing and conducting projects, often in the real world of community businesses and organizations. These partnerships allow undergraduate students to have professional level experiences that usually are only found at the master’s degree level. NSSE data rates Bemidji State significantly higher than its Minnesota peer institutions on measures of faculty-student interactions.

By way of example:

- **UTAP, Undergraduate Teaching Associate Program**: Students work with faculty in the classroom.
- **Student Scholarship and Creative Achievement Conference**: Students present their work, mentored by faculty, such as presentations by Political Science majors.
- **Journal of Student Research**: Faculty serve as sponsors and editors for student work.
Criterion Three

- Literary Anthologies: English Department faculty mentor students in editorial and publication processes.
- Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) offers active learning for Accounting students and provides a valuable service to the university and the community. The service is especially important to international students.
- Marketing Assistance & Research Solutions, a faculty-run, student-directed real-life marketing collaboration.
- Visual Arts Student Accomplishments
- Madrigal Dinners: Forty year tradition of student achievement, faculty collaboration (video).

Collaborations with Colleagues
Faculty are encouraged to collaborate with each other on learning, teaching and professional development.

By way of example:
- The Office of Academic Affairs sent a Liberal Education Committee team to an AAC&U General Education Institute. See “Liberal Education” feature story.
- Faculty from diverse disciplines are invited to teach breakout sections and to participate in large-group discussions in People and the Environment courses (Liberal Education).
- Faculty team teach in Honors and other programs.
- It is common for faculty to collaborate on grant writing and administration, such as the following grants awarded to Bemidji State in fiscal year 2008 (2007-2008 Data Book):
  - Student Support Services
  - Nurse Education Practice and Retention
  - Post-secondary Vocational Education Training
  - Small Business Development Center
  - Title VI-E BWS Child Welfare Training
  - Restoration of Indian Lake
  - NASA Space Grant
  - Data in Mathematics
  - Minnesota Water Resources Climate Change
  - 360 Degrees: Engineering Technology Center

Course and Program Delivery Options
Faculty are encouraged to utilize alternative course and program delivery options such as those discussed above, including online, summer, remote site and blended format.

Programs Offering Graduate Degrees
- Biology
- Counseling Psychology
- English
- Environmental Studies
- Mathematics
- Professional Education
- Science
- Sport Studies
- Technological Studies

3. LEARNING AND TEACHING ENVIRONMENTS: GRADUATE
(Core Components 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d)

Graduate study at Bemidji State offers students advanced preparation in their chosen fields, providing them with professional level knowledge and credentials. Graduate students are prepared to enter careers, to advance in their current careers, and to transition to doctoral and other terminal degree programs.

Faculty are admitted to the graduate faculty based on stated criteria, department approval, and approval of the college dean, the graduate dean and the vice president for academic affairs. Terms run for seven years. Admission of associate graduate faculty is also based on stated criteria and approvals. Terms run for three years.

A Graduate Committee makes recommendations on curriculum and program proposals and advises the graduate dean. Members of the committee belong to the graduate faculty and are elected for service by graduate programs.
Graduate Degrees, Licensures and Certificates

Five master's degrees are offered by nine of Bemidji State's 22 academic departments:

1. Master of Arts
2. Master of Science
3. Master of Education
4. Master of Special Education
5. Master of Science (Education)

Specialized licensures (non-degree) are offered in Career and Technical Education, Preprimary Specialty, Reading and Special Education. Certificates (non-degree) are offered in Electronic Writing and Online Teaching.

Programs are offered on-campus at Bemidji State and through Distance Learning.

Assessment of Graduate Programs

Graduate programs are assessed on the five-year cycle of the Five-Year Academic Program, Review and Assessment plan. The five-year plan is described above, in undergraduate program review. As with undergraduate programs, graduate program assessment results are evaluated and inform curriculum revision. Graduate programs are also assessed indirectly with exit evaluations conducted at the thesis oral defense.

Opportunities for Graduate Students

Bemidji State supports graduate student learning by offering graduate assistantships, mini-grants, thesis awards and flexible program options.

Graduate assistantships

The university supports graduate students through fifty-four graduate assistantships offered annually through the three colleges and seven administrative and support offices. Graduate assistants teach, coach, conduct research and assist with administrative duties. They receive annually a stipend of $8,500.00 and twelve credits of tuition waiver.

Mini grants

These awards may be used to support research related to a thesis or travel to a professional conference in the student's field. An average of just fewer than four awards per year at an average of $365 each has been given in the last seven years.

Graduate Creativity Award: An award is given annually in recognition of excellence in scholarship, research, and creativity at the master's level as exhibited in a thesis or research paper.

Faculty-Student Collaborations

As noted above in Undergraduate Studies, faculty at Bemidji State recognize the value of faculty-student collaborations such as community activities, research projects, creative work and events.

By way of example:

- **Student Scholarship and Creative Achievement Conference**: Students present their work, mentored by faculty.
- **Journal of Student Research**: Faculty serve as sponsors and editors for student work.
- **English Department Literary Anthologies**: Faculty editors mentor graduate student managing editors.
- **Internships**
Perhaps the most intensive collaboration for graduate students comes with the writing of the master’s thesis or project. Students are mentored through the process of conceptualizing, developing and conducting their projects, often in the real world of community businesses and organizations.

A listing of masters’ theses is available in the A.C. Clark Library catalog. To see abstracts, click on titles.

By way of example, some 2008 thesis titles:

- Our bodies, our words: living poetically in a political world / by Katherine Leigh Beaver.
- The NFL chaplaincy: duties, expectations and perceived accomplishments / Reid Patrick Ferrin.
- What’s holding ‘us’ back? An investigation into wind power production and public ownership schemes in the United States / by Anna M. Carlson.
- Culturally subversive domestic literature: Maxine Kumin and Anne Sexton’s Eggs of things and More eggs of things by Katherine E. Carter.

Flexible Program Options

In addition to traditional offerings, Bemidji State offers graduate programs through Distance Learning.

Opportunities for Graduate Faculty

Members of the graduate faculty teach graduate-level courses and chair and serve as members on thesis committees. They may also serve as Graduate Representatives for the Graduate Studies Office at thesis defenses. Graduate faculty frequently mentor students in their applications for continued graduate study at other schools.

4. LEARNING AND TEACHING ENVIRONMENTS: EXTERNAL
(Core Components 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d)

Programs

Bemidji State recognizes and has responded to the national trend of increased interest in distance learning and its value for students and faculty. The university offers a variety of undergraduate and graduate programs in online and blended formats, as well as stand-alone courses, especially in Liberal Education. As noted below, all Distance Learning programs participate in regular assessment through their departments.

Undergraduate Distance Programs

- Bachelor of Science in Teacher Education (DLITE) (Distributed Learning in Teacher Education) blended technologies, K-8 Elementary Education for rural and urban students who cannot attend a campus-based teacher education program.
- FasTrack Secondary Initiative Portfolio process for Minnesota Department of Education certification.
- Bachelor of Science - Business Administration - Online with emphasis areas in Management, Marketing and Small Business/Entrepreneurship.
- Bachelor of Science/Bachelor of Arts - Psychology (Arrowhead University Consortium-AUC) Focuses on independent research activities and/or applied human service skills development; on Hibbing Community College campus and through guided/self directed study courses.
- Bachelor of Applied Science in Technology Management Builds on an individual’s past technical education and related work experience. Apply credits toward 2-year A.S., A.A.S. or 4-year degree. Six week courses meet face to face meetings plus independent study via Internet or email; completion of program in 2 1/2 years.
- Bachelor of Applied Science in Applied Engineering A 2 + 2 degree program; builds on individual’s previous certificate, diploma or 2-year technical degree.
- Bachelor of Science - Criminal Justice - Online Generalist degree; preparation for careers in law enforcement, corrections, and other crime prevention and investigation agencies.
- R.N to Baccalaureate - Nursing Block times, blended format, including campus visits plus online work.
Graduate Distance Programs

- Master of Science in Education: For pre-K-12, post-secondary educators; online or blended format, individualized emphasis.
- Master of Education: For practicing Pre-K through post-secondary teachers; improve their teaching skills. Meets five program standards from the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).
  - M.S. Education or M.Ed. - Reading Licensure: Online; for P-12 teachers; advanced degree in reading.
  - M.S. Education or M.Ed. - Mathematics: Provides advanced studies in math; for elementary, middle school teachers; intense summer face-to-face; addresses the No Child Left Behind requirements. Core education courses are completely online. Mathematics program: core classes online plus math face to face in summer.
- Master of Science - Industrial Technology: An advanced degree in industrial technology, manufacturing, business, and enterprise quality leadership. Courses in the MSIT degree program are offered through a variety of flexible delivery options, including online, self-study, and other methods.
- Master of Science – Educational/Information Communications and Technology (Field of Emphasis): Online, advanced studies in educational technology for in-service p-12 and post-secondary teachers.
- Master of Science – Special Education: Online degree program provides in-service teachers with a broad base of knowledge about disabilities and programming strategies to use with students with disabilities. Leads to Minnesota licensure in Emotional Behavioral Disorders and Specific Learning Disabilities; includes clinical experiences.
- Master of Science - Technology/Career Technical Education: A graduate degree for individuals wishing to enhance their personal credentials and/or prepare for leadership roles in a wide range of positions in Technology Education, and Career & Technical Education.

Stand-Alone Distance Courses

The Liberal Education Program at Bemidji State may be completed by taking courses through Distance Learning. Some of these courses may also meet requirements in majors and minors. Although the number of courses varies in any given semester, by way of example, in the fall semester of 2009, thirty-seven Liberal Education courses were offered through distance learning across 10 of 11 categories (Category Two does not have dedicated courses).

- Credits offered: 109
- Credits generated: 1,583
- Enrollment: 542
- Departments represented: 14

Assessment of External Studies Programs

Several initiatives, undertaken by the Center for Extended Learning, help ensure that assessment activities specifically related to distance learning courses and programs are directly incorporated into planning at the department, college, and university levels.

- The CEL Assessment Coordinator works directly with distance learning program coordinators to help develop assessment plans for distance learning programs and to annually review departmental assessment activities. See left for Assessment Summary Report.
- University Guidelines for Academic Program Review and Assessment include the protocols for assessment of learner outcomes. In 2005-06 the Guidelines were revised to include required assessment of all distance learning programs. Specifically required was the inclusion of direct measures of student learning outcomes from these programs for the purposes of program evaluation and improvement.
- Academic departments offering distance learning programs are required to file an annual report outlining both direct and indirect measures of student learning conducted by the department.
- The CEL assessment coordinator is responsible for tracking program coordinators assessment and reporting activities and in turn provides an annual report to the Center for Extended Learning outlining departmental assessment initiatives and progress.
Opportunities for External Studies Students
Distance learning makes it possible for students who are place-bound, because of work or families or for other reasons, to pursue higher education away from their homes without leaving home. This opens careers and personal advancement to them that might otherwise have been out of reach.

Opportunities for Faculty
Faculty also can benefit from teaching in distance learning programs. They can participate in curriculum development and in the challenges and rewards of teaching in new formats and venues. In the fall semester of 2009, 93 of approximately 170 faculty members—55 percent—taught distance learning courses.

Programs for external constituents, including customized training, are discussed further in Chapter Five, Criterion Five.

