

**Assurance Argument**  
**North Dakota State University - ND**

**9/18/2015**

## 1 - Mission

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

### 1.A - Core Component 1.A

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

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

## Argument

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### 1.A.1

NDSU is a public institution that serves the citizens of North Dakota through the delivery of appropriate educational programs to prepare students for the future, outreach activities to improve lives and cutting-edge research to address the needs of the state, nation and world. NDSU's mission statement appears on President Dean L. Bresciani's website: "With energy and momentum, North Dakota State University addresses the needs and aspirations of people in a changing world by building on our land-grant foundation."

The past two decades have been a period of change as NDSU moved from a regional institution focused on undergraduate education and service to North Dakota to a research-oriented institution that serves a broader constituency. The current mission statement, which recognizes this change, was created through a yearlong collaborative process. The Mission and Common Good Focus Group, with six members representing a cross section of the university, reviewed existing mission statements at other land-grant institutions as well as academic literature on mission statement development. The group drafted a mission statement to describe NDSU's trajectory as a growing and transforming institution. After the campus community provided input and suggestions during meetings and open forums, final draft language was reviewed by the shared governance units and NDSU administration. The State Board of Higher Education approved the mission statement on January 15, 2004.

In recent years, the statement, "[NDSU is a student-focused, land-grant, research university](#)," has become the campus identity and its functional mission statement. This key message embodies NDSU's mission to address the ever-changing needs and aspirations of people through 21st century learning, outreach and discovery.

### 1.A.2

Academic programs are delivered by [seven academic colleges](#). Based on its land-grant mission and history, NDSU emphasizes programs in agriculture, engineering and the applied sciences while maintaining a commitment to the social sciences and humanities. NDSU offers 163 bachelor's programs, 83 [master's](#) programs and 51 [doctoral](#) programs, in addition to minors and undergraduate and graduate certificates. The [Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletins](#) describe these programs.

New courses and degree programs are approved through a process that begins with the relevant academic department and moves through collegiate and university curriculum committees, including the Faculty Senate Academic Affairs committee. All changes are approved by Faculty Senate (see 5.B.2). The State Board of Higher Education gives final approval for new prefixes, degrees, majors, minors or certificates (see 3.A.1). This process ensures that programs are rigorous, meet student demand and serve the needs of North Dakota.

As one of two North Dakota research institutions, NDSU's mission includes offering baccalaureate, master's, professional and doctoral degrees. In Fall 2014, NDSU enrolled 14,747 students, including 11,763 degree-seeking undergraduate students, 1,902 graduate students and 340 professional students. Another 742 students enroll with a special status (Tri-College, collaborative or non-degree students). Approximately 42 percent of NDSU students are North Dakota residents, 55 percent are U.S. citizens from other states and 3 percent are international students. Approximately 86 percent of NDSU's students identify as white, while 8 percent identify themselves as American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, African-American, Hispanic, or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander. Male students make up 55 percent of the student body at NDSU, possibly due to its large engineering and agriculture programs. About 21 percent of NDSU's students are low-income.

NDSU offers more than 200 year-round academic and co-curricular support programs, including an extensive tutoring program, a one-stop shop for student transactions ([Bison Connection](#)), a student [wellness center](#), a [career center](#) and other support services. Many of these programs are supported by professionals in the Division of Student Affairs. NDSU offers services for specific target populations as well, including low-income students, first generation students, students from underrepresented groups, veterans and students with disabilities. (See 3.D.1)

### 1.A.3

(See 5.C.1.)

### 1.A – Summary

NDSU's mission, as captured in the key message, is woven throughout campus culture. Recent changes reflect NDSU's evolution to meet changing demands and needs, while staying true to its core tenets of being a "student-focused, land-grant, research university." In addition to serving students' needs and aspirations, NDSU operates to serve citizens in North Dakota and beyond with its extension and research programs, creative activities and public service.

## Sources

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- Bison Connection - accessed 09.11.15
- Career Center - accessed 08.10.15
- Doctoral Programs - accessed 07.20.15
- Key Messages NDSU is a student-focused, land-grant, research University - accessed 07.14.15
- Master's Programs at NDSU - accessed 07.14.15
- Wellness Center - accessed 08.10.15

## 1.B - Core Component 1.B

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The mission is articulated publicly.

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

### Argument

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#### 1.B.1

NDSU's mission is articulated in the institution's key message, "NDSU is a student-focused, land-grant, research university." This statement appears on the webpage, in publications, on administrative presentations, at orientation and admissions events and in other public forums. The statement forms the organizational structure of [NDSU's Strategic Vision 2015-2020](#) and is the basis for the President's annual "State of the University" address. The message encapsulates NDSU's [core values](#) of diversity and access, internal and external collaboration, service to the state, nation and world, ethical behavior, academic freedom and respect for diverse viewpoints and accountability.

All [staff position descriptions](#) and the staff responsibility review form used for annual evaluations contain the mission statement approved in 2003. The mission statement is discussed during both new faculty and new student orientation. University Relations produces examples of how NDSU fulfills its mission and these populate the homepage, the President's and Provost's remarks, publications, admissions materials and other venues.

#### 1.B.2

NDSU's mission as a student-focused, land-grant, research university represents a 15-year evolution in its focus and mission. Due to its land-grant mission, NDSU has always provided an accessible and affordable education for the people of North Dakota. However, NDSU is not an open access institution, and strives to enroll students who can thrive at a research institution. The academic profile of NDSU's first-year undergraduate class has increased. From Fall 2005 to Fall 2014 the average high school GPA rose from 3.38 to 3.43. In the same period, the 25th percentile ACT increased from 20 to 21. [Admission guidelines](#) will be increasing for the 2016 class.

NDSU has also increased its focus on graduate and professional programs. The percentage of graduate and professional degrees awarded annually increased from 16% to 21% from 2000 to 2015.

In the past, much of NDSU's research was applied and focused on issues faced by North Dakotans; this research was shared with the citizens of North Dakota through the Extension Service and

Experiment Station. Over the past fifteen years, NDSU has become North Dakota's premier research university. In fact, NDSU is one of the top 108 research institutions in the nation.

The mission statement, the Strategic Vision 2015-2020 and key message emphasize the three aspects of NDSU's mission: teaching, service and research. The budget process (see 5.A and 5.C) ensures support for the mission and the allocation of funds is in line with NDSU's mission. The actual activities pursued on campus best represent NDSU's mission.

NDSU's student population increased substantially since 2000, from 10,002 to 14,747. In spring 2015, NDSU had the largest graduating class in its history, conferring to 2,354 undergraduate, 85 professional and 556 graduate degrees, for a total of 2,995, compared to 1,715 in 2000. NDSU remains an affordable choice for most students. Graduate and professional student enrollment has increased as NDSU has developed more graduate and professional programs.

[NDSU's Extension Service](#), which employs extension agents in 53 county and local offices, reported over 800,000 direct educational contacts with North Dakota citizens in 2013. Extension is engaged with its stakeholders to receive input that drives the direction of future programs. The [ND Agricultural Experiment Station](#), with its [main Fargo station and seven Research Extension Centers](#), develops and disseminates technology important to the production and use of food, feed, fiber and fuel from crop and livestock enterprises.

Since 2011, NDSU has been ranked among the nation's top 108 public and private universities in the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education's elite category of "[Research Universities/Very High Research Activity](#)." In FY2013, NDSU reported \$150,173,000 in [research expenditures](#) to the National Science Foundation, compared with \$102,100,000 just [9 years earlier](#).

### 1.B.3

In addition to having a special relationship with the people of North Dakota, NDSU strives to serve people globally. Consequently, NDSU has purposefully reached out beyond North Dakota's borders to be inclusive of "people in a changing world," whether they are engaging in teaching and learning or participating in or benefitting from NDSU research or other creative activities.

Internationalism is an important part of NDSU's mission, as evidenced by the creation of the [Global Council](#) comprised of faculty, staff, students and local educational, political and business leaders to develop a strategic plan for comprehensive internationalization. NDSU has a growing number of [international partnerships](#) with a variety of institutions in many countries, promoting [student exchanges](#) (see 3.B.4). The [international studies major](#) is a secondary major available to any NDSU student.

NDSU's increasingly diversified [research portfolio](#) demonstrates how it reaches beyond North Dakota. Though more research funds come from federal programs than from any other source, NDSU is engaged with more than 30 private sector [partners in research](#) and a newly added [executive director for corporate and foundation research relations](#) enhances opportunities with outside partners such as Sanford Health, interested in accessing NDSU research expertise. NDSU and Sanford have joined to conduct research related to human nutrition, weight management and other basic research related to the impacts of nutrition on human health as part of a seed-grant initiative developed between the two organizations.