CRITERION THREE PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT
Bemidji State University has identified three Priorities for Improvement. These are described in Priority for Improvement features and in the Priorities for Improvement Criterion Summary. Supporting documents and detailed plans for improvement are provided in the self-study resource room.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority for Improvement</th>
<th>Civic Engagement (Leadership Center)</th>
<th>School of Graduate Studies</th>
<th>Professional Education Department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criterion Three: Student Learning &amp; Effective Teaching (Summary, All Criteria)</td>
<td>Establish assessments to assure effective teaching and learning.</td>
<td>Establish assessments to assure effective teaching and learning.</td>
<td>Establish assessments to assure effective teaching and learning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CRITERION THREE SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE
The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

Core Component - 3a
The organization’s goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.

- The university’s commitment to utilizing evidence of success for its educational mission is manifest in assessment components of its five-year plans and reviews. These plans and reviews are required of academic departments and programs, and of student development and university services departments.
  - Undergraduate departments and programs participate in the Five-Year Program Planning, Review and Assessment Cycle.
  - Graduate programs are assessed on the five-year cycle of the Five-Year Academic Program, Review and Assessment plan.
  - Several initiatives, undertaken by the Center for Extended Learning, help ensure that assessment activities specifically related to distance learning courses and programs are directly incorporated into planning at the department, college, and university levels.
  - Student and university offices ... engage in regular planning and review, including assessment.
Criterion Three

- The assessment component [of academic program five-year planning] is informed by the university’s Dimensions of Student Learning.
- Assessment of the Liberal Education Program:
  - Goals of Liberal Education
  - Assessment of Liberal Education
  - (In Chapter Four, Criterion Four) Assessment of the current program is based on Minnesota Transfer Curriculum goals and competencies.
- The [Master Academic Plan] MAP arises from and reflects goals and values of the university’s academic colleges and departments. It helps inform other master plans and the University Plan.
- Goals and Measurements evaluate achievement of the University Plan and of related items in MnSCU’s Strategic Plan. These are reported in an Accountability Dashboard.

Core Component - 3b
The organization values and supports effective teaching.

- The intent of the vision and mission—to educate and to make a difference—are especially carried out in Strategy A of the University Plan ... Engage Students for Success in Careers, Communities and Life.
- The University Plan ... supports learning, teaching and assessment in its Goals and Measurements.
- [Educational] offerings are supported by the university through planning and assessment, and through the allocation of resources that assure faculty, curriculum and facility excellence.
- As noted above, the university’s commitment to utilizing evidence of success for its educational mission is manifest in assessment components of its five-year plans and reviews. These plans and reviews are required of academic departments and programs, and of student development and university services departments.
- The University Assessment Plan ... coordinates assessments that are carried out at various levels.
- Other resources include the following:
  - Assessment Plan, 2009
  - Academic Assessment Committee
  - Assessment Coordinators
  - Cross-walk MAP and Five-Year Guidelines
  - Curriculum Liaison
  - Dimensions of Student Learning
  - Guidelines: Five-Year Academic Program Planning, Review and Assessment Cycle
  - Gaps & Trends
  - Academic Program Review Schedule
  - Student Development and University Services Program Planning and Review

Core Component - 3c
The organization creates effective learning environments.

- Bemidji State assures learning and teaching excellence through distinctive, excellent programs.
- Undergraduate study is Bemidji State’s raison d’être.
- Graduate study at Bemidji State offers students advanced preparation in their chosen fields, providing them with professional level knowledge and credentials.
- Bemidji State recognizes and has responded to the national trend of increased interest in distance learning and of its value for students and faculty.
Learning and teaching are supported through services and with buildings, equipment, technology and related features, including the following:

- Opened in February 2008, the Advising Success Center is the result of many years of efforts toward focusing advising services for students, especially for at-risk and undecided students.
- Library Services include on-campus and electronic holdings and services to patrons.
- TRIO/SSS provides comprehensive direct services to 350 eligible students through a student centered learning model.
- The American Indian Resource Center (AIRC) is a source of great pride for Bemidji State University.
- D2L is a course management system that provides a password-protected environment in which students can interact online with each other and with their instructor.
- ATC provides technologically advanced tools to enhance the learning experience.
- Open to all students, faculty and staff, new computer lab hardware is rotated in every two to three years.
- Bemidji State’s buildings and grounds also support learning and teaching excellence. The campus grounds are appealing and are well maintained. Building renovations are scheduled as needed.

**Core Component - 3d**

The organization’s learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.

- Curriculum processes at Bemidji State are supported at several levels and include the allocation of resources.
- The university continually assesses for learning and teaching success and for student satisfaction and engagement.
- Bemidji State assures the quality of its faculty through various means.
- The Center for Professional Development also supports faculty excellence through its services.
- **As noted in 3c above:** Learning and teaching are supported through services and with buildings, equipment, technology and related features, including the following:
  - Opened in February 2008, the Advising Success Center is the result of many years of efforts toward focusing advising services for students, especially for at-risk and undecided students.
  - **As noted in 3c, above:** Library Services include on-campus and electronic holdings and services to patrons.
  - TRIO/SSS provides comprehensive direct services to 350 eligible students through a student centered learning model.
  - The American Indian Resource Center (AIRC) is a source of great pride for Bemidji State University.
  - D2L is a course management system that provides a password-protected environment in which students can interact online with each other and with their instructor.
  - ATC provides technologically advanced tools to enhance the learning experience.
  - Open to all students, faculty and staff, new computer lab hardware is rotated in every two to three years.
  - Bemidji State’s buildings and grounds also support learning and teaching excellence. The campus grounds are appealing and are well maintained. Building renovations are scheduled as needed.

- Improving learning and teaching is prioritized in budgets at Bemidji State, as indicated in the following:
  - Commitment of resources to assessment
    - University-wide Assessment Planning
    - Support for Curriculum
    - Student and University Services Plans and Reviews
Criterion Three

- Feature Stories
  - College Reorganization
  - Liberal Education
  - Student Development & Enrollment
- Priorities for Improvement
  - Civic Engagement
  - Graduate Studies
  - Professional Education

CRITERION THREE STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES

Strengths
- Cross-Cutting Themes—Learning-Focused
- Liberal Education Feature

Challenges
- Graduate Studies Priority for Improvement
- Professional Education Priority for Improvement

SENIORS TO WATCH
Horizons Winter 2008, Page 9

Michelle Morgan, Bemidji, MN Mathematics Education, Technology Education, Mathematics

Liz Wentland, Sartell, MN Psychology, Applied Psychology

Jesan Sorrells, Bridgeton, NJ Visual Arts
CHAPTER FOUR

Criterion Four

Bemidji State University shapes students who go out to shape the world.

Alumna Trudy Rautio, Accounting Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer, Carlson Company: “I never expected to travel the world and sit on the boards of public companies in Europe.” Horizons, Winter 2009, Page 7

Criterion Four: Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge

The organization promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.

Core Component 4a: The organization demonstrates, through the actions of its board, administrators, students, faculty, and staff, that it values a life of learning.

Core Component 4b: The organization demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs.

Core Component 4c: The organization assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.

Core Component 4d: The organization provides support to ensure that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

Organization of Chapter Four

Introduction
1. University Commitment (Core Components 4a, 4c, 4d)
2. Faculty and Staff (Core Components 4a, 4c)
3. The Learning Journey: Student Development & Enrollment (Core Components 4a, 4b, 4d)
4. Liberal Education (General Education) (Core Components 4b, 4c, 4d)
5. Undergraduate Study (Core Components 4a, 4b, 4c)
6. Graduate Study (Core Components 4a, 4b, 4c)
7. External Constituents (Core Components 4b)
8. Priorities for Improvement

Summary of Evidence

Strengths and Challenges
INTRODUCTION

Bemidji State University is unequivocal in its commitment to the acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge. This commitment is evident in its primary and foundational mission documents and in its actions, which are mission motivated. The university promotes lifelong learning for all of its constituents, internal and external; promotes and models the values of an educated life; supports, through its actions, an informed and active citizenry; and assesses its programs for usefulness to students.

1. UNIVERSITY COMMITMENT (Core Components 4a, 4c, 4d)

For the last decade, Bemidji State has been exploring, rediscovering and, in a sense, reinventing aspects of itself based on two primary factors:

- A learning-centered approach to higher education.
- A sense of who our students are in the 21st century.

While the university continues to honor its heritage as a normal school and to value its development toward a regional comprehensive university, it has recognized that neither description alone offer an accurate portrayal of Bemidji State’s current place in higher education. Three major developments have arisen from the clarifying process of self-consideration:

- Reorganization of the colleges (with departmental redefinition).
- Examination of the Liberal Education Program.
- Creation of the office of Student Development & Enrollment.

As noted in Chapter Two, Criterion Two, the reorganization of the colleges went into effect on July 1, 2008. The university had framed for itself a new identity: an arts and sciences university with select professional programs. Financial alignment contributed to the changes: budget allocations and shifts supported the examination of the Liberal Education Program and the opening of the Student Development & Enrollment office, including a new vice presidential position (with a salary line redirected from External Affairs).

The refined identity serves as a touchstone for the university’s commitment to an energized curriculum at all levels, student development, continued professional development of faculty and staff, and the creation of new knowledge. The changes continue to spark lively conversations across the campus. Bemidji State does what universities are suited to do: question widely; continually learn about themselves and their students; improve on multiple levels; model change; prepare students for life and citizenship; and create new knowledge for the broader world.

Mission Documents

As noted in Chapter One, Criterion One, the University Plan promotes and supports excellence in higher education. That excellence is defined, in part, by the university’s vision and mission, by its Signature Themes and by the Strategies for 2008-2013.

By way of example:

Strategy A: Engage Students for Success in Careers, Communities and Life

Strategic Imperative: Create opportunities for student success through high quality programs and services. Bemidji State recognizes the value of higher education as a public good, provides student-centered access to learning, meets the needs of our diverse, rural and nontraditional students, and promotes lifelong learning.

Also as noted in Chapter One, Criterion One, the spirit and letter of the primary mission documents reflect the foundational documents, including master plans and college plans.
By way of example:

**Master Academic Plan (MAP):**
- [The] Master Academic Plan coordinates and further develops those portions of the University Plan that are uniquely academic.
- The Master Academic Plan provides a flexible overall framework for the development of specific college and department plans and for academic initiatives that reflect those plans. In this way, the MAP guides academic development at the university and connects current planning efforts to those that have gone before....

Effective 2008-2009, Bemidji State reorganized its colleges. The new college visions and missions clearly embrace the university’s vision and mission as well as reflect the personality of each college and its departments:

**College of Arts & Sciences (CAS)**
- Vision: As a college that values intellectual curiosity, creativity, and diversity, we foster the transformation of lives and societies through the power of an engaged, integrative education.
- Mission: We shape passion for knowledge, meaning, and creativity.

**College of Health Sciences & Human Ecology (HSHE)**
- Vision: The College of Health Sciences & Human Ecology embraces a deep respect for the individual, a holistic approach to education, dedication to science and service, and a commitment to the betterment of communities.
- Mission: To excel in education, research, and service.

**College of Business, Technology & Communication (CBTC)**
- Vision: Student-centered preparation for professional leadership in a dynamic, interconnected world.
- Mission: Engaging students for the professional world.

As noted in Chapter One, Criterion One, the MAP informs the Facility Master Plan, Technology Master Plan and Student Enrollment and Development Master Plan, thus carrying forward the university’s mission.

By way of example:

**J-Plan: The Learning Journey, Student Development & Enrollment, 2008-2013**

**Mission:** We’re here for the journey, investing in our students’ success through excellent programs and services focused on learning and development.

**Strategies to Achieve the Mission**

Strategy 6: Promote and support staff professional development. Hallmarks of a strong, unified and successful staff include collaboration and collegiality; scholarship, participation in conferences and knowledge of professional literature; the framing of work in a common language of learning; and the modeling of learning and growth.

**Policies and Procedures**

In its policies and procedures, the university both promotes and models values and behaviors that address integrity in behavior and actions, including research, teaching and learning.

By way of example, integrity policies include the following:
- **Affirmative Action Plan:** Nondiscrimination in employment and education opportunity.
- **MnSCU Code of Conduct Training** (scroll to middle of right column): Bemidji State employees participate in system conduct training.
- **Human Subjects in Research:** Bemidji State protects individuals’ rights through Policies and Procedures for the Use of Human Subjects in Research.
Employee Code of Conduct Training Begins

Are you allowed to take advantage of a special discount offered by a local business to government employees? This question and others are answered in two new online training courses for Office of the Chancellor employees. The courses introduce the Employee Code of Conduct, System Procedure 1C.0.1, which establishes expectations for all employees of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, whether full- or part-time, temporary or unlimited. The Code of Conduct draws together commonly used employment-related policies and procedures, including those on ethics, nondiscrimination, fraud, other dishonest conduct and more. The 20-minute courses are available at https://mnsite.ims.mnscu.edu.

Congressional Initiatives

• $236,367 to increase the number of baccalaureate-trained nurses for northwestern Minnesota (for curriculum and equipment).
• $341,000 to prepare engineering technology graduates for technical manufacturing processes.

Criterion Four

• Intellectual Property Rights: The university subscribes to MnSCU system Intellectual Property Rights policies and procedures.
• Privacy Rights: Bemidji State values and protects privacy rights through MnSCU system policies and its own policies.
• Online: Policies are in effect to promote privacy of web site visitors.
• Student Policies: Student Code of Conduct, registration, academic and related policies are in effect for students.
• State and federal Right to Know policies for students are in effect.
• Responsible Men, Responsible Women: A required program for students that promotes a safe and civil campus community.

Budget

Through its budget alignments and allocations, Bemidji State supports the acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge. Priorities for the budget are set in the University Plan:

Strategy D: Optimize Resources to Achieve the University’s Vision and Mission

Strategic Imperative: Effectively manage and increase enrollment and resources in support of the university’s vision and mission. Bemidji State recognizes and honors the role of the university in the stewardship of its resources and the importance of accountability.

D.2 Manage revenues in support of educational programs and services. Support student success through stewardship of revenue streams including tuition and fees, scholarships, state allocation, and external fundraising.

D.3 Create institutional capacity through improvement in efficiencies. Support student success through efficiencies and improved utilization of internal financial resources.

D.4 Through intentional analysis, utilize data to inform decision-making in support of the university’s vision and mission. Improve generation and allocation of resources through a process of discovery, identification, collection and interpretation of data.

D.5 Maintain financial strength through priority program growth and development. Expand capacity for existing programs with high regional or national demand while identifying new programs and markets that have the potential to strengthen enrollment.

In the spirit of that commitment, and utilizing data sources such as IPEDS, the university has moved from one-year budget plans that addressed the situation of the moment to forward-thinking, longer-term planning. As noted in Chapter Two, Criterion Two, a three-year, 2007-2010 budget responded primarily to internal pressures and increased the percent of the budget dedicated to direct instructional costs. The current four-year, 2010-2013 budget responds primarily to external economic pressures. It was constructed prior to the fall 2008 state and national financial crisis. As a result of that planning, the university has been in a good position to weather the economic storm that included an additional state of Minnesota unallotment in 2009. For example, although the holding of positions through attrition has been utilized, the university has not had to resort to faculty retrenchment.

In fact, Bemidji State operates within a balanced budget while continuing to support faculty development, maintain and support steady enrollments, meet new enrollment targets despite a challenging demographic environment, and pursue building and maintenance projects and other routine expenditures that support learning.

Part of the success of the budgets can be attributed to transparency in the budget process, including frequent budget forums open to the campus, budget statements by the president of the university, feedback loops with the bargaining units and the Student Senate, and careful planning in all units.
By way of example:
- Office of the President
- Budget Forums PowerPoints
- 2007-2010 Budget Proposal
- 2008-2010 Budget Adjustments
- 2009-2011 Budget Adjustments

As noted in Chapter Three, Criterion Three, the university also commits budgetary support to learning through reassigned time for the Directors of Liberal Education, Honors, the Center for Professional Development, People and the Environment, Curriculum Liaison, Curriculum Editor, and other positions related to curriculum, learning and teaching.

While Bemidji State remains committed to full-time, probationary and tenured positions, budget allocations also fund a significant number of adjunct and fixed-term positions when expertise required to teach certain courses is not available within our full-time faculty. Such positions are regularly offered to provide specialized instruction in music, visual arts, psychology, criminal justice and other programs. For instance adjuncts are used to teach American Sign Language courses that are offered jointly in Professional Education and Languages and Ethnic Studies.

**Information Technology**

Bemidji State is nationally recognized for moving campus-wide to the dual-boot Macintosh and Windows platform, allowing maximum flexibility for software and hardware choice. It also maintains current-standard software across the university, including programs in manufacturing, architecture, graphic and media design. Software excellence and cross-platform coordination among programs helps assure that students have the opportunity to enter the workforce with competitive skills and knowledge.

Other information technology support includes a laptop program for faculty (new hardware every four years), open and specialized computer laboratories (see side panel), technical support and related services.

**Web-enhanced teaching**

The university also supports student knowledge and understanding of information technology through its growing use of web-enhanced courses using D2L.

**External Guidance and Relevance to Students**

Bemidji State recognizes that today’s academy does not function in isolation from the larger world. This understanding is especially confirmed in its vision statement: “Shaping Potential, Shaping Worlds,” and in its Strategies for 2008-2013:

**Strategy B: Promote Vital Communities through Involvement**

Strategic Imperative: Support and promote community vitality through Bemidji State’s commitments within our local, regional, national and world spheres. Bemidji State values the supportive relationships between the university and its communities.

Bemidji State further recognizes that its relationship with external communities is mutual: influence, support and benefits flow in both directions.

To assure that its mission motivated actions are responsive to the realities of the larger world, the university solicits, accepts and acts on commentary and feedback in multiple forms.
 Criterion Four

By way of example:

- Five-Year academic program reviews include visits and recommendations by external consultants.
- Five-Year Student Development and University Services reviews recommend external consultant reviews.
- As noted in Chapter One, Criterion One, eight departments hold outside accreditation for their programs.
- Five-Year academic reviews may include alumni surveys, standardized national exams, internship evaluations and employer surveys.
- The following areas have external program advisory boards:
  - College of Business, Technology & Communication (CBTC)
    - Business Administration Advisory Board
    - CBTC Advisory Board
    - Technological Studies
      - Industrial Technology Advisory Board
      - Design Technology Advisory Board
  - College of Health Sciences & Human Ecology
    - Psychology Advisory Board
    - Nursing Advisory Board
    - Professional Education
      - Professional Education Advisory Board
      - DLITE/FasTrack Advisory Board
    - Social Work Advisory Board
  - The Internal Revenue Service consults on the Accounting Departments Voluntary Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program.
  - As noted in Chapter Five, Criterion Five, the American Indian Resource Center has feedback relationships with American Indian communities.
  - Also as noted in Chapter Five, Criterion Five, Bemidji State has feedback relationships with its external constituents.

2. FACULTY AND STAFF (Core Components 4a, 4c)

Through professional development activities, faculty and staff at Bemidji State engage in, embrace and model lifelong learning. Sources of funding for these activities include summer school profits, reassigned time, grants and contractual obligations.

As noted in Chapter Three, Criterion Three, support for individual activities includes the following:

- Professional Study and Travel (IFO Master Agreement, Article 19 Section B)
- Professional Improvement Grants
- Sabbatical Leaves

As noted in Chapter Three, Criterion Three, the university supports professional development through programs such as the following:

- Center for Professional Development
- Honors Program (Honors Council Lecture Series)
- EuroSpring and other international travel (faculty directors)
- Conference hosting
- Academic Forums
- Professional training for faculty and staff
- Luoma Institute Leadership Training
- Fall and spring faculty and staff start-up activities and related events
Professional development activities include research, creative work, study, publishing and travel. These activities are developed and reported in Professional Development Plans and Reports.

*By way of example,* faculty and staff report the following professional development activities:

- Faculty
  - Sabbatical Reports FY 2001-2007
  - Professional Improvement Grant Recipient Topics
  - Publications, presentations at conferences, related activities, as reported in faculty vitae
- Staff
  - Publications, presentations at conferences, related activities, as reported in staff vitae
  - MSUASF Professional Improvement Grants, 2008

The university also recognizes faculty and staff development and accomplishments through publication in the BSU Insider.

3. THE LEARNING JOURNEY: STUDENT DEVELOPMENT & ENROLLMENT
(Core Components 4b, 4c, 4d)

One of the most significant changes for Bemidji State since the 2000 Self-study is the opening of the division of Student Development & Enrollment which is led by a vice president. While most of its constituent offices and programs had been operational for many years, the office brought a new focus to their purpose and renewed energy to their commitment.

Through Student Development & Enrollment, Bemidji State promotes students’ academic journeys and provides opportunities for co-curricular experiences and development. As noted in the Student Development & Enrollment Master Plan (the Learning Journey Plan, or J-Plan):

> From the Preface: With its 2008 mission statement, Bemidji State University turns its attention toward “a future that can only be imagined” and the recognition that a primary responsibility of higher education today is to prepare students not only for immediate careers, rich personal lives and citizenship, but for the entire arc of their life journeys. The Student Development & Enrollment Master Plan acknowledges the breadth and depth of that challenge, and guides programs, services and staff in their efforts to meet the challenges of a thousand unpredictable tomorrows.

See the Student Development & Enrollment feature story for further information on the evolution of this office.

Planning Document Support for the Learning Journey

As noted above, the J-Plan is based on a commitment to learning and development. That commitment is carried out especially through the first four Strategies to Achieve the Mission:

1. Support and promote students’ learning.
2. Support and promote students’ personal well-being.
3. Challenge and support students as they navigate their journey.
4. Ensure ease of access to the university and to campus services and programs.

Communities of Practice (COP) (Etienne Wenger) and Assessment

Student Development & Enrollment has created five *Communities of Practice Groups* comprised of individuals across the division. A Community of Practice is defined as, “groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.”
Communities created at Bemidji State cover the following areas of study:

- Access
- Assessment
- Challenge and Support
- Student Learning
- Wellness

The intent of each community is to identify strategies or evidence of practices within SD&E relative to each COP. For instance, the Assessment COP gathered and compiled an Assessment Inventory Matrix for each SD&E department. Each of the assessments appears to have a unique purpose for improving and developing student experiences at Bemidji State. The matrix provides a list of the assessments as well as a description of each and how they are used. The document is evidence of the assessment of student learning and supportive learning environments outside the classroom.