The NDSU Research Foundation (NDSURF) manages more than 325 technologies, many of which are commercialized by outside companies. Averaging 31 potentially patentable inventions and 48 total inventions per year since 2004, the foundation has 69 issued patents, more than 62 pending patent applications, 49 active U.S. Plant Variety Protection certificates, 19 foreign Plant Breeders' Rights registrations, 34 registered U.S. trademarks and 17 foreign registered trademarks, as of June 30, 2015. With NDSURF intellectual property (IP) licensing revenue in excess of \$2.5 million for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2015, NDSU discoveries drive innovation. In FY2013, NDSURF ranked 25th of 50 land-grant universities (and related foundations) and 10th of 25 land-grant universities (and related foundations) without a medical school, when comparing intellectual property licensing and royalty revenues. NDSURF licensed technologies to seven start-up companies in the last five years and executed an average of over 60 licenses per year during that same period. (See 2.E.1 for IP policies.)

The [Research and Technology Park](#) is a 501(c)3 private nonprofit corporation, under the direction of a Board of Directors, consisting of the NDSU's President, Provost, and Vice President of Research and Creative Activity and seven community business leaders. The Park serves as a nucleus for innovation and entrepreneurial activity by providing space, facilities and services where "university researchers and private industry can combine their talents to develop new technologies, methods and systems." Over the years, many students and faculty have been involved with projects at the Research and Technology Park through direct research, internships, employment and/or starting their own company.

### **1.B – Summary**

NDSU's mission statement, vision statement and core values all guide how it meets its mission of "addressing the needs and aspirations of people in a changing world." To articulate this publicly, University Relations uses a "key message" derived from the mission statement to highlight three priorities – student-focused, land-grant, research university. This message is highly visible in public forums, publications, and other materials. As detailed in 5.A.2 and 5.C, budget, enrollment, and resource decisions align with the mission.

## **Sources**

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- Core Values - accessed 08.12.15
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- Partners in Research - accessed 07.17.15
- Profile of Incoming Students

- Research and Technology Park - accessed 08.12.15
- Research Expenditures - FY 2004
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- Research Portfolio - accessed 08.12.15
- Research Universities Very High Research Activity Carnegie Commission - accessed 07.17.15
- Staff Position Descriptions Form - March 2013
- Staff Position Descriptions Form - March 2013 (page number 2)
- Study Abroad Services - accessed 07.17.15

## 1.C - Core Component 1.C

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

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

### Argument

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#### 1.C.1

NDSU addresses its role in a multicultural society by recruiting diverse students, faculty and staff and by providing curricular and co-curricular opportunities to develop multicultural understanding.

North Dakota and northern Minnesota, the areas from which most of NDSU's undergraduate population is drawn, are not as diverse as much of the United States. According to the U.S. Census Bureau in 2013, [North Dakota's population](#) was 90 percent white; Native Americans (5.4 percent of the population) are the largest group among people of color. Northern Minnesota is similar. North Dakota's [LGBT population](#) is estimated at 1.7%, the lowest in the United States.

NDSU's [undergraduate student body](#) is consistent with the population from which it draws its students. As of Fall 2014, approximately 86 percent of undergraduates were white, 4 percent were international (representing 78 countries), 8 percent were underrepresented minority and 2 percent chose to not identify their ethnicity. Of the professional students, 90 percent identified as white, 9 percent as either international or underrepresented minority and 1 percent did not report. NDSU's graduate student population is more diverse. In Fall 2014, 50 percent of graduate students identified themselves as white, 26 percent were international students, 16 percent did not report and 8 percent were underrepresented minority students.

NDSU has several programs in place aimed at increasing the diversity of the student body, including a summer [STEM research program for Historically Black Colleges and Universities students](#), 11 Memorandums of Understanding that include student exchanges (see 3.B.4) and a bridge program for multicultural, first-generation students (see 3.D.1).

NDSU is actively engaged in and committed to inclusion, pluralism and a culture of global engagement. As part of the existing general education curriculum, students must take a 3-credit course in cultural diversity and a 3-credit course in global perspectives (see 3.B.1-2). Peer mentoring, professional advising and scholarships are used to encourage NDSU students to in study abroad. Short-term faculty-led programs are becoming more popular – in 2014, 30 faculty took 341 students on trips to Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East and Latin America (see 3.B.4).

From 2008-15, NDSU's Division of Equity, Diversity and Global Outreach (EDGO) oversaw efforts to create and support a welcoming, inclusive and diverse campus community. In mid-2015, the Provost and Vice President for Student Engagement and Inclusion reorganized EDGO to better align its programs with the missions of other units on campus and more fully integrate the critical work of equity, diversity and global outreach into the daily work of all units. Faculty immigration and equity compliance were moved to faculty support services. International recruiting activities were moved to undergraduate admissions and the Graduate School. Diversity programs, study abroad and

international student services were returned to Student Affairs, under the Vice President for Student Engagement and Inclusion. The realignment clarifies which offices are responsible for NDSU's goals of recruiting a diverse student body, providing support services for faculty and students of diverse backgrounds and encouraging students to engage with the global world.

### 1.C.2

In accordance with the mission of NDSU and in addition to the outreach activities described in 1.C.1, campus policies and processes seek to recruit and retain diverse students, faculty and staff, and educational offerings and activities are aimed at sensitizing individuals to diversity-related issues experienced by others. NDSU [Policy 100](#) describes its commitment to equal opportunity in [employment decisions](#) and educational programs and activities for all individuals without regard to age, color, disability, gender expression/identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, public assistance status, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or status as a U.S. veteran. NDSU tracks bias reports through the NDSU Bias Reporting System (please see summary reports from [2013-14](#) and [2014-15](#)) and follows-up on non-anonymous reports. [Policy 156](#) outlines formal and informal equal opportunity grievance processes.

To provide both benchmarks and actionable information, NDSU conducted Campus Climate Surveys in [2003](#), [2009](#) and [2014](#) and from 2002-14 NDSU FORWARD (see 3.C.4) conducted [surveys](#) focusing on [obstacles](#) women faculty faced. Survey results are shared broadly with the NDSU community and have been used to inform planning for diversity efforts.

The [Equity and Diversity Advisory Council](#) (2011-present) includes administrators, faculty, staff, students, alumni and Fargo community members. Members provided advice about relevant policy and program decisions, communicated back to their respective areas about diversity initiatives, and assisted in promoting and supporting diversity, equity and community at NDSU.

NDSU's [Community of Respect](#) program offers seminars designed to improve inter-cultural competencies and provide hands-on strategies to assist participants in working more effectively with colleagues and students of varied cultural backgrounds.

The [Equity and Diversity Student Ambassadors](#) are student leaders committed to promoting diversity and creating a community of respect.

The [Institute for the Study of Cultural Diversity](#), the [Faculty Senate Standing Committee on Equity and Diversity](#) and [NDSU FORWARD](#) (Focus on Resources for Women's Advancement, Recruitment/Retention and Development) (see 3.C.4) are examples of faculty initiated efforts to promote diversity.

The [National Student Exchange](#) provides students an opportunity to attend school at another campus in the U.S., Canada, Puerto Rico, or the US Virgin Islands and brings students from other campuses to NDSU.

The following student support services addressing needs of diverse students or focusing on encouraging diversity are described in more detail in 3.D.1.

- [American Indian Resources](#)
- [Disability Services](#)

- [International Student and Study Abroad Services](#)
- [LGBTQ Programs](#)
- [Multicultural Programs](#)
- [Student Success Programs](#)
- [TRIO Programs](#)

## 1.C – Summary

NDSU is committed to "building on its land-grant foundation" by reaching out to serve and collaborate with diverse populations from around the nation and the world. To provide effective programming for "people in a changing world," NDSU has numerous programs and offices as well as academic courses designed to support diverse populations, to ensure a welcoming climate for all students, staff and faculty, and to provide educational opportunities that enable students to become educated citizens in a global society.

## Sources

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- Summer STEM Research Program - accessed 07.20.15

- TRIO Programs - accessed 08.07.15
- Undergraduate Student Body Ethnicity- 09.23.14

## 1.D - Core Component 1.D

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

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

### Argument

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#### 1.D.1

As a public land-grant institution, NDSU welcomes its obligation to educate students, serve its community and conduct research relevant to people's lives. Its resources are used exclusively to support its public mission.

NDSU serves the citizens of North Dakota through [Distance and Continuing Education](#) (DCE), providing a vehicle for credit and non-credit activity and continuing education. Since 1965, DCE has offered online degrees, continuing education for K-12 educators and specialized conferences and workshops, such as Expanding Your Horizons, which brings 400 middle-school girls to campus for a day of activities to introduce them to STEM fields.

[NDSU Extension Service](#) and the [Research and Extension AES Centers](#) offer numerous examples of actions and decisions serving the public in an educational role. Across the state each summer, the centers sponsor [Agricultural Field Days](#), so [producers](#) can learn about research, ask questions and suggest projects. Extension produces publications and educational news columns on topics ranging from crops and livestock, energy and economics, to [family issues](#), [nutrition](#) and [financial planning](#). The [Extension Service](#) reaches out to North Dakotans of all ages to offer informal education to develop the [potential of youth](#), adults and [communities](#). With headquarters at NDSU in Fargo, Extension connects to North Dakotans by its statewide network of [county offices](#), regional research extension centers and via mechanisms such as lectures, institutes, tours, fairs, 4-H and demonstrations. [Extension impact reports](#) summarize accomplishments and their impact on the state and its citizens. The NDSU Extension Service celebrated its [centennial](#) on July 1, 2014.