By way of example:

The “Access” Community of Practice group’s focus is to ensure ease of access to the university and to campus services and programs by leading, initiating, intervening, following through, reaching out and networking.

As noted in the Student Development & Enrollment feature story, progress with Communities of Practice goals is assessed through a Balanced Scorecard approach.

**Support for the Academic Journey**

Support for students’ academic journeys includes advising, first-year programs, and tutoring and related services.

**Advising Success Center (ASC)**

In consultation with faculty advisors, the Advising Success Center provides comprehensive advising to students, including academic and co-curricular options. ASC background, theory, goals and related information are discussed in Chapter Three, Criterion Three, including the following:

- Theory, Rationale, Transition, Advising
- Conceptual Framework, Activities
- Program and Student Learning Outcomes
- Free University Workshop Schedule

Materials available to students and faculty also include the following:

- Student Guide to Academics & Registration
- Faculty Guide to Academics & Registration

University Services: Other university services that support student development and enrollment include the following:

**Admissions & Scholarships**

The Office of Admissions and Scholarships is responsible for recruiting and matriculating students. Functions include the following:

- Recruits new, domestic incoming students, including freshman, transfer and adult learners.
- Enforces and applies Admission procedures and criteria for students taking courses on campus as well as through the Center for Extended Learning (CEL).
Criterion Four

Student Scholarship and Creative Achievement Conference

Students are invited annually to share their scholarly and creative work with other students, faculty, staff and visitors.

- Research Paper/Thesis (e.g., senior project, capstone course paper, senior or master's thesis, research project)
- Creative work (e.g., works of fiction, poetry, works of art, dance)
- Performances (e.g., vocal or instrumental recital, dramatic reading/performance, performance art)
- Poster Session (e.g., visual display of research, technology, photographs, art)

Madrigal Dinners

Forty year tradition of student achievement, faculty collaboration (video).

- Manages the application process, including the tracking of applications, transcripts, test scores and application fees for both CEL and on-campus students.
- Maintains communication with potential and accepted students during the following stages:
  - Still in the recruitment phase, either prospect or inquiry.
  - In the application process, which includes Admissions decision, Accepted Student Information, the transfer evaluation and invitation to the Academic Advising and Registration (AAR) programs.
- Coordinates, implements and staffs AAR programs.
- Manages the Post Secondary Enrollment Option (PSEO) program.
- Manages Scholarship budget implemented by the University and Foundation for new incoming students and endowed scholarships assigned to Admissions.
- Reviews scholarship awards and tracks scholarship applications, including communication with students and with other Bemidji State offices, such as Financial Aid, Business Services and Residential Life.

Financial Aid

The Financial Aid Office's primary focus is assisting students in securing adequate funding to meet their educational expenses while attending Bemidji State University. General functions include the following:

- Processes financial aid applications, including collection and processing of documents, determination of aid awards and email notification of students of award status.
- Administers all federal, state, institutional and private aid programs.
- Updates institutional and outside scholarships on student awards, including Minnesota Indian Scholarship Program and tribal awards.
- Processes federal, state and alternative loans.
- Meets with students regarding general financial aid questions, special circumstances, study abroad funding and other topics.
- Maintains accurate award records to ensure adherence to federal and state regulations.
- Completes processes for financial aid satisfactory academic progress and Return of Title IV funds, when appropriate.
- Review petitions for reinstatement of financial aid.
- Provides data for institutional research surveys.
- Updates administration of federal and state regulations.

Records and Registration

The Records and Registration Office implements and enforces many university policies and processes, including the following:

- Manages the university’s Degree Audit System (DARS), updating and maintaining individual student degree progress reports.
- Manages student degree completion activities.
- Processes teacher license applications for in-state and out-of-state.
- Monitors student satisfactory academic progress and academic suspension.
- Enforces academic calendar deadlines.
- Reviews petitions for exceptions regarding the application of many academic policies.
- Processes enrollment verification requests.
- Provides official and unofficial transcripts upon request.
- Provides assistance to students applying for and receiving educational benefits for veterans; monitors veterans’ progress as required.
- Assists faculty, staff and students with web applications required for class registration, class schedule maintenance, graduation application, and teacher licensing processes.
- Manages enrollment through supervising the class scheduling process.
- Provides necessary data to administrative units for planning purposes.
- Maintains data to monitor and manage student progress, including residency status, directory and demographic information, name changes, standardized test results.
The office also assists students and faculty with registration, oversees spring graduation ceremonies and prepares the university’s catalog and class schedules.

Security and Safety
The Department of Security & Safety is a division of the office of Finance & Administration. It is responsible for campus security and parking operations on both the Bemidji State and Northwest Technical College (NTC) campuses and for providing security services for students, faculty, staff and campus visitors. Department personnel include fulltime professional and part-time paraprofessional officers. The Department of Security & Safety has developed a working relationship with the Bemidji Police Department that allows for immediate response to crimes, emergencies or requests for service generated by the campus.

Security & Safety duties and functions include the following:

- Provide emergency medical, safety and related response and assistance.
- Monitor electronic warning and related systems.
- Activate emergency evacuation and security plans.
- Operate Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD).
- Maintain daily logs and security records.
- Assist external security and safety agencies.
- Conduct general patrols, manage building access, enforce university policy, manage and enforce parking, make maintenance referrals, as appropriate.
- Initiate and participate in crime prevention and public relations activities.
- Conduct investigations and security and welfare checks; make student conduct referrals; assist Residential Life staff, as needed.

First-Year Programs
The university supports three programs taught by faculty and staff that especially promote academic and personal success for first-year students:

- First-Year Experience (FYE) helps students transition into college life.
- First-Year Residence Experience (FYRE) helps students who live in the residence halls transition into college life.
- TRIO Student Support Services offers three courses to first year students in the program, including College Orientation, Life Career Planning, and Reading and Study Skills.

Academic Support through Tutoring
The university offers tutoring support for students.

By way of example:

- TRIO Student Support Services
- Office for Students with Disabilities
- The Writing Resource Center
- Math Help Room
- Tutoring Services
- American Indian Resource Center
- Accounting Help Room
- Residence Hall Academic Resource Center

Library Services
As noted in Chapter Three, Criterion Three, the A.C. Clark Library provides resources and services to on-campus and distance learning students.
Support for Co-curricular Experiences and Development

Bemidji State recognizes that students who come to the university have diverse backgrounds and needs. Student development and university services range from advising, as noted above, to specialized services such as on-campus childcare, counseling, veterans services and services for students with disabilities. Opportunities include participation in student programs and organizations.

Student Development and University Services Offices

Students are assisted in their personal and academic journeys by campus offices such as the Advising Success Center, Career Services, the Counseling Center and Health Services. (See list and links in side panel). Strategies one through four in the J-Plan guide student development and university services offices in their work with students:

1. Support and promote students’ learning. Self-confidence, self-reliance and responsibility for self lie close to the heart of academic success.

2. Support and promote students’ personal well-being. Personal wellness has many facets, including physical competence, emotional intelligence, a sense of geographic place, spirituality, life-style balance, and a positive sense of self and well-being.

3. Challenge and support, i.e., empower, students as they navigate their journey. The constant for the future is change. In addition to being prepared for careers and graduate study, students who are ready for the future will have knowledge and skills that prepare them to be effective in team work, to think critically and to discern values.

4. Ensure ease of access to the university and to campus services and programs. By leading, initiating, intervening, following through, reaching out and networking, Student Development & Enrollment advocates - makes things happen - for students.

Student Opportunities

Student participation in campus organizations and processes contributes to their personal and academic growth and to the development of lifelong learning skills.

By way of example:

- Student Senate, including service on university committees.
- Student Organizations.
- President’s Student Commission.
- Service on committees such as administrative searches and department advisory boards.

4. LIBERAL EDUCATION (GENERAL EDUCATION) (Core Components 4b, 4c, 4d)

As noted in Chapter Two, Criterion Two, Bemidji State recently reorganized its colleges and reviewed its Liberal Education Program. These efforts evolved cooperatively, both contributing to the redefinition of Bemidji State from a comprehensive university to an arts and sciences university with select professional programs. As noted in the Liberal Education Feature Story, the proposal to revise the Liberal Education curriculum was informed by extensive assessment and in collaboration with faculty, staff and administration. The Liberal Education Feature Story also relates the university’s allocation of resources in support of the Liberal Education Program.

The current Liberal Education Program features breadth of study across the arts and sciences. While the Task Force was at work, assessment activities concentrated on national critical thinking standards. Assessment of the current program is based on Minnesota Transfer Curriculum goals and competencies. A schedule for current review is under development and will be monitored by the Liberal Education Committee and the Director who also serves as Liberal Education Assessment Coordinator. The position carries six credits of reassigned time each semester.
5. UNDERGRADUATE STUDY (Core Components 4a, 4b, 4c)

As noted in Chapter Three, Criterion Three undergraduate study is Bemidji State’s raison d’être. The university encourages and supports undergraduate students by recognizing their successes and by offering programming that reaches beyond the classroom.

Recognition for Undergraduate Student Learning

Bemidji State recognizes and supports undergraduate student scholarship and creative accomplishments. By way of example:

- Student Scholarship and Creative Achievement Conference
- Memorial art work for Katrina and 9/11
- Journal of Student Research
- Creative Arts Performance and Exhibits in Music, Theatre and Visual Arts, e.g., Madrigal Dinners Forty year tradition of student achievement, faculty collaboration (video).
- Rivers Meeting, Writing & Art by Bemidji State Students
- Scholarships
  - 2009
  - 2008
- Seniors to Watch in Horizons magazine. Three seniors are featured at the end of each chapter in this self-study.
- Visual Arts Student Accomplishments
- Madrigal Dinners, 40 year tradition of student achievement, faculty collaboration (video).

Acquiring Knowledge Outside the Undergraduate Classroom

The university encourages students to explore learning, creativity, innovation and knowledge outside of their majors and the university. By way of example:

- International Program Center
- Outdoor Program Center
- Internships
- Student Organizations
- American Indian Resource Center
- MARS Marketing Assistance & Research Solutions
- VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance)
- English Department Literary Anthologies
- Social Work Program Field Expeditions Faculty and students collaborate in Social Work practice.
- Boys and Girls Club of the Bemidji Area Bemidji State students and organizations volunteer for special programs, such as a computer science class that provided weekly instruction.
- Madrigal Dinners, 40 year tradition of student achievement, faculty collaboration (video).

The university continues to improve student opportunities for acquiring outside experience, as exhibited in its Civic Engagement Priority for Improvement.
Preparation for Living in a Global, Multicultural and Diverse Society

Bemidji State is committed to preparing students for careers and living in a global, multicultural and diverse society. This commitment is expressed in its primary mission documents, including its Signature Themes, and in its support of dedicated academic and student development and university services programs such as the following:

- International Program Center, including the Festival of Nations
- International Studies
- Indian Studies
- American Indian Resource Center
- Women’s Studies Program
- Phoenix (GLBTQS)
- Honors

6. GRADUATE STUDY (Core Components 4a, 4b, 4c)

As noted in Chapter Three,Criterion Three, graduate study at Bemidji State offers opportunities for students to specialize in a field and obtain professional level knowledge and credentials. The university supports graduate students by recognizing their successes and by offering opportunities that reach beyond the classroom.

Recognition for Graduate Student Learning

Bemidji State recognizes and supports the academic success of its graduate students.

By way of example:

- Thesis Awards
- Mini-Grants
- Graduate Assistantships
- Scholarships for Graduate Students

Acquiring Knowledge Outside the Graduate Classroom

The university promotes and supports opportunities for graduate students outside the classroom.

By way of example:

- As noted above, Graduate Assistantships
- Internships
- As noted above, Mini-Grants
- Editorial Boards, English Department Literary Anthologies

Preparing for Living in a Global, Multicultural and Diverse Society

As noted above in Undergraduate Study, Bemidji State is committed to preparing students for careers and living in a global, multicultural and diverse society. This commitment is expressed in its primary mission documents, including its Signature Themes, and in its support of dedicated academic and student development and university services programs.

By way of example:

- International Program Center, including the Festival of Nations
- International Studies
- Indian Studies
- American Indian Resource Center
- Women’s Studies Program, including Women’s History Month and Dust & Fire: Writing and Art by Women
- Phoenix (GLBTQS)


**Graduate Studies Priority for Improvement**

The School of Graduate Studies continues to formalize and energize its policies and practices.

**7. EXTERNAL CONSTITUENTS (Core Component 4b)**

Bemidji State supports the acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge for its external constituents. This support is acknowledged in **Strategy B of the 2008-2013 University Plan**: Strategic Imperative B: Support and promote community vitality through Bemidji State’s commitments within our local, regional, national and world spheres.

This support is discussed in detail in Chapter Five, Criterion Five.

**CRITERION FOUR PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT**

Bemidji State University has identified three Priorities for Improvement. These are described in Priority for Improvement features and in the Priorities for Improvement Criterion Summary. Supporting documents and detailed plans for improvement are provided in the self-study resource room.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority for Improvement</th>
<th>Civic Engagement (Leadership Center)</th>
<th>School of Graduate Studies</th>
<th>Professional Education Department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criterion Four: Acquisition, Discovery &amp; Application of Knowledge (Summary, All Criteria)</td>
<td>Assure availability of and support for service learning and participation for students, faculty and staff.</td>
<td>Attend to national practices in developing improved policies and practices; assure consistency of practice across the programs.</td>
<td>Model adaptation and change by improving department integrity through assessment and accreditations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CRITERION FOUR: ACQUISITION, DISCOVERY, AND APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE**

**Core Component 4a**

The organization demonstrates, through the actions of its board, administrators, students, faculty, and staff, that it values a life of learning.

- The University Plan promotes and supports excellence in higher education.
- The new college visions and missions clearly embrace the university's vision and mission.
- The MAP [Master Academic Plan] informs the Facility Master Plan, Technology Master Plan and Student Enrollment and Development Master Plan, thus carrying forward the university’s mission.
- The J-Plan [Student Development & Enrollment Master Plan: The Learning Journey] is based on a commitment to learning and development.
- Through its budget alignments and allocations, Bemidji State supports the acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge.
- The university has moved from one-year budget plans that addressed the situation of the moment to forward-thinking, longer-term planning.
- Through professional development activities, faculty and staff at Bemidji State engage in, embrace and model lifelong learning.
Criterion Four

Core Component 4b
The organization demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs.

- **Dimensions of Student Learning**
  - The university ... supports student knowledge and understanding of information technology.
  - Software excellence and cross-platform coordination among programs helps assure that students have the opportunity to enter the workforce with competitive skills and knowledge.
  - Support for students’ academic journeys includes advising, first-year programs, and tutoring and related services.
  - Bemidji State recognizes that students who come to the university have diverse backgrounds and needs.
  - Student participation in campus organizations and processes contributes to their personal and academic growth and to the development of lifelong learning skills.
  - The ... Liberal Education Program features breadth of study across the arts and sciences.
  - The university encourages and supports undergraduate students by recognizing their successes and by offering programming that reaches beyond the classroom.
  - Bemidji State recognizes and supports the academic success of its graduate students.
  - The university promotes and supports opportunities for graduate students outside the classroom.

Core Component 4c
The organization assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.

- To assure that its mission motivated actions are responsive to the realities of the larger world, the university solicits, accepts and acts on commentary and feedback in multiple forms.
- Through [the services and programs of the office of] Student Development & Enrollment, Bemidji State promotes students’ academic journeys and provides opportunities for co-curricular experiences and development.
- The university encourages students to explore learning, creativity, innovation and knowledge beyond their majors and related programs.
- Bemidji State is committed to preparing students for careers and living in a global, multicultural and diverse society.
- Student Scholarship and Creative Achievement Conference: Students are invited annually to share their scholarly and creative work with other students, faculty, staff and visitors.

Core Component 4d
The organization provides support to ensure that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

- In its policies and procedures, the university both promotes and models values and behaviors that address integrity in behavior and actions, including research, teaching and learning.
  - **Affirmative Action Plan:** Nondiscrimination in employment and education opportunity.
  - **MnSCU Code of Conduct Training:** Bemidji State employees participate in system conduct training (scroll to middle of right column).
  - **Human Subjects in Research:** Bemidji State protects individuals’ rights through Policies and Procedures for the Use of Human Subjects in Research.
  - **Intellectual Property Rights:** The university subscribes to MnSCU system Intellectual Property Rights policies and procedures.
  - **Privacy Rights:** Bemidji State values and protects privacy rights through MnSCU system policies and its own policies.
  - **Online Privacy:** Policies are in effect to promote privacy of web site visitors.
Student Policies: Student Code of Conduct, registration, academic and related policies are in effect for students.
State and federal Right to Know policies for students are in effect.
Responsible Men, Responsible Women: A required program for students that promotes a safe and civil campus community.

**CRITERION FOUR STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES**

**Strengths**
- Cross-Cutting Themes—Future Oriented; Learning-Focused
- Student Development & Enrollment Feature

**Challenge**
- Civic Engagement Priority for Improvement
- Graduate Studies Priority for Improvement

**SENIORS TO WATCH**
Horizons Fall 2007, Page 11

Samuel Parsons, Aberdeen, Scotland  *Mathematics*
Sara Spann, Sheridan, WY  *Industrial Technology*
Chris Zempel, Bemidji, MN  *History*
Chapter Five, Criterion Five Engagement and Service

**Core Component 5a:** The organization learns from the constituencies it serves and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations.

**Core Component 5b:** The organization has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities.

**Core Component 5c:** The organization demonstrates its responsiveness to those constituencies that depend on it for service.

**Core Component 5d:** Internal and external constituencies value the services the organization provides.

Organization of Chapter Five

Criterion Five is organized according to the University Plan 2008-2013 Strategy B

Strategic Imperative B. Support and promote community vitality through Bemidji State’s commitments within our local, regional, national and world spheres. Bemidji State values the supportive relationships between the university and its communities.

**Introduction**

1. University Plan Strategy B. University-wide Commitment to External Constituents (Core Components 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d)
2. University Plan Strategy B.1. Support and Promote Educational Vitality (Core Components 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d)
3. University Plan Strategy B.2 Support and Promote Economic Vitality and Quality of Place (Core Components 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d)
4. University Plan Strategy B.3 Support and Promote Cultural and Recreational Vitality (Core Components 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d)
5. University Plan Strategy B.4 Promote Environmental Vitality (Core Components 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d)
6. Priorities for Improvement

**Summary of Evidence**

**Strengths and Challenges**

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BEMIDJI STATE UNIVERSITY

Criterion Five

INTRODUCTION

Bemidji State 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.

1. UNIVERSITY-WIDE COMMITMENT TO EXTERNAL CONSTITUENCIES

Advance educational opportunities in the university’s communities through customized training, concurrent enrollment, PSEO, online and on-campus programs and related offerings.

Bemidji State University is located in rural northern Minnesota where the winters are long and hard. Survival in this robust place has always depended on community, the community of American Indian nations, of settlers, of neighbors. Early in the 20th century, when the community needed trained teachers, citizens organized a campaign for their own college and Bemidji Normal School opened in 1919.

The community tradition of the Bemidji area continues today. In 2005, after the fateful high school shootings on the Red Lake Indian Reservation (35 miles north of Bemidji), Bemidji State and the City of Bemidji embraced its neighbors: healing ceremonies were held at the American Indian Resource Center and at North Country Regional Hospital. In 2009 when Minnesota State University Moorhead was forced to close by the flood waters of the Red River, Bemidji State opened its dormitories to their students.

Also in 2009, construction began in Bemidji on a regional Event Center, the culmination of years of work and collaboration that paired the community’s desire to improve its services to the region with the university’s need for a new sports facility as a venue for university-related programming.

The Higher Learning Commission Criterion Five asks for evidence that the university takes seriously its role in communities of interest. More than that, Bemidji State has a symbiotic relationship with its communities, its neighbors. It is a north country tradition that assures not only survival but quality of life, including access to services, resources and opportunities, and preservation and enjoyment of cultural heritages.

Mission Documents

In its mission documents, Bemidji State makes it clear that it operates within a broad community of external constituents and that it values those 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:

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


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.

Signature Themes

- International/Multicultural understanding
- Civic engagement
- Environmental stewardship

HLC Self-Study Outreach Profiles

- Nursing Program
- Professional Education Mega Conference
- B-Team, B-Well
- Campus Recreation
- Adapted Physical Education Outreach
- Environmental, Earth and Space Studies
- Center for Research & Innovation
- Marketing Assistance & Research Solutions (MARS)
- Engineering & Manufacturing
- Athletic Department Fan Research
- Early Childhood Training Program

Bemidji State Recognizes Community Leaders

- Bemidji State University Hall of Fame Recognizes Community Leaders
- In Collaboration with the Northwest Minnesota Foundation, Bemidji State Women’s Hall of Fame Recognizes Regional Leaders
The second (of four) strategies in the University Plan is dedicated to the university’s relationships with external constituents:

**University Plan 2008-2013**

**Strategy B: Promote Vital Communities through Involvement**

**Strategic Imperative:** Support and promote community vitality through Bemidji State’s commitments within our local, regional, national and world spheres.

Bemidji State values the supportive relationships between the university and its communities. The strategies are informed, in part, by the environmental scan of the SCOT: Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities and Weaknesses. This document analyzes internal and external forces that are likely to come to bear on university planning and helps the university understand the needs of its external constituents. As noted below, it is informed by university relationships and partnerships with its communities of interest.

Goals and measurements (accountability) for Strategy B are also included in the plan:

- **Goal Three** Increase the number and type of partnerships with external entities.
- **Goal Four** Increase the capacity of the custom college.
- **Goal Five** Develop measurements of community service by students, faculty and staff.
- **Goal Six** Improve graduation-related employment rates.
- **Academic outreach programs,** such as online master’s degrees, are assessed through academic department five-year reviews, as described in Chapter Three, Criterion Three.