(See 3.E.2 for service learning and volunteer work that further contributes to the public good.)

#### 1.D.2

NDSU is a public institution and part of the North Dakota University System (NDUS). NDSU does not support external interests that are unrelated to its educational mission, contribute to a parent organization or generate funds for investors.

### 1.D.3

NDSU seeks to engage with other identified external constituencies and communities of interest outside of its campus borders.

NDSU President Dean L. Bresciani established the [Campus Community Partner program](#) in 2012 to recognize private sector collaborations with the university that benefit the community. Current partners include Sanford Health, Microsoft and Gate City Bank.

Colleges and departments have external advisory boards. These boards provide advice on the relevance of curriculum, the post-graduation performance of students, potential research partnerships and other needs.

NDSU has programs providing specialized expertise, research and services to the public in a wide range of disciplinary areas.

- Given its location, NDSU has a special role to play in collaborating with Great Plains Native Americans.
  - The [American Indian Public Health Resource Center](#) is part of NDSU's Master of Public Health program, the only program in the country with an American Indian specialization.
  - The multidisciplinary Tribal and Indigenous Peoples Studies program collaborates with the state's tribal colleges to introduce students to theories and methodologies to foster decolonized, cross-cultural and global perspectives.
- Since 2002, NDSU's telepharmacy sites have been bringing pharmacy services to rural areas. So far, 81 pharmacies (53 retail and 28 hospital) involving 38 counties in North Dakota and two in Minnesota are participating. The program has restored valuable access to health care in remote, medically underserved rural communities and has added approximately \$26.5 million annually in economic development to the local economy. NDSU's telepharmacy program received the Outstanding Rural Health Program Award at the 2006 Annual Dakota Conference on Rural and Public Health.
- [Growing Up STEM](#) is an NSF-funded, 10-week summer research experience for non-NDSU undergraduate students that includes on-campus housing, a \$5,000 stipend and the opportunity to experience discipline-based education research

[Tri-College University](#) is a cooperative undertaking by three local higher education institutions – NDSU, Concordia College and Minnesota State University Moorhead. Dating back 45 years, it is one of the nation's longest such partnerships. Any student registered at one of the institutions can enroll in one class per semester at the other two campuses at no additional expense (outside of tuition paid to the original institution) and without an admission application. This expands the range of classes available to students. Recently, two other institutions, Minnesota State Community and Technical College and the North Dakota State College of Science, were added to the Tri-College consortium.

Many faculty members engage with the local community and contribute to the region's vitality:

- Theatre Arts explored the intersection between community engagement and social challenges through "[Playing on Common Ground.](#)" a program with students, faculty, civic leaders and community organizers designed to uncover and address community needs.
- The [Fargo History Project](#) started in a Fall 2012 Digital History class. It builds on student research exploring Fargo's history from 1871 to 1897.

- [Poetry on Wheels](#) brings work by NDSU students, faculty, community and established poets to commuters throughout the city who ride the daily Metro Area Transit buses.
- Visual Arts and Fargo Theatre, a beautifully restored theatre in downtown Fargo, have partnered to present the [Art Cinema Series](#), showcasing fine films for the public on the first Monday of every month, September through May.
- Science faculty address public topics in monthly [Science Café](#) evening presentations at a local business. They are free and open to the public.
- NDSU's [Challey School of Music](#) offers diverse musical events, many times free and open to the public, while the [NDSU Music Academy](#) provides music lessons for children and adults throughout the community.
- NDSU's College of Business produces [Student Consulting Teams](#) that provide customized, in-depth, confidential consulting service for small businesses and a hands-on program for students to participate in real world business management experiences.
- Kevin Brooks, professor of English and [Bush Foundation fellow](#) for 2013-15, spent the last two years reviving [Giving + Learning](#), an in-home English Language Learning program that served the Fargo-Moorhead area from 2001-11. He also helped to launch the New American Consortium for Wellness and Empowerment.
- Faculty from Visual Arts, Natural Resources Management, Geosciences, Soil Sciences, and Architecture/Landscape Architecture are engaged in [The Fargo Project](#), an artist led collaborative ecological restoration project. Using trans-disciplinary methods the City of Fargo is retrofitting existing storm water ponds into multi-purpose spaces for more holistic land management that will help build capacity at the local level for socially engaged art practice.

## 1.D – Summary

As a public, land-grant institution, NDSU welcomes its primary responsibility to educate students, citizens and global residents. Thus, NDSU serves the public by providing a more educated citizenry and trained workforce for the “changing world.” NDSU also serves the public through research and extension, creative activities and service. NDSU fulfills this mission in numerous ways, including:

- Campus Community Partner Program
- Centers and Institutes (70+)
- Creative arts, K-12 education and business projects in the local community
- NDSU Extension and Agricultural Experiment Station
- Research and Technology Park
- Research projects and programs
- Student Service Learning and Volunteer Work
- Technology Transfer and Research Foundation activities
- Tri-College University

In response to an unsuccessful bid to obtain a Carnegie Foundation Engagement ranking, NDSU's [Strategic Vision 2015-2020](#) emphasizes a commitment to engaged scholarship. Although NDSU has always partnered with local communities through its extension service, it has not used that platform to form collaborative partnerships with communities. In the next five years, NDSU will strive to integrate the concept of engaged scholarship into its outreach efforts, build on its successful extension and service-learning programs and more fully integrate its research and outreach missions.

## Sources

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## **1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary**

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

### **Summary**

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NDSU is mission-driven. It is broadly understood both internally and externally that NDSU is a “student-focused, land-grant, research university” that addresses the needs and aspirations of the citizens of North Dakota and the world. At its core, NDSU's mission reflects its institutional commitment to providing affordable access to an excellent education, connecting teaching and research in a rich and diverse learning environment, preparing future leaders who will create solutions to community, state, national and global challenges and improving the lives of citizens through outreach, cutting-edge research, creative works and collaborative partnerships with the public.

### **Sources**

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*There are no sources.*

## 2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

### 2.A - Core Component 2.A

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The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

#### Argument

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##### 2.A

NDSU's underlying commitment to operating with integrity in all functions is evidenced by its fair and ethical policies and processes. NDSU is governed by North Dakota law, State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) policy and institutional policy. [NDSU's policy manual](#) is regularly reviewed for consistency with external policies and procedures. [Section 3](#) of the policy manual serves as the faculty handbook and [section 2](#) serves as the staff handbook. [Section 1](#) contains policies applying to all employees. The policy manual and the [student code of conduct](#) include statements on ethical behavior, academic misconduct and grievance procedures, and define general, ethical and responsible behavior for faculty, staff and students. Alleged violations are investigated according to stated procedures, and respondents are made aware of explicit appeal avenues.

Financial integrity is maintained through financial audits and other safeguards outlined in Criterion 5. All faculty and staff are required to complete fraud awareness training annually (see 5.A.4). A hotline is available for anonymous reporting of alleged fraud. The office of the state auditor conducts external audits of NDSU and performance audits of state agencies, including NDSU.

Student academic integrity is governed by the Student Code of Conduct. [Policy 335: Rights and Responsibilities of Community: A Code of Student Conduct](#) outlines requirements for non-academic student conduct at NDSU. Student-athlete behavior is addressed in the [Student-Athlete Handbook](#). Faculty academic integrity is governed by [policy 326](#). Alleged violations are investigated by a faculty committee, which recommends action to the Provost and President (see 2.E).

Fair and ethical grading practices and accurate record keeping are essential to the integrity of NDSU as an educational institution. Students may appeal [course grades](#) with final appeals made to the Grade Appeals Board.

Commitment to integrity in personnel functions is supported by various policies concerning recruitment and hiring, dismissal and grievance processes. Recruitment and hiring is addressed by the following policies:

- [Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination](#)
- [Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities and Reasonable Accommodation](#)
- [Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Policy on the Announcement of Position Openings](#)

- [Recruitment Period for Position Announcements](#)
- [Employment Qualifications](#)
- [Academic Staff and Executive/Administrative Recruitment](#)
- [Procedures for Filling Academic Staff and Executive/Administrative Positions.](#)

In order to assist in compliance with these policies, NDSU Human Resources/Payroll [provides training for members](#) of search committees and administrative staff who support search committee efforts. Position-specific policies for hiring are:

- [Professional Staff](#)
- [General Staff](#)
- [Faculty](#)
- [Academic Staff and Executive/Administrative Positions](#)

Dismissal policies include:

- [Discipline/Dismissal of Staff](#)
- [Termination of Faculty](#)
- [Staff Reductions in Force](#)

To uphold the integrity of personnel decisions, various channels are available to faculty to mediate and resolve grievances:

- [Mediation](#)
- [Standing Committee on Faculty Rights](#) which forwards recommendations to the president for a [final decision](#).
- [Faculty Grievances not Involving Tenure or Promotion](#)
- The [Ombudsperson](#) assists faculty in identifying options to resolve work-related concerns.