**Civic Engagement—The University**

Bemidji State models civic engagement through its community relationships. Senior staff represent the university at organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Northwest Minnesota Foundation, and the Joint Economic Development Commission (JEDC), medical providers (e.g. North Country Regional Hospital, MeritCare Clinic) businesses (e.g. Nortech Systems, Anderson Fabrics, Black Star Dairy) and other agencies are also represented at these organizations. Community projects and needs are brought to meetings and ideas are exchanged. One example of a successful collaboration: a high-end test engineering firm opened a satellite office in Bemidji in part because of the potential employee pool among Bemidji State graduates (see sidebar).

In a less formal capacity, the university’s president meets personally with key office holders in the Bemidji area, such as the mayor of Bemidji, the president of North Country Regional Hospital, American Indian tribal chairs, and the superintendent of the Bemidji Public Schools. He also visits area schools, businesses and industries on a regular basis.

In addition to the above personal connections, Bemidji State continually conducts surveys to determine community needs and to ascertain its position in the community.

*By way of example:*

- In 2003, the marketing firm Russell-Herder conducted community focus groups regarding Bemidji State. A 2004 report on the results of the focus groups proposes specific tactics to address concerns regarding the university’s service and image. The tactics contributed to recent refinements of the university’s public image.
- In 2001 Russell-Herder assisted the university in a review of its logo and mascot. The report on the review contributed to the development of a new Bemidji State logo.
Civic Engagement—Students, Faculty and Staff

In addition to its institutional role, the university contributes to its communities of interest through the actions of its students, faculty and staff. Contributions of students are discussed primarily in Chapter Four, Criterion Four. They include student organizations such as Students Today Leaders Forever, Habitat for Humanity and Relay for Life, and projects in academic programs such as VITA (see sidebar) in the Accounting program.

Faculty and staff contributions include outreach and partnerships. As noted in Chapter One, Criterion One, these are described at length in Telling Our Stories: Outreach and Partnership Efforts at Bemidji State University, Committee for Outreach and Partnership, Spring 2001. Civic engagement on campus and in courses has also been studied. The results are documented in Inventory of Civic Engagement, Spring 2005, and in a Campus Compact report, December 2008.

The 2005 Inventory of Civic Engagement report recommends that Bemidji State undertake a systematic inventory of support for civic engagement activities at the university. The 2008 Campus Compact report recommends that the university pursue the opening of a service learning and civic engagement center.

Based on the results of those reports, Bemidji State has identified civic engagement as one of its three major Priorities for Improvement.

Capacity for Engagement

Bemidji State University is judicious in its development of programs and activities for its external constituents. Criteria for consideration include the university’s ability to carry out a project, especially regarding faculty resources and capacity of facilities. The university also strives to assure that there is real need for such projects. As appropriate, the president’s Cabinet, the Leadership Council and the Deans’ Council evaluate initiatives in light of other university planning and relevant indicators.

2. UNIVERSITY PLAN STRATEGY B.1 SUPPORT AND PROMOTE EDUCATIONAL VITALITY.

Advance educational opportunities in the university’s communities through customized training, concurrent enrollment, PSEO, online and on-campus programs and related offerings.

Bemidji State provides educational opportunities to its communities of interest, from elementary school through higher education and customized training.

Elementary, Middle and High Schools

In addition to maintaining personal contact between area school administrators and the university’s senior staff, Bemidji State has multiple connections with the area’s high schools, including the following:

Post-Secondary Education Options (PSEO)

(High school students must meet eligibility requirements.)

On-Campus

Students in area high schools attend classes on the university campus. Fifty-five PSEO students enrolled in on-campus classes Fall 2009. Since 2001, PSEO on-campus students have taken 6,000 credits at Bemidji State.

Concurrent Enrollment

As noted in Chapter Three, Criterion Three, students take Bemidji State classes in their high school classrooms. Their teachers must meet certain requirements and are mentored by a Bemidji State professor.

EXB Solutions Opens Bemidji Office

EXB Solutions, a high-end test engineering firm, has selected Bemidji to be their primary office location. They opened their Bemidji office last June with a staff of six test engineers. Other EXB offices are located in Wayzata (MN), Phoenix (AZ) and Huntsville (AL). EXB hired five seniors from the Physics Engineering Program at Bemidji State University as some of their initial employees. They have been awarded their Federal HUB Zone certification which will give them extra points in securing government contracts.
Criterion Five

Teacher Training
Bemidji State places approximately 140 student teachers each year in elementary and secondary schools from its on-campus majors. This program provides education majors with classroom experience and provides support and professional development opportunities for area teachers. Ninety-two percent of the placements are in the Bemidji region.

As noted in Chapter Three, Criterion Three: The Professional Education Department, Student Teacher Placement, maintains the following partnerships (on-campus programs):

• Urban Teacher Education Project (UTEP), St. Paul School District.
• Minnesota Common Market, available with Southwest Minnesota State University, Minnesota State University—Mankato, Winona State University, and Minnesota State University—Moorhead.
• Aldine, Texas, 15 miles north of Houston.
• Student Teaching Abroad, through Winona State University with Global Student Teaching, University of Minnesota Morris and Minnesota State University Moorhead.

Also as noted in Chapter Three, Criterion Three, the DLITE and FasTrack programs place 43-46 elementary and secondary student teachers annually. Ninety-nine percent of students are placed in Minnesota schools. The occasional other placements are in neighboring states.

Bemidji State is continuing to improve its preparation of teachers, as demonstrated in the Professional Education Priority for Improvement.

College Preparatory and Summer Programs
Through special programs, Bemidji State assists area students in preparation for college.

By way of example:

• 360 Degrees: This innovative program guides high school students with an interest in technology careers to programs that will help them fulfill their career goals.
  • 360 Annual Report FY’07
• MusiCamp
• Upward Bound: This federally-funded program encourages area high school students to consider higher education and helps prepare them for success in college.
• Mathematics Bridge Course: Improving Student Interest, Mathematical Skills, and Future Success through Implementation of Novel Mathematics Bridge Course for High School Seniors and Post-secondary Students.

Higher Education
Bemidji State serves its external constituents through course and program offerings to individuals and through collaborations with other post-secondary institutions.

Distance Learning Programs
Introduced in Chapter One, Criterion One, these programs offer higher education opportunities to students who cannot or choose not to study on-campus at Bemidji State.

• Center for Extended Learning Feature
• Program Summary, 2000-2010

Campus Support for Distance Learning
The university supports its distance learning programs through several means, including the following:

• In response to a need identified through assessment, the A.C. Clark Library provides access to library holdings and services for distance learners.
• Also in support of improving library services for distance learning students, a systems librarian position has been partially dedicated to providing such service.
• Through its web site, the Center for Extended Learning guides distance learners to university services, including Admissions and Financial Aid.
Post-Secondary Collaborations
Bemidji State has formal relationships with numerous post-secondary institutions.

System Articulations
MnSCU has an elaborate system of course articulations, promoting seamless transfer for general education courses within the system and assisting with course transfers for majors.

Bemidji State has numerous program articulations with other MnSCU institutions. These help promote timely graduation for transfer students.

The university also collaborates with other higher education institutions to offer degrees, including the following:
- An Associate in Arts degree collaboration with Alexandria Technical College.
- A Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science in Psychology collaboration with the Arrowhead University Consortium.

American Indian Community Agreements
Bemidji State has formal articulation agreements with area tribal colleges, including Red Lake Nation College and Leech Lake Tribal College and served as a consultant for Leech Lake’s successful Higher Learning Commission accreditation application.

360 Degrees
(Manufacturing and Applied Engineering Center of Excellence): Bemidji State partnership with eight two-year technical and community college partners:
- Central Lakes College
- Minneapolis Community and Technical College
- Northland Community and Technical College
- Northwest Technical College
- Pine Technical College
- Riverland Community College
- St. Cloud Technical College
- St. Paul College

Other outreach programs: Other programs meet specific needs or interests, such as the following:
- GEM Scholars Program: This research partnership offers opportunities in Geology, Environmental Science and Meteorology (GEM) to American Indian Students. The partners are Purdue University, Bemidji State University, Red Lake Nations College and Leech Lake Tribal College.
- UArctic: Bemidji State is pursuing a relationship with the University of the Arctic, “a cooperative network of universities, colleges, and other organizations committed to higher education and research in the North.”
- Casper, Wyoming: The Master of Special Education degree is offered through a collaborative agreement between the Natrona County School District, Casper, Wyoming and the Professional Education Department of Bemidji State University.

Service to Businesses and Organizations
Bemidji State provides educational and other opportunities to area businesses and organizations through the Center for Research and Innovation and the Small Business Development Center.

Center for Research and Innovation (CRI)
Through CRI, the university offers services to area businesses and organizations that include networking, custom training, professional development, strategic planning and media development. Each year, CRI serves 20 to 30 northern Minnesota employers through direct contracts for service and serves hundreds indirectly through open enrollment professional development courses, workshops and conferences.
Criterion Five

Northwest Minnesota Small Business Development Center Profile

Bemidji State and Independent School District (ISD) # 31 Share Facilities

ISD # 31 uses Bemidji State’s:
- John Glas Fieldhouse
- Commencement
- Hockey games
- Football Stadium for Games
- Baseball Field for Games

Bemidji State uses ISD’s:
- High school auditorium for music performances and other events
- J.W. Smith Elementary School track and green space for club sports

Social Work Program Field Expeditions

- Faculty and students collaborate in Social Work practice.

MARS Community Connection: Faculty-Run, Student-Directed

- Marketing Assistance & Research Solutions services include feasibility studies, Internet and exploratory research, focus groups, group interviews, telephone surveys, mail surveys and strategic management analysis.

MARS Mission

- Provide talented students valuable and real marketing experiences.
- Provide area organizations with competitively priced marketing information.

Accounting Students Help with Taxes through VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance)

University-City of Bemidji Collaborations Undertaken Include

- Bemidji Regional Event Center
- Diamond Point Park

Bemidji State University recently signed a 20-year lease as the anchor tenant in the new Regional Event Center being built by the City of Bemidji. The agreement process involved the MnSCU system, the State Attorney General’s office and the State Department of Finance.

Diamond Point Park

Bemidji State and the City of Bemidji partnered on the recent renovation of this important city park. The collaboration includes the housing of the university’s Outdoor Program Center at the park.

University Facilities

The Bemidji State campus is available for rental for community events, such as an annual boat show, and for weddings and other private events. A process is in place for evaluating and scheduling rental requests.

Civic Engagement

In recent years, Bemidji State has done several surveys to determine the extent of civic engagement by Bemidji State students, faculty and staff. The surveys indicate that the Bemidji State community participates in civic engagement. See Priorities for Improvement: Civic Engagement on plans to improve such activity.

- Telling Our Stories, Spring 2001, compiled by the Outreach & Partnership Committee, describes in detail the activities of 43 faculty and staff members.
- Civic Engagement Survey, 2005, reports on civic engagement in classes.
- Campus Compact, 2008, expands on the 2005 report and includes examples from students on civic engagement activities.
- NSSE (National Survey on Student Engagement).

Collaboration with Government Agencies

The university maintains regular relationships with local governments, including law enforcement, to assure cooperation on matters of law, health and related issues, including disaster planning and law enforcement.

Small Business Development Center (SBDC)

The College of Business, Technology & Communication at Bemidji State hosts the Minnesota Small Business Development Center, Northwest Region. SBDC provides management and technical assistance to small businesses.

3. UNIVERSITY PLAN STRATEGY B.2 SUPPORT AND PROMOTE ECONOMIC VITALITY AND QUALITY OF PLACE.

Build capacity for problem-solving and community building through partnerships and engagement with businesses, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and other entities.

Bemidji State and its community partners work together to assure mutual economic success for their shared constituencies.

Bemidji Community

The university’s relationships with the City of Bemidji, Beltrami County, American Indian communities and the northern tier of Minnesota are manifold. They range from recreational planning to disaster planning and include a variety of shared efforts and opportunities.

Regional Event Center

MARS Mission

- Provide talented students valuable and real marketing experiences.
- Provide area organizations with competitively priced marketing information.

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Collaboration with Government Agencies

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**Criterion Five**

**Endowed Chairs at Bemidji State**
Established in recognition and appreciation of Bemidji State’s mission to Engage, Embrace, Educate:
- George W. Nelson Endowed Chair of Wetlands Ecology, Biology Department
- 3M Endowed Chair in Accounting

**Endowed Chair Opportunity**
- American Indian Endowed Chair in Nursing

**Bemidji State University Foundation**
Although the Foundation accounts were not impervious to the stock market losses of 2008 or the national recession, they still made substantial gains over the 15 year period from 1994–2009.
- Growth of Endowed/Designated Funds
  - 1994: $2,553,411
  - 1999: $5,905,775
  - 2004: $8,225,156
  - 2009: $8,860,204
- Growth of Foundation Assets
  - 1994: $3,017,263
  - 1999: $7,724,608
  - 2004: $9,847,659
  - 2009: $12,646,308
- Foundation Scholarships
  - 1994: $205,424
  - 1999: $323,593
  - 2004: $552,353
  - 2009: $772,664
- Cash Contributions Received
  - 1994: $769,663
  - 1999: $1,510,571
  - 2004: $1,698,782
  - 2009: $2,742,721

**Bemidji State Participates in Shared Vision**
“Shared Vision seeks to be a catalyst that encourages the Bemidji community to work together to expand social, economic, education and leadership opportunities for people of all races.” Indian Country Today Doni Day, Director, Bemidji State University American Indian Resource Center, is a member of Shared Vision.

By way of example:
- Campus Security and Safety Director meets weekly with the City of Bemidji Police Sergeant.
- The Paul Bunyan SWAT team has partnered with the university and has used campus facilities to conduct active shooter training.
- The university has provided resources to Beltrami County to help sandbag during floods.
- The university is an active partner and participant with Beltrami County in H1N1 planning and response.

**Community Appreciation Day**
Bemidji State hosts an annual day of appreciation in recognition of its external constituents. The 2009 event hosted more than 2,500 guests who visited 20 information booths sponsored by academic departments and student clubs, and observed nine athletic teams at practice.

**University Foundation**
The Bemidji State Foundation promotes and maintains relationships with alumni and with area businesses, industries and individuals.

The Bemidji State University Foundation deeply believes that education transforms lives and society, that every individual has an obligation to help others, that working together we can create greater opportunities, and that our vision of the future must be built upon the honorable traditions of our past.

Alumni, friends, professionals and members of the business community support the Bemidji State Foundation through memberships and contributions. Annual contributions are used to fund scholarships, support student recruitment efforts, faculty research and Foundation operations.

4. UNIVERSITY PLAN STRATEGY B.3 SUPPORT AND PROMOTE CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL VITALITY.

Participate in the enrichment of our communities through development and support of the arts and other cultural and recreational offerings.

**Cultures and Heritage**
Bemidji State promotes cultural vitality through its relationships with communities of interest.

- American Indian Tribal Colleges: Bemidji State supports the Leech Lake Tribal College and the Red Lake Nations Tribal College through articulation agreements, consultations, and similar relationships.
- American Indian Reservations: The university president and other members of the Bemidji State community maintain formal and informal relationships with the Red Lake and Leech Lake Indian Reservations, in part through the university’s American Indian Resource Center.
- Bemidji community organizations: Bemidji State participates in community organizations for change, including Bemidji Leads, Shared Vision, and the Bemidji Race Relations Council.
- American Indian Resource Center: Bemidji State: Opened in 2003, offices housed in AIRC include the Indian Studies and Ojibwe Language programs, Retention Counseling, and the Council of Indian Students. The AIRC director serves as a liaison between Bemidji State and regional American Indian communities and represents American Indian students to the university. The building is designed to support and represent American Indian architectural values. Annual Spring Powwow, sponsored by the Bemidji State Council of Indian Students, is held at the university. University of the Arctic: As noted above, Bemidji State is pursuing a relationship with the University of the Arctic.
The Arts

Creative arts contribute to the collective identity of the university and the larger community. Bemidji State provides arts and entertainment offerings open to the public and promotes collaboration between area and university artists.

- The Theatre Program collaborates with the community on performance opportunities and connects the community to national trends in theatre.
- The Music Department collaborates with the community on performance opportunities and connects the community to national trends in music.
- The Visual Arts Department collaborates on local, regional, national and international levels to bring to the university and the community a broad spectrum of art and artists, speakers and lecturers. The department also supports four galleries and hosts statewide conferences and workshops for the learning community. The galleries are open to the public.
- The English Department publishes two anthologies with open submissions: Dust & Fire: Writing & Art by Women, and New Voices: Fiction & Poetry by Minnesota High School Students.

Athletics and Recreation

The university provides athletic and recreation opportunities that are open to the public and promotes collaboration between area and university athletics and recreation.

- Bemidji State athletic events are open to the public, including men’s and women’s basketball, golf and ice hockey and men’s baseball, football, soccer, softball, tennis, track/cross-country and volleyball.
- Summer camps for high school students are sponsored in girls’ and boys’ basketball and in boys’ soccer and volleyball.
- The Bemidji State Campus Recreation Center is available for private rental for birthday parties, school groups, and campus/community organizations. Community members may also obtain memberships for use of the center.
- The Outdoor Program Center and OPC sponsored trips are open to the public.

5. UNIVERSITY PLAN STRATEGY B.4 PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL VITALITY.

Work with partners to assure the environmental stewardship of our shared communities.

As promised in its Signature Themes and its Strategies for 2008-2013, Bemidji State is committed to environmental stewardship on its campus and beyond.

By way of example:

- Shoreline and Water Quality Protection
  - Shoreline Restoration
  - Water quality and lakeshore values
  - Beauty Lake water quality
- Recreational Use
  - Diamond Point Park
  - Hobson Forest
- Sustainability
  - Sustainability Coordinator
  - Sustainability Office Annual Report
  - Hobson Union Wind Power
CRITERION FIVE PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Bemidji State University has identified three Priorities for Improvement. These are described in Priority for Improvement features and in the Priorities for Improvement Criterion Summary. Supporting documents and detailed plans for improvement are provided in the self-study resource room.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority for Improvement</th>
<th>Civic Engagement (Leadership Center)</th>
<th>School of Graduate Studies</th>
<th>Professional Education Department</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criterion Five: Engagement &amp; Service (Summary, All Criteria)</td>
<td>Assure availability of and support for external constituents through support for service learning.</td>
<td>Improve access to graduate studies for external communities of interest; assure program relevance through attention to societal needs.</td>
<td>Serve public education through improved program integrity and improved relationships with regional schools.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

CRITERION FIVE: ENGAGEMENT AND SERVICE SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

**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 quality of life, including access to services, resources and opportunities, and preservation and enjoyment of cultural heritages.
- In its mission documents, Bemidji State makes it clear that it 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 Chapter Three, Criterion Three.

**Core Component 5b**
The organization has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities.

- Bemidji State models civic engagement through its community relationships.
- Bemidji State continually conducts surveys to determine community needs and to ascertain its position in the community.
- The university contributes to its communities of interest through the actions of its students, faculty and staff.
- Bemidji State University is judicious in its development of programs and activities for its external constituents.

**Core Component 5c**
The organization demonstrates its responsiveness to those constituencies that depend on it for service.

- As noted in 5b, above: Bemidji State models civic engagement through its community relationships.
- As noted in 5b, above: Bemidji State continually conducts surveys to determine community needs and to ascertain its position in the community.
- As noted in 5b, above: The university contributes to its communities of interest through the actions of its students, faculty and staff.
Criterion Five

- Bemidji State provides educational opportunities to its communities of interest, from elementary school through higher education and customized training.
- Bemidji State serves its external constituents through course and program offerings to individuals and through collaborations with other post-secondary institutions.
- Bemidji State promotes cultural vitality through its relationships with communities of interest.
- The university provides arts and entertainment offerings open to the public and promotes collaboration between area and university artists.
- The university provides athletic and recreation opportunities that are open to the public and promotes collaboration between area and university athletics and recreation.

Core Component 5d

Internal and external constituencies value the services the organization provides.

- As noted in 5c, above: Bemidji State provides educational opportunities to its communities of interest, from elementary school through higher education and customized training.
- As noted in 5c, above: Bemidji State serves its external constituents through course and program offerings to individuals and through collaborations with other post-secondary institutions.
- 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.
- As noted in 5b, above: Bemidji State continually conducts surveys to determine community needs and to ascertain its position in the community.

CRITERION FIVE STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES

Strengths

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

Challenge

- Civic Engagement Priority for Improvement

SENIORS TO WATCH

Horizons Winter 2007, Page 11

Todd Hillukka, Sebeka, MN
Technology Education

Katherine Tieben, Jordan, MN
Vocal Music Performance, Theatre

Berne Christiansen, Arden Hills, MN
English Education, Political Science
Priorities for Improvement

Priorities for Improvement Summary by Criterion

Civic Engagement

Graduate Studies

Professional Education
### Priorities for Improvement

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<tr>
<td>Criterion One: Mission and Integrity</td>
<td>Signature Theme: Develop Leadership Center mission and structures and processes to assure integrity of service learning.</td>
<td>Develop Graduate School mission; improve structures and processes to assure integrity of school’s and university’s missions.</td>
<td>Develop department mission; improve structures and processes to assure integrity of department’s and university’s missions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criterion Two: Preparing for the Future</td>
<td>Establish ongoing support for Leadership Center and its goals.</td>
<td>Establish and assure policies and practices that support advanced preparation for students, including attention to national standards.</td>
<td>Attain full state and national accreditation for teacher licensure programs, to assure the department’s future and student success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criterion Three: Student Learning &amp; Effective Teaching</td>
<td>Refine assessments to assure effective teaching and learning.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criterion Four: Acquisition, Discovery &amp; Application of Knowledge</td>
<td>Assure availability of and support for service learning and participation for students, faculty and staff.</td>
<td>Attend to national practices in developing improved policies and practices; assure consistency of practice across the programs.</td>
<td>Model adaptation and change by improving department integrity through assessment and accreditations.</td>
</tr>
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<td>Criterion Five: Engagement &amp; Service</td>
<td>Assure availability of and support for external constituents through support for service learning.</td>
<td>Improve access to graduate studies for external communities of interest; assure program relevance through attention to societal needs.</td>
<td>Serve public education through improved program integrity and improved relationships with regional schools.</td>
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Priorities for Improvement

From the J-Plan
(Outreach and Partnership Efforts)
“Challenge and support, i.e., empower, students as they navigate their journey. … students who are ready for the future will have knowledge and skills that prepare them to be effective in team work, to think critically and to discern values.”