Grievance procedures for staff include:

- [Conditions of Employment.](#)
- [Appeals of Discipline and Reduction in Force](#)
- [Equal Opportunity Grievances.](#)

NDSU's auxiliary units are governed by the same policies as the non-auxiliary units on campus.

Policies and processes governing NDSU administration begin with the authority and responsibilities of [NDUS institution presidents](#). The NDUS chancellor evaluates each president annually.

Policies also establish procedures for regular evaluation of

- [Academic deans, directors and department chairs and heads](#)
- [Promotion, tenure and evaluation of faculty](#)
- [Staff responsibility reviews](#)

## **2.A – Summary**

NDSU's policy manual guides its processes; it strives for transparent and fair application of those policies in recruiting, hiring and evaluating staff, administrators and faculty. These policies guide and

maintain both ethical conduct and accountability, while allowing for appropriate grievance and appeal opportunities. Oversight is provided by external and internal audits, a commitment to shared governance and shared responsibility in enforcing policies, and clear processes for investigating policy violations.

## Sources

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- Academic Misconduct - Policy 326 - last amended November 2008
- Academic Staff and Executive Administrative Positions - NDSU Policy 304 - last amended 12.27.10
- Academic Staff and Executive Administrative Recruitment - NDSU Policy 103.1 - last amended 12.10.14
- Appeals of Discipline and Reduction In Force - Policy 231 - last amended 05.19.15
- Code of Academic Responsibility and Conduct NDSU Policy 335 - last amended 01.28.14
- Conditions of Employment - Policy 230 - last amended January 2007
- Discipline Dismissal of Staff - NDSU Policy 220 - last amended 02.11.14
- Employment Qualifications - Policy 107 - last amended March 2006
- Equal Opportunity Affirmative Action Policy on the Announcement of Position Openings- NDSU Policy 103 - last amended 12.12.14
- Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Policy - Policy 100 - last amended 06.01.11
- Equal Opportunity Grievances - Policy 156 - last amended 05.19.15
- Evaluation of Academic Deans, Directors, and Department Chairs and Heads NDSU Policy 327 - last amended October 2007
- Faculty Appointments NDSU Policy 300 - last amended October 2007
- Faculty Grievances - Policy 353 - last amended 06.01.11
- General Staff Recruitment NDSU Policy 201 - last amended 12.10.14
- Grade Appeals Board NDSU Policy 337 - last amended 11.07.11
- Hearings and Appeals NDSU Policy 350.4 - last amended December 2005
- Mediation - Policy 350.5 - last amended August 2003
- NDUS Institution Presidents - SBHE Policy 305.1 - last amended 06.20.13
- Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities and Reasonable Accommodation NDSU Policy 100.1 - last amended 10.05.99
- Ombudsperson - accessed 07.31.15
- Policy Manual (NDSU) - accessed 07.20.15
- Policy Manual Section 1 - General Employment - accessed 07.16.15
- Procedures for Filling Academic Staff and Executive Administrative Positions - NDSU Policy

304 - last amended 12.27.10

- Professional Staff Recruitment NDSU Policy 200 - last amended 12.10.14
- Promotion, Tenure and Evaluation of Faculty - Policy 352 - last amended 06.19.14
- Promotion, Tenure and Evaluation of Faculty - Policy 352 - last amended 06.19.14 (page number 8)
- Recruiting and Hiring Resources (NDSU HR) accessed 07.16.15
- Recruitment Period for Position Announcements - Policy 104 - last amended December 2007
- Staff Reductions In Force - Policy 223 - last amended November 2008
- Staff Responsibility Reviews - Policy 221 - last amended December 1999
- Standing Committee on Faculty Rights - Policy 350.2 - last amended August 2003
- Student-Athlete Handbook 2012-13 - 05.23.13
- Termination of Faculty - Policy 350.3 - last amended 06.22.15

## 2.B - Core Component 2.B

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

### Argument

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#### 2.B

NDSU states its membership in the NDUS on its homepage and in its messaging. Its accreditation status with the Higher Learning Commission is displayed on the webpages of the Office of [Accreditation and Assessment](#), “[About NDSU](#)” and the [Provost](#).

NDSU provides accurate and complete information to the public, in compliance with the Higher Education Opportunity Act, on its [consumer information webpage](#). NDSU also provides current information on costs, demographics, student retention and graduation and faculty size in the Voluntary System of Accountability [College Portrait](#). Retention and graduation data is available on [NDSU’s website](#) and on the [Student Achievement Measure](#).

Students provide input on fee assessment and allocation through [Student Government’s Student Fee Advisory Board, Finance Advisory Board and Finance Commission](#).

Registration and Records produces publicly available [curriculum guides](#) and a general catalogue (the NDSU [Bulletin](#)), describing the requirements for academic credentials. Campus Connection, the student portal used for course registration, degree tracking progress and billing, has a publicly available section that lists available courses by semester, course prerequisites, instructor of record and other course information. Course descriptions and prerequisite information are also available in the NDSU [Bulletin](#) as are academic policies and a listing of [faculty](#) and [administrators](#).

#### 2.B – Summary

To promote transparency and facilitate informed decisions by current and prospective students, NDSU provides accurate and up-to-date information that is publicly available on its website, on external sites, and in its publications.

### Sources

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- About NDSU - accessed 09.10.15
- Accreditation and Assessment page - accessed 07.29.15
- Administrators List - accessed 08.28.15
- College Portrait - accessed 07.22.15
- Consumer Information Webpage - accessed 07.22.15
- Curriculum Guides - accessed 08.04.15
- Provost Homepage- accessed 07.22.15
- Retention and Graduation Link - accessed 07.22.15

- Student Achievement Measure - accessed 07.31.15
- Student Government's Student Fee Advisory Board, Finance Advisory Board and Finance Commission - accessed 07.22.15

## 2.C - Core Component 2.C

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

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

### Argument

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#### 2.C

NDSU is a member of the NDUS, which is governed by the State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) under Article VII section 6 of the state constitution. The [SBHE](#) consists of seven citizen members, a student appointed by the governor to serve a one-year term, a non-voting faculty adviser selected by the North Dakota Council of College Faculties and a non-voting staff adviser selected by the NDUS Staff Senate. The citizen-members are nominated by a five-person committee, appointed by the governor and confirmed by the North Dakota Senate; they serve four-year terms.

The NDUS was organized in 1990 and consists of 11 publicly supported colleges and universities in North Dakota. The [NDUS chancellor](#) serves as the chief executive officer and represents the SBHE to the governor, legislature and other governmental agencies. The chancellor also advises the SBHE and works with institution presidents on matters of policy and procedure.

The SBHE is subject to North Dakota open records laws. Its meetings are open to the public and are streamed via live [video and archived](#). Its agendas and minutes are available on its website.

In April 2014, based on concerns generated by media articles and a formal complaint "[describing a governance situation in North Dakota marked by turmoil and controversy.](#)" the HLC conducted an advisory visit to the SBHE to assess governance issues. The report of HLC's visit states "[No evidence emerged during the visit that cast doubt on the Board's \[SBHE\] commitment to preserving and enhancing the system](#)" and that SBHE members "[...share a commitment to providing high quality education for the state's students.](#)" The report also concluded that "...a climate conducive of operating with integrity is currently present in relations among Board members, the system [NDUS] office staff and the campus presidents," and that "[...the system is currently functioning with a high degree of integrity.](#)"

The [Constitution of North Dakota](#) (Article VIII, Section 6) states that the SBHE was "...created for the control and administration of the ... state educational institutions." A 1938 statewide initiative created the SBHE to protect higher education from political interference. Recent concerns about the SBHE's independence from the North Dakota Legislature were addressed in the HLC's advisory visit report, which states the HLC team "[...found no evidence that the Legislature clearly attempts to](#)

[exercise undue influence on the SBHE.”](#)

The SBHE affirms that the [presidents are the chief executive officers](#) of their institutions and “the Board delegates to the president of each institution full authority and responsibility to administer the affairs of the institution...” in accordance with legal or policy limitations. Institution presidents report to, advise and work with the chancellor within the context of the NDUS, but have the authority to manage day-to-day activities at their individual institutions.

In October 2014, the SBHE and NDUS released a [strategic plan for 2015-2020](#) outlining the following goals:

1. Deliver degrees that are the best value in the nation
2. Provide programs people want, where and when they need them
3. Equip students for success
4. Maximize the strengths of the unified system

In developing these goals, the SBHE sought input from both internal and external constituencies, including students, faculty, staff, administration, business and community leaders, government officials and legislators.

## 2.C – Summary

Despite recent [controversies](#), the SBHE retains its autonomy and its ability to make decisions in the best interest of NDSU and the other institutions in the NDUS. Its citizen membership facilitates dialogue with internal and external constituents and fosters accountability to the public. NDSU values the SBHE transparency and student-focused goals, along with board policies that uphold NDSU’s ability to manage curricular matters and day-to-day activities in the best interest of NDSU students.

## Sources

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- College and University Presidents' Authority and Responsibilities - SBHE Policy 305.1 - last amended 06.20.13
- Constitution of North Dakota, Article VIII - accessed 07.22.15
- NDUS Chancellor - accessed 07.22.15
- NDUS HLC Advisory Visit Cover Letter & Report 08 28 14
- NDUS HLC Advisory Visit Cover Letter & Report 08 28 14 (page number 6)
- NDUS HLC Advisory Visit Cover Letter & Report 08 28 14 (page number 23)
- NDUS HLC Advisory Visit Cover Letter & Report 08 28 14 (page number 24)
- NDUS HLC Advisory Visit Cover Letter & Report 08 28 14 (page number 25)
- NDUS HLC Advisory Visit Cover Letter & Report 08 28 14 (page number 27)
- NDUS Strategic Plan 2015-2020 - accessed on 07.28.15
- NDUS Strategic Plan 2015-2020 - accessed on 07.28.15 (page number 3)
- SBHE Meeting Videos - accessed 07.22.15

- SBHE Memo on Measure 3 - 05.28.14
- State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) Members - accessed 07.22.15

## 2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

### Argument

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#### 2.D

NDSU holds academic freedom as a core value, as stated in [Policy 325](#): “The primary responsibility of the academic community is to provide for the enrichment of intellectual experience. Essential to the realization of this ideal is a free and open academic community ... Conflict of ideas cannot occur unless there is opportunity for a variety of viewpoints to be expressed. Toleration of what may be error is an inescapable condition of the meaningful pursuit of truth. The academic community must be hospitable even to closed minds and it must welcome the conflict of ideas likely to ensue.”

The policy specifically addresses research and teaching:

“Faculty are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of results subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties. They are also entitled to freedom in lecturing or conducting demonstrations in their subject or field of competence.”

And the rights of students:

“Students are entitled to be taught by unfettered teachers and to have access to all information pertinent to their subjects of study. They are entitled to as complete freedom as possible in selection of their curriculum, their teachers and their associates. Moreover, they have a right to intellectual disagreement with their instructors and their associates and to question them without fear or recrimination or punishment.”

Policy 325 protects faculty, staff, guests and students. Policy violations can be pursued under the grievance policy and other protections afforded to faculty, staff and students.

Because of a controversy over a [federal grant for sex education for at-risk teens](#) in 2013 (please see responses from the [Faculty Senate Executive Committee](#) and the [FORWARD Steering Committee](#)), NDSU President Bresciani issued a [statement supporting academic freedom](#) and faculty research and established a task force to explore ways to promote an understanding and appreciation of academic freedom.

[The Undergraduate Learning Outcomes](#) developed by the [Core Undergraduate Learning Experiences committee](#) and approved by the Faculty Senate in 2013, 2014 and 2015 (see 3.B.2) also support the pursuit of truth. The Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking and Problem Solving outcome specifies, “Students will evaluate the assumptions, evidence and logic of competing views and explanations.”

NDSU also supports [sponsorship of guest speakers](#), performers and other programs representing diverse expression, noting: “It is not necessary that the point of view presented be congenial to the campus, members of the staff or student body individually, or to individual members of the wider community.” Speakers must be allowed to give an uninterrupted presentation, but must also permit

questions from the floor and accept the right of their audience to “...question or challenge statements made in their address.” Examples illustrating a diversity of viewpoints among presentations at NDSU include the [Laurie Loveland Speaker Series](#), sponsored by the Women and Gender Studies program; the weekly [Science, Religion and Lunch Seminars](#) and the [Pfiffner Lecture Series](#), sponsored by the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences. The Department of Visual Arts also upholds free expression in its [exhibition policy](#).

## 2.D – Summary

Free expression and academic freedom are central principles underlying all teaching and learning, research and co-curricular campus activities at NDSU. These principles are protected through both policy and practice.

## Sources

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- Academic Freedom - Policy 325 - last amended April 1992
- Core Undergraduate Learning Experiences Committee - accessed 08.13.15
- Exhibition Policy Visual Arts Department
- Letter to President Bresciani from Faculty Senate Executive Committee - 01.17.13
- Letter to President Bresciani from FORWARD - 01.17.13
- Loveland Speaker Series - accessed 08.13.15
- Pfiffner Lecture Series - 01.15.13
- Pfiffner Lecture Series - 01.15.13 (page number 10)
- Science, Religion and Lunch Seminar Schedules - Fall 2014
- Sex Education Grant from Health and Human Services - 01.15.13
- Sex Education Grant from Health and Human Services - 01.15.13 (page number 8)
- Statement Supporting Academic Freedom - 01.25.13
- Undergraduate Learning Outcomes Approved by Faculty Senate on 04 13 2015

## 2.E - Core Component 2.E

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

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

### Argument

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#### 2.E

##### Integrity of Research and Scholarship

NDSU's commitment to upholding integrity in research and scholarship is evidenced by procedures for evaluating and investigating complaints of [academic misconduct](#) by faculty, staff and students in their scholarly inquiry, creative activity, and research. As outlined in [Policy 326.7.3](#), initial inquiry committees appointed by the Provost investigated six misconduct complaints from 2009-14, and all but one were found to have no basis for further action. Based on this initial inquiry, one case was formally investigated by the [Academic Integrity Committee](#) and resolution included having the faculty member attend a workshop on proper research citation.

##### 2.E.1

NDSU subscribes to the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI), and offers a graduate-level course (BIOC 720 Scientific Integrity), to provide training in the [responsible conduct of research](#). The Vice President for Research and Creative Activity currently serves as NDSU's Research Integrity Officer (RIO), but recognizes the importance of having a separate RIO to oversee research integrity. [Policy 326](#) defines and outlines the process for investigating academic misconduct.

Through the Office of Sponsored Programs Administration, NDSU oversees and guides safe and ethical research involving humans, animals and bio-hazardous materials with the following:

- [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#) oversees research projects involving human subjects. IRB review, as well as initial and ongoing training, is required to assure that NDSU protects the rights, safety and welfare of [research participants](#). In FY 2015 IRB reviewed 289 new proposals and trained 899 individuals.
- [Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee \(IACUC\)](#), in conjunction with the attending veterinarian, oversees NDSU's animal program, facilities and procedures. IACUC review, initial and ongoing training, as well as facility inspections are required to assure the humane care and [use of animals in NDSU](#) research. In FY 2015 IACUC trained 226 individuals.
- [Institutional Biosafety Committee \(IBC\)](#) provides oversight for research and academic courses involving recombinant or synthetic nucleic acids, infectious agents, human blood, bodily fluids and tissues. IBC review, initial and ongoing training, as well as laboratory inspections are required to assure the safety of lab workers, [public health and the environment](#). In FY 2015 IBC trained 210 individuals.

Under the supervision of the University Police and Safety Office, the Laboratory and Chemical Safety Committee oversees and enforces the NDSU [Chemical Hygiene Plan](#), and the Radiation Safety Committee oversees and enforces the NDSU [Radiation Safety Handbook](#). The [Biological Safety Officer](#) ensures measures are in place to protect students, employees and the environment from biohazards utilized in research.

NDSU's [Export Controls Office](#) assists faculty, staff and students in navigating complex federal laws governing access to research equipment and information, affecting areas as varied as purchasing and faculty travel, as well as information and technology that is restricted to countries specified by the federal government.

Issues related to [intellectual property](#) are addressed through the [Technology Transfer Office](#) and the NDSU [Research Foundation](#), as well as through [Policy 190](#) (see 1.B.3 and 3.D.5).

Possible financial conflict of interest for investigators is addressed either in

- [External Activities and Conflicts of Interest](#) or
- [Financial Conflict of Interest](#) - Public Health Service Sponsored Research

## 2.E.2

NDSU provides incoming students with information on the ethical use of information resources, including information on appropriate use of electronic communication resources. Students must pass a quiz on acceptable use prior to activating their email accounts. [Skills for Academic Success](#), a first-year experience course required of all new students, includes instruction in the ethical use of information resources.

Information to help students understand plagiarism and copyright issues is provided by the NDSU Libraries in their Information Literacy Tutorial, the Center for Writers, the Advising Resource Center and TRIO programs. Registration and Records' ["Tips for Improving Your Grade Point Average"](#) promotes alternatives to academic dishonesty.

NDSU supports the incorporation of ethics into programs across campus through its General Education Program, as evidenced by its previous General Education Category 9: Comprehension of Personal and Professional Ethics Integrated into Majors and its new Undergraduate Learning Outcome, Personal and Social Responsibility. However, in the [NSSE](#) results from 2007-13 NDSU seniors were significantly less likely ( $p < .05$ ) than students at peer institutions to report that NDSU contributed to "their ability to develop a personal code of ethics."

## 2.E.3

[Policy 335](#) provides the minimum standards of academic responsibility and conduct for students and also guides instructional staff members in maintaining academic honesty and integrity. While upholding these minimum standards, some colleges employ additional policies and procedures as described in the honor codes of the Colleges of [Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources](#):

[Engineering](#); [Health Professions](#); and [Human Development and Education](#).

All course syllabi at NDSU must include an approved [academic honesty statement](#), which refers students to academic honesty policies and resources. Tools to help faculty uphold academic honesty and integrity include the SafeAssign feature on Blackboard. Faculty report instances of academic misconduct and student penalties using the [Student Academic Misconduct Tracking Form](#), which is submitted to the chair/head of the faculty member's department, or the program director for students in interdisciplinary programs, and copied to the student. The chair/head or program director forwards the information to the college dean of the student's primary major, the dean of the faculty member's college, the Registrar and the Provost. The Registrar compiles this information in a FERPA-compliant database for the purposes of identifying multiple cases of misconduct by a student. In the event of a successful appeal, the misconduct information is deleted from the database. Since March 2011 faculty have reported 340 incidents involving 316 students.

## 2.E – Summary

NDSU has policies and procedures that outline ethical standards for research, teaching and the ethical use of information resources. The Provost and the Vice President for Research exercise final oversight of these policies, but there is an expectation that the University community will play a role in maintaining ethical standards and the integrity of the research enterprise. Students are provided with guidance on the definition of plagiarism, the use of technology, and the appropriate use of information.

## Sources

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- Academic Integrity Committee - 07.29.15
- Academic Misconduct - Policy 326 - last amended November 2008
- Academic Misconduct - Policy 326 - last amended November 2008 (page number 4)
- Biological Safety Officer - accessed 07.29.15
- Chemical Hygiene Plan - version 03.09.15
- Code of Academic Responsibility and Conduct NDSU Policy 335 - last amended 01.28.14
- College of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Natural Resources Honor System - accessed 07.30.15
- College of Engineering Honor Code - accessed 07.30.15
- College of Health Professions Student Academic and Conduct Standards Policy 3 01
- College of Human Development and Education Honor Code - Updated 06.2014
- Course Syllabus - Policy 331.1 - last amended 04.24.14
- Course Syllabus - Policy 331.1 - last amended 04.24.14 (page number 2)
- Export Controls Office - accessed 07.29.15
- External Activities and Conflicts of Interest - Policy 151.1 - last amended Jan. 2008
- Financial Conflict of Interest - Public Health Sponsored Research - Policy 823 - last amended Aug. 2007
- Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) - accessed 07.29.15
- Institutional Biosafety Committee - Policy 347 - last amended 07.31.01

- Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) - accessed 07.29.15
- Institutional Review Board (IRB) - accessed 07.29.15
- Intellectual Property - Policy 190 - last amended Nov. 2010
- Intellectual Property Handbook - 01.04.06
- QUEST NDSU Students GE Outcomes National Data
- QUEST NDSU Students GE Outcomes National Data (page number 2)
- Radiation Safety Handbook - version 11.19.14
- Research Foundation - accessed on 07.29.15
- Responsible Conduct of Research - Policy 348 - last amended 10.21.10
- Skills for Academic Success Textbook - 2015
- Student Academic Misconduct Tracking Form - accessed 07.30.15
- Technology Transfer Office - accessed 07.29.15
- Tips For Improving Your Grade Point Average - accessed 07.29.15
- Use of Animals in NDSU Research (Policy 346) - last amended Feb. 2006

## **2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary**

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

### **Summary**

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NDSU is dedicated to acting with integrity and engaging in ethical and responsible conduct in all interactions with students, employees and the public. Freedom of expression and responsible discovery and application of knowledge by students, faculty and staff are core values of NDSU, carried out in its daily operations. Allegations of ethical misbehavior are investigated according to written policy.

### **Sources**

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*There are no sources.*

## **3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support**

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

### **3.A - Core Component 3.A**

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

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

### **Argument**

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#### **3**

Teaching and learning are essential to NDSU's academic mission and strategic plan. NDSU is committed to providing high quality education in an intellectually stimulating and enriched learning environment. To achieve this aim, it offers degree programs that have appropriate levels of rigor and that are regularly evaluated and improved. Both undergraduate and graduate programs interweave intellectual inquiry with acquiring, integrating and applying a range of knowledge and skills to address society's needs. Because faculty design and implement these programs, NDSU emphasizes support for hiring and retaining highly qualified faculty and staff, as well as investing resources in professional development and advancement to strengthen the effectiveness of the programs.

NDSU strives to cultivate and sustain an environment conducive to learning. It provides a variety of support services to its diverse student population with varying needs. In addition, it supplies students with co-curricular opportunities to enrich students' experiences and create synergistic educational values with their chosen field of study.

#### **3.A.**

NDSU's degree programs are appropriate for a land-grant, research university.

#### **3.A.1**

Its courses and programs are current and require appropriate levels of performance. Prior to implementation, faculty systematically review courses and programs.

- The department, college curriculum committee, Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee, Graduate Council (if appropriate) and Faculty Senate review [new courses](#) (see 4.A.4). The State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) reviews [new programs](#) prior to implementation (see 1.A.2).
- Programs requirements differ for various programs and levels, as described in [Curriculum Guides](#) for programs and certificates.

Faculty review programs and assess student learning regularly after implementation.

- See 4.A.1 for program review.
- See 4.B.2 for learning assessment activities.

NDSU requires appropriate levels of student performance for its degrees and certificates.

- To be eligible to register continuously without conditions, [an undergraduate or professional student must maintain good academic standing, defined as a minimum cumulative institutional grade point average \(GPA\) of 2.00 \(4.00 scale\)](#).
- Student progress committees in each college determine whether to suspend, continue on probation or readmit undergraduate students who failed to maintain good academic standing.
- Graduate students [must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 \(4.00 point scale\)](#).
- On the recommendation of programs and colleges, the Graduate School Dean suspends or dismisses students who fail to meet scholastic standards, to maintain appropriate academic or professional conduct, to make progress toward a degree or to meet professional expectations or standards.

### 3.A.2

The [“Degree and Graduation Information”](#) section of NDSU’s [Undergraduate Bulletin](#) and the [Master’s](#) and [Doctoral](#) Degree Program sections of the Graduate School Bulletin define various degrees and clearly articulate their requirements.

- [Policy 331.1](#) highlights the different expectations for undergraduate and graduate learning. It requires all syllabi to list the “objectives, goals, aims and/or outcomes for the course.” If the course is offered for both undergraduate and graduate credit, the course must “require a significant, identifiable higher level of expectations for the performance of the graduate students,” and “the additional requirements for graduate students must be clearly described on the syllabus.”
- The Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee [reviews proposals for all courses](#), including those offered for both graduate and undergraduate credit. The [Graduate Council](#) must also review courses offered for both undergraduate and graduate credit (see 4.A.4).

The [Graduate School Bulletin](#) stipulates, “Courses that a student has used to fulfill the requirements of a baccalaureate degree may not be used on that student's graduate plan of study.”

- Eight programs have created [“combined/accelerated bachelor's to master's programs”](#) that are limited to “highly qualified candidates” who may use up to 15 credits in the master’s program to meet requirements for their bachelor’s degree.
- The Graduate School Bulletin specifies [master’s degree requirements](#) (totaling 30 credits minimum) that are clearly different from those for a bachelor's degree. Requirements vary by program depending on whether the master’s degree sought is in the humanities, the sciences, or

is a practitioner or licensing-oriented degree. Examples of requirements in addition to classes include: a thesis, two years of language study and/or an oral defense.

- NDSU offers doctoral degrees in the arts, nursing practice, education and the Doctor of Philosophy degree. The [Graduate School Bulletin](#) details requirements (totaling 90 credits minimum) extending beyond the requirements of bachelor's and master's degrees. Examples of requirements in addition to classes include: artistic performance, examinations and/or a dissertation.

### 3.A.3

Program quality and goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and locations; NDSU offers no dual-credit courses and has no contractual arrangements (see 4.A.4).

- Courses offered at NDSU's recently acquired Nursing at Sanford Health in Bismarck, North Dakota, are subject to the same process for review and approval as those on the main campus.
- All online courses are offered by NDSU departments. Relatively few courses are offered only online and such courses go through the same course approval process (see 1.A.2, 3.A.1 and 5.B.2) as face-to-face courses do. Departments monitor courses offered in multiple modes through regular course assessment to ensure that the learning outcomes and level of student work are consistent across all modes of delivery (see 4.B.2).
  - Four colleges have PhD-level instructional design specialists to assist faculty with online courses (see 3.C.4).
  - Degrees or programs offered online must be approved through standard campus processes (see 1.A.2, 3.A.1 and 5.B.2) and additionally must be approved by the SBHE.
- All courses are evaluated using either paper or online student ratings of instruction (see 3.C.3).

NDSU offers 11 bachelor's, 13 master's, one undergraduate certificate and 11 graduate certificates online.

NDSU is a member of three consortia. All consortia members are regionally accredited and faculty members at each institution are responsible for monitoring their own courses.

- [Great Plains IDEA](#)
  - 8 Master's degrees
  - 3 Graduate certificates
- Regional Universities Transportation Centers
  - Graduate certificate
- University of North Dakota
  - PhD

### 3.A – Summary

NDSU programs and the required levels for student performance in classes are appropriate for a [“student-focused, land-grant, research university.”](#) Undergraduate and graduate courses are clearly differentiated and learning outcomes are consistent in all modes of delivery.

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## 3.B - Core Component 3.B

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

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

## Argument

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### 3.B

Ensuring that students acquire, apply and integrate a breadth of knowledge and skills is central to NDSU's commitment to student learning from undergraduate through graduate degrees. NDSU's general education program, in conjunction with major requirements, provides students with opportunities to acquire broad knowledge across the curriculum, specific knowledge in a major field, skill in communicating and assessing information, and facility in adapting to changing environments.

#### 3.B.1-2

The goal of the NDSU general education program is to provide students with the breadth of knowledge and skills they need to succeed in their personal and professional lives. It mirrors the land-grant mission in the 1862 Morrill Act "to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life." It is appropriate to NDSU's [mission, vision and core values](#), including the core value of "Teaching and Learning": "We promote and value liberal . . . education in a collegial environment where divergent ideas can be shared. We foster an environment that promotes lifelong learning ..."

From 1992 to 2013, NDSU had seven General Education Intended Student Outcomes. Each approved general education course was required to meet at least two of the following:

- Communicate effectively in a variety of contexts and formats.
- Locate and use information for making appropriate personal and professional decisions.
- Comprehend the concepts and perspectives needed to function in national and international

societies.

- Comprehend intrapersonal and interpersonal dynamics.
- Comprehend concepts and methods of inquiry in science and technology, and their applications for society.
- Integrate knowledge and ideas in a coherent and meaningful manner.
- Comprehend the need for lifelong learning.

Although all general education course syllabi are required to list the learning outcomes for the course, students fulfill the [existing general education](#) program through a 40-credit menu of content-based categories (required credits in parentheses).

- First Year Experience (1)
- Communication (12)
  - Public Speaking (3)
  - Writing
    - Lower Division (6)
    - Upper Division (3)
- Quantitative Reasoning (3)
- Science and Technology (10)
- Humanities and Fine Arts (6)
- Social and Behavioral Sciences (6)
- Social and Behavioral Sciences-Wellness (2)
- Cultural Diversity (integrated into a course in one of the above categories)
- Global Perspectives (integrated into a course in one of the above categories)
- Communication Activities in Upper-Division Major Courses
- Comprehension of Personal and Professional Ethics Integrated into Majors
- Capstone Experience in all Majors

In 2010, NDSU began to revise its general education. In 2013 the Faculty Senate approved “Five Core Questions to Frame Undergraduate Learning Outcomes for NDSU Undergraduates”:

- How does the world work?
- How do we create, expand or discover knowledge and understand its limitations?
- What does it mean to be human?
- What values and practices are worth sustaining for the common good?
- What are the world’s challenges and how might they be addressed?

In addition, the Faculty Senate approved new [Undergraduate Learning Outcomes](#), which it subsequently revised in 2014 and 2015. The current learning outcome categories are:

- Communication
- Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking and Problem Solving
- Technology
- Natural and Physical Sciences
- Human Societies
- Diversity and Global Perspectives
- Personal and Social Responsibility

As of fall 2015, all new general education courses will be required to address the above new learning outcomes.

The [General Education Committee](#) and the [Faculty Senate approve general education courses](#) (both new and continuing) to ensure they meet the program's outcomes.

Since 1993 NDSU's general education program has required all majors to include a capstone experience. Evaluation of capstones in HLC's Cohort Three Pathways Demonstration Project is described in 4.B.2. Examples of such capstone experiences include:

- [Industrial and manufacturing engineering](#) majors engage in real world projects for business and industrial clients.
- [Computer science](#) majors create a software project for a particular company.
- [English](#) majors assemble portfolios of their work to prepare for future employment or graduate school, and these portfolios are the primary means of assessing strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum.
- [Music](#) majors may complete a research project on a topic related to music, an internship (such as directing an ensemble), teaching at the NDSU Academy (with a formal written document of the experience), a "lecture recital" with a formal presentation or a performance, or major opera role or major solo with an ensemble in a formal concert, accompanied by a summary document.

In September 2015, the Faculty Senate approved the revised general education model, [NDSU QUEST](#). As recommended by the original committee, the Senate created a committee to evaluate the model's feasibility and a committee to study possible course designs and professional development.

### 3.B.3

In keeping with NDSU's identity as a student-focused, research university, students are challenged to develop skills to adapt to changing environments as they collect, analyze and communicate information by mastering modes of inquiry or creative work, through co-curricular opportunities and classes both in their majors and in general education.

NDSU's existing general education program supports these goals. Its [purpose](#) is "to ensure that students acquire knowledge, perspectives and skills associated with a university education. The program is designed so that graduates will be able to adapt to and anticipate changes in their profession and in society. Graduates also will be able to integrate and use the knowledge and perspectives they have gained to live productive, intellectually rewarding and meaningful lives."

Majors emphasize acquiring knowledge and skills that students demonstrate by engaging in intellectual inquiry. Within individual majors, the foundation from general education is expanded with additional coursework focusing on writing, communicating orally, defending one's position, and using peer-reviewed research to produce logical arguments. In addition to the evidence from NDSU's HLC Quality Improvement Project evaluating its capstone courses (see 4.B.2), the University Assessment Committee gathered [indirect evidence](#) from annual department assessment reports that students engage in these learning activities.

Specific courses and programs incorporate inquiry, creativity, research, communication and the development of adaptable skills. Student class research projects vary by program, and specific information can be provided upon request. In addition to the required capstone experience (see 3.B.2), nearly all junior and senior level classes have a project requiring research, creative activity or problem solving. Some examples include:

- [Agricultural Economics' Commodity Trading Room](#) teaches commodity marketing, logistics, trading and risk management in a real-life simulation.
- Pharmacy students participate in the [Thrifty White Concept Pharmacy](#), a licensed pharmacy integrating all the features of contemporary community and institutional pharmacy practice.
- Students in the ENGL 213, 313 and 413: Literary Publications classes annually produce the [Northern Eclecta](#) literary journal. Their work ranges from publicizing the call for submissions to reviewing the material, to designing the document, to desktop publishing.

Despite these institutional practices, [compared to their NSSE peers](#), freshman and seniors are less likely to report they are actively engaged in courses and employ higher order learning strategies. The Office of Teaching and Learning (see 3.C.4) and the Gateways to Completion Initiative (see 4.C.3) are responses to this and similar information.

All graduate programs include a research or creative activity component. Doctoral students are required to communicate their creative activity or research by creating a [short video](#) for the general public. To date, students have recorded over 140 dissertation videos.

(See 3.E.1 for co-curricular campus-wide competitions that encourage students to develop skills in inquiry, creativity, research and communication.)

### 3.B.4

Although North Dakota has a less diverse population than many other states, NDSU is committed to preparing its graduates for a diverse world through its curriculum and co-curriculum. NDSU expects campus wide acceptance of diverse students, and its policies ensure that cultural diversity is part of every student's and employee's experience. (See 1.C for the institutional context and 3.D.1 for student support services for cultural diversity.)

As noted in 3.B.2, cultural diversity and global perspectives have been general education components since 1992. Presently, 28 courses are approved for cultural diversity and 30 are approved for global perspectives. In addition to courses approved for general education, NDSU offers a [variety of courses addressing](#) diversity.

Recently, the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences has focused on increasing the cultural diversity of its curriculum:

- From 2009-13, Dr. Clifford Canku offered courses on the Dakota language, tribe, religion and culture through the [Native American and Dakota Studies](#) program.
- In 2013-14, the college agreed on a "UNITE" ("UNifying hires for Innovation, Transformation and Engagement") initiative and hired:
  - [Dr. Michael Yellow Bird](#), director, of the new Tribal and Indigenous Peoples Studies Program, which replaces the Native American and Dakota Studies program
  - Dr. Kristen Fellows, historical archaeologist, Africana Studies

There are a variety of options available for students who wish to [study abroad](#). The number of students studying abroad varies. In 2006-07, there were 140, in 2013-14, there were 279, and in 2014-2015 there were 432. In 2014-15, almost two-thirds of participants were female, nearly 80% participated in a NDSU faculty-led program (see 1.C.1), 31% went during the spring break and 33% during the summer, and 64% studied in Europe. NDSU has 11 active student exchange agreements

with international institutions and many program level relationships that provide additional opportunities for students to learn about different cultures.

### 3.B.5

As noted in 1.B.2, NDSU is recognized as one of the nation’s top 108 public and private universities by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, placing it in the top 2 percent of accredited universities and colleges. Faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge at NDSU. A variety of [news briefs](#), many focused on research, are posted on NDSU’s website.

NDSU faculty are expected to be active in research or creative activity. The [tenure review process](#) explicitly includes [research and creative activities](#) as a part of faculty members’ responsibilities. Research productivity is evaluated in [annual reviews](#). Many staff members also have research as part of their job responsibilities. Faculty and staff communicate their research findings through presentations at national conferences, research publications and other creative activities. Research activity and grants from the past three years are summarized below:

College	Research Publications	Juried and Conference Presentations	Grants Number Amount	
AFSNR 2011-12	398	212	433	\$23,012,320
AFSNR 2012-13	412	343	421	\$23,047,555
AFSNR 2013-14	427	288	449	\$20,477,519
AHSS 2011-12	107	84	20	\$470,955
AHSS 2012-13	112	178	19	\$592,812
AHSS 2013-14	146	169	29	\$803,113
BUS 2011-12	31	26	1	\$2,000
BUS 2012-13	31	29	0	\$0

BUS 2013-14	7	14	2	\$17,426
ENGR 2011-12	155	124	35	\$2,428,795
ENGR 2012-13	128	160	43	\$2,299,230
ENGR 2013-14	140	146	26	\$1,081,223
HD&E 2011-12	41	94	33	\$1,392,185
HD&E 2012-13	56	76	40	\$2,203,554
HD&E 2013-14	76	87	33	\$1,005,589
HP 2011-12	32	38	34	\$4,444,316
HP 2012-13	32	42	29	\$3,113,082
HP 2013-14	38	65	33	\$5,629,736
S&M 2011-12	482	234	64	\$9,668,521
S&M 2012-13	507	296	60	\$9,152,481
S&M 2013-14	467	322	48	\$9,875,201

The [North Dakota Centers of Excellence \(NDCOE\) program](#) created hubs of research and development partnering with private companies to commercialize new products and services. Twelve [Centers of Excellence](#) are located at NDSU.

(See 3.E.2 for student research activities.)

### 3B - Summary

As a “student-focused, land-grant, research university,” NDSU incorporates intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application and integration of broad learning and skills throughout its degree programs. The student focus prompted revising the Undergraduate Learning Outcomes to ensure students develop the intellect, skills and attitudes expected of college graduates. A land-grant mission means that programs often are oriented toward practical problem solving, available to all and communicating respect for human and cultural diversity. Faculty incorporate their research in classes and the university promotes student research through multiple venues.

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## 3.C - Core Component 3.C

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

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

## Argument

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### 3.C

#### Core Component

Faculty and staff are appropriately qualified, evaluated regularly and supported in pursuing regular professional development to be current in their disciplines. Faculty have primary oversight of curriculum from course development to approval and integration to assessment.

#### 3.C.1

The rapid growth in the number of courses, programs and students during recent years has been accompanied by increases in faculty and staff as noted in 5.A. From 2007-08 to 2012-13, the student FTE teaching load increased by 14.07%, but the faculty FTE increased by 25.47%. NDSU's IPEDS student-faculty ratio for Fall 2013 was 19 to 1, in the top third of its 16 land-grant peers (range=8-22; mean=16.8; median=17). (See 5.A.4.)

Despite those numbers, some NDSU faculty and staff feel they are "stretched too thin" (see 5.C.4). Possible contributing factors are:

- Statements from the President and former Provost describing the campus as so efficient as to be understaffed,
- Changes leading to and resulting from achieving Carnegie's "Research University/Very High Research" category (such as the increasing emphasis on research productivity),
- Continuing faculty commitment to vigorous faculty governance and high levels of service,

- Lag between student body growth and faculty hiring,
- Rapid pace of changes and
- High student/support staff ratio (see 5.A).

NDSU has lagged in adopting technologies that support some of the routine business of the campus. For example, promotion and tenure portfolios and annual review files are assembled manually and either printed or converted to PDF. Currently, NDSU is in the process of adopting Digital Measures, an electronic solution for managing faculty reviews, to decrease the time faculty spend in tracking, amassing and producing portfolios. Likewise, grant submissions are routed using paper forms; many faculty spend a day or more on a routine routing procedure that should take just a few minutes. NDSU recently reviewed proposals by three different vendors for the implementation of electronic research submission and oversight.

Because of the increasing emphasis on research, some departments have shifted some teaching responsibilities to graduate assistants, adjuncts, senior lecturers and professors of practice so tenure-track faculty have more time for research. Professors of practice have a greater focus on teaching and service, although research is still typically 10 percent of their appointments. They are not tenure-track, but are eligible for promotion to associate or full professor. In Fall 2014, NDSU had 61 professors of practice (9.9 percent of full-time faculty) and 28 senior lecturers (36.8 percent of full-time lecturers).

### 3.C.2

Policies, especially degree verification, guarantee all instructors are appropriately qualified. As noted in 3.A.3, NDSU has no dual or contractual programs.

Employment of [academic and executive/administrative staff](#) starts with carefully written position descriptions that clearly indicate minimum and preferred qualifications. Since 2009, [all search committee chairs have been required](#) to participate in [training developed by FORWARD](#) on “the ways that bias can influence the recruitment and screening of applicants in a search and strategies for overcoming bias.” This training is available either in person or on [Blackboard](#).

During the search process, NDSU reviews CVs thoroughly, requests transcripts as necessary, conducts reference checks and requires a thorough interview process, often including at least two sets of interviews, such as by Skype or phone and on-campus, for faculty applicants. Part-time and adjunct teaching faculty appointments are approved by the department, college and Office of the Provost.

For many years, faculty hired for tenure track positions have been required to have terminal degrees. The percentage of faculty (full-time and part-time) with terminal degrees decreased very slightly from [2013 to 2014](#).

[Faculty Qualifications](#) documents indicate the number of courses taught by faculty with various types of credentials. This is broken down into traditional classroom instruction and other modes of instruction. The percentage of faculty with terminal and non-terminal graduate degrees is similar for both traditional and online instruction.

### 3.C.3

NDSU has multiple policies and procedures to regularly evaluate instructors:

- [NDSU policy 332](#) requires instructors to administer the standard Student Rating of Instruction (SROI) in every course in each semester. The [department head/chair](#) is expected to review the [SROI summary](#) with each instructor during [annual faculty appraisals](#). The link for SROI results by college can be provided on request.
- Each academic year, instructors are expected to assess instruction in at least one class by soliciting information from students, peers or both, [for the purpose of improving instruction](#).
- The [promotion and tenure process](#) includes an evaluation of teaching, focusing on:
  - the delivery of instruction
  - continuous improvement of courses and programs
  - effective advising of students
- All full-time faculty, including tenured faculty, are [reviewed annually](#). Each academic unit determines its own review procedures.
- Both the College of Engineering and the [School of Education](#) include the results of advising surveys in annual reviews of faculty performance and PTE reviews.
- The Office of Teaching and Learning coordinates the optional Peer Review of Teaching program, a “collaborative effort among faculty to provide quality teaching and enhanced student learning through a process of review, observation and assessment.” An assigned peer works with the participant to scrutinize the course through observation, examination of materials and discussion. The formative track is useful for persons new to teaching or who try an innovative approach to teaching. The summative track results in a formal performance evaluation that can be used for promotion, tenure or merit consideration. In the past three years, the number of faculty using the peer review program has been: 42 in 2014-15, 20 in 2013-14 and 23 in 2012-13.

### 3.C.4

NDSU has multiple processes, both formal and informal, to guarantee faculty are current in their disciplines and teach effectively. They can participate in a variety of professional development opportunities. (See 3.C.3 above for how annual evaluation procedures assure discipline currency and effective teaching.)

NDSU supports excellence in teaching through on-campus activities such as:

- The Office of Teaching and Learning (see below) promotes active learning.
- Teaching Excellence Awards are presented annually, with the [Odney](#) and [Peltier](#) Awards specifically focusing on teaching.
- The Provost's office coordinates a [mentoring program for new faculty](#), beginning with sessions during new faculty orientation, and continuing with monthly workshops on topics such as time-management, developing a sponsored research program and promotion and tenure. Most new faculty are matched with mentors from tenured faculty outside their departments.
- Each fall, the Provost's office sponsors a one-day Professional Development (formerly called Teaching and Learning) Conference for all instructors across campus. Effective teachers from campus typically present the sessions, with topics ranging from using technology to managing large-enrollment classes.
- The Provost's office has sponsored monthly Professional Development (formerly called Pedagogical) luncheons for many years, providing opportunities for faculty to hear from colleagues with expertise relating to teaching and learning. In 2013-15, attendance ranged from 70-169. Topics included:

- Effective and Efficient Peer Review of Teaching
- Understanding and Achieving Accessible Instruction in Higher Education
- Using Case Studies in Teaching
- The Impact of Innovative Space Design on Teaching and Student Learning
- Teaching with Wikipedia (Jamie Mathewson, Wiki Education Foundation)
- The Peer Review of Teaching Program supports teachers' ongoing growth (see 3.C.3 above).
- NDSU [FORWARD](#) works to establish a university culture that nurtures and supports faculty to develop to their fullest potential, and incorporates the skills and contributions of both men and women. NDSU FORWARD began as a self-initiated