Time Line
Past Actions
• 2000-2001 Telling Our Stories: Outreach and Partnership Efforts
• 2004-2005 Inventory of Civic Engagement
• 2008-2009 Campus Compact: Civic Engagement & Service Learning
• 2009-2010 Ad hoc advisory work group

Projected Actions
• Standing advisory group
• Three to four year grant for Leadership Center
• Subsequent ongoing institutional support for Leadership Center

Leadership Center
Relevant learning and skills for today’s society, including the following:

Students
• Transformative learning
• Deep connections with community

Faculty
• Enhanced student learning and achievement
• Resources for faculty/students

Community
• Pool of leadership/civic entrepreneurs
• Economic leverage

University
• Quality of learning
• Deeper community-university relations

PRIORITY FOR IMPROVEMENT: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Serve the Common Good

Current Status
Since 2004, the university has conducted three significant studies of civic engagement activities. These indicate that (1) civic engagement activities are included in some university courses and are required in some majors; (2) some students participate in extracurricular civic engagement through student organizations; and (3) some faculty and staff participate in civic engagement in the region and in their professional communities. Respondents (students, faculty, staff) generally support civic engagement as a valuable component of a university education and of lifelong learning and service.

The three studies offer different perspectives on civic engagement at Bemidji State:

• Telling Our Stories, 2000-2001: Extensive anecdotal accounts of faculty, staff and student civic engagement activities.
• 2004-2005 Inventory of Civic Engagement: “With the aid and encouragement of the administration, the faculty can incorporate civic engagement into scholarship and knowledge creation as well as teaching and service. Once tied to the central intellectual mission of the university, civic engagement will no longer be marginal, rather it will be a vital aspect of academic life."
• 2008-2009 Campus Compact Study: Consider “the possibility of establishing a Service Learning and Civic Engagement Center.”

The university’s commitment to developing and formalizing civic engagement at Bemidji State is embedded in its mission documents:

• Signature Themes: International/Multicultural Understanding, Civic Engagement, Environmental Stewardship.
• University Plan 2008-2013: Strategy A.2 Promote achievement and understanding through active learning opportunities. Foster active learning pedagogies, and opportunities that support volunteerism, student research, internships, and related activities.
• MAP: The Master Academic Plan, Strategy 2F, Civic Engagement: Scholarship and Service: The colleges, the Center for Professional Development, the Center for Extended Learning, and the Center for Research and Innovation are expected to support faculty in their development of civic engagement service and scholarship.
• J-Plan: Student Development & Enrollment Master Plan, Strategy 3, Suggested Initiatives (excerpt): Developing student leadership, providing opportunities to connect students to the worlds of work and life after college; supporting students’ quest for knowledge and skills in addition to their academic goals.

Need for Change
The studies indicate that (1) definitions and understanding of civic engagement are inconsistent across the campus community and (2) support and resources for civic engagement tend to be irregular. Students cited a lack of free time and lack of information on how to participate in civic engagement as two reasons for lack of involvement.

Next Steps
The office of Student Development & Enrollment is pursuing the opening of a Leadership Center informed by the university’s Signature Themes: international/multicultural understanding, civic engagement, environmental stewardship. The center will facilitate student, faculty and staff service to the public good and will, concurrently, hone student leadership potential. An advisory work group has identified four constituencies for the Leadership Center: students, faculty, community and the university (see left). Grant funding for three years is being sought and includes plans for ongoing institutional funding.

Expectations
The opening of a Leadership Center serving students, faculty and staff in civic engagement service learning will improve the ease and success of establishing civic engagement service learning across the campus, and will result in service opportunities and leadership development for students.

Contact: Vice President for Student Development & Enrollment, 218-755-2075.
www.bemidjistate.edu/offices/development_enrollment
Priorities for Improvement

Time Line

Past Actions
- 2005 School of Graduate Studies (formerly Office of Graduate Studies).
- Summer 2009, topics identified for discussion (see below).

Projected Actions
- Develop university-wide culture of advanced study.
- Improve program-level advanced preparation for lifelong achievement.

Focus on Curriculum and Mission

Deans, Vice-President for Academic Affairs
- Staffing
- Variety of program offerings
- Quality of programs and adherence to MnSCU policy
- Graduate studies learning outcomes and assessment
- Recruiting and marketing
- Growth in selected programs

Faculty Association Graduate Studies Committee
- Consultation and Recommendation

Graduate Offerings
- Master of Arts
- Master of Science
- Master of Education
- Master of Special Education
- Graduate Certificates

Priority for Improvement: School of Graduate Studies

Imagine the Possibilities

Current Status
Graduate study at Bemidji State is diverse and lively, offering traditional, online and cooperative programs in professional education and mathematics, and traditional programs in the sciences and English. Programs arise usually from student interest and increasingly based on trends in graduate studies demand. They are developed by faculty, approved through the university’s curriculum process, and assessed by departments. Graduate programs, policies and practices are coordinated by the School of Graduate Studies. A Faculty Association Graduate Studies Committee consults and recommends on graduate matters. Faculty are appointed to the graduate faculty based on established criteria.

Need for Change
In 2005, the Office of Graduate Studies was renamed the School of Graduate Studies in response to an increase in programs, enrollment and online offerings. The shift increased the uniformity of policies and practices across the programs. The Vice President for Academic Affairs and the deans have identified areas for continuing discussion (see left) to promote a) adherence to MnSCU requirements, b) more focused graduate offerings, and c) recognition of the values and responsibilities of programs for advanced preparation in subject areas.

Next Steps
The School of Graduate Studies at Bemidji State will more closely align with the University’s Mission: Engage in new worlds of thought. Embrace responsible citizenship. Educate for a future that can only be imagined. Improvements will focus on two levels:

University Level
A Culture of Advanced Studies: The School of Graduate Studies will continue to formalize its practices through the following measures:
- Develop the Graduate Studies mission and vision statement.
- Determine broad learning outcomes across the graduate programs and systematically assess them.
- Promote a university-wide recognition of the values and responsibilities of advanced preparation.
- Consider national trends and university mission.
- Review criteria for and responsibilities of graduate faculty.
- Promote uniform practices through better office efficacy.

Department/Program Level
Advanced Preparation for Lifelong Achievement: Departments and programs will continue to formalize and energize their offerings through the following measures:
- Identify program learning outcomes and align with Graduate Studies outcomes.
- Assess and review curriculum and programs; amend as appropriate.
- Address MnSCU requirements for graduate programs.
- Consider new programs, especially regarding student interest, societal need, variety of curriculum, value, delivery methods and national trends.
- Contribute to the university’s culture of advanced studies.

Expectations
- Graduate School and department learning outcomes, leading to improved student learning.
- Regular university and department assessment practices, leading to improved and energized offerings.
- Focused curricula and offerings, leading to improved opportunities for students.
- Compliance with MnSCU requirements, leading to improved offerings.
- Appointment of an Assistant Director of the Graduate School, leading to office efficacy and improved uniformity in practices.
- University-wide recognition of the values and responsibilities of offering advanced preparation, leading to improved engagement of graduate faculty, uniform practices, and responsiveness to national trends.

Contact: Dean of Graduate Studies, 218-755-2965, grad@bemidjistate.edu
www.bemidjistate.edu/academics/graduate_studies
### Priorities for Improvement

**Teacher Education Mission**

Bemidji State prepares teachers through inquisitive, involved, reflective practice. The framework outlining our program sets a standard that is rigorous, exemplary and innovative.

The curricular structure is research based and organized around the Standards of Effective Practice.

Graduates are proficient, collaborative, technologically literate and environmentally aware teachers, who work effectively in various settings with diverse learners.

**Time Line**

**Past Actions**

- 2006 Associate Dean for Professional Education, to assist with Minnesota Board of Teaching (BOT) accreditation.
- 2008 Conditional accreditation by Minnesota Board of Teaching.
- 2008 Appreciative Inquiry Strategic Planning Model (See pages 5-6) introduced. Strategic initiatives and committees formed. Faculty reassigned time for service on BOT group.
- 2009 Team of ten sent to AACTE/NCATE accreditation conference.

**Projected Actions**

- 2010 Interim report to BOT.
- 2011 Report to BOT for continuing accreditation.
- 2011-2015 Build curriculum, conduct assessment; gather data.
- 2015 Apply to NCATE for accreditation.

**The Professional Education unit** includes faculty in professional education, arts and sciences, and technology studies who prepare teachers in the various majors.

### Priority for Improvement: Professional Education

**Current Status**

Bemidji State was founded in 1919 as a Normal School for the express purpose of educating teachers for northern Minnesota. The Professional Education Department continues to have the highest number of majors at the university. It offers 13 Bachelor of Science public school licensures and Master of Science, Master of Education, and Master of Special Education degrees, as well as graduate licensures and certificates. Its K-8 elementary education program is offered on-campus and through the Distance Learning in Teacher Education (DLiTE) program, which uses blended technologies for course delivery. A blended format is also used for FastTrack, an alternative secondary licensure program. The DLiTE/FastTrack programs have been recognized by the governor of Minnesota as models for alternative delivery teacher preparation programs.

In 1999-2000 the Professional Education Department discontinued its accreditation with the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). It is currently approved for one year by the State of Minnesota Board of Teaching (BOT).

**Need for Change**

Central to the Board of Teaching’s conditional requirements for 2010 is the establishment of a “conceptual framework” in Professional Education that organizes the curriculum, teaching and assessment around a common, measurable approach to teacher education. The program is, therefore, transitioning from a loose structure toward a more organized, mission-driven and engaged unit focused on 21st century teachers and the needs of P-12 schools.

**Next Steps**

The department plans to take the following steps toward improvement:

- Coordinate and consult across the unit to create a common conceptual framework for teacher preparation.
- Continue and increase efforts for professional development opportunities for unit faculty regarding assessment and accreditation.
- Prepare Department of Professional Education vision and mission statements.
- Develop common student learning outcomes aligned with state and national expectations.
- Practice regular curriculum review and assessment, with action on outcomes.
- Improve communication and significant participation across the unit.
- Engage faculty in the accreditation process.
- Continue State of Minnesota approval with goal of national accreditation.

Steps in progress include the following:

- Create Board of Teaching strategy groups.
- Consult and collaborate with campus secondary education areas.
- Consult and collaborate with local schools and newly established teacher advisory committees.
- Develop learning outcomes, strategies, related practices.
- Redesign curriculum to meet Minnesota teacher licensure rules and to address deficiencies in curriculum as identified by the Board of Teaching.
- Identify professional development strategies.

**Expectations**

The department anticipates the following results:

- Development of strategic directions, including vision and mission.
- Common student learning outcomes across the licensures, including secondary school areas.
- Regular assessment and program evaluation.
- Ongoing strategic planning.
- Ongoing coordination and consultation with public schools.
- Minnesota Board of Teaching continuing accreditation, 2010-2011.
- NCATE accreditation, 2015.

**Contact:** Dean of Health Sciences & Human Ecology, 218-755-2965.

www.bemidjistate.edu/academics/colleges/health_sciences_humanEcology
Office of the President
Deputy Hall 304
Bemidji State University, # 3
1500 Birchmont Drive NE
Bemidji, MN 56601-2699
218-755-2011

This document is available on line:
www.bemidjistate.edu/hlc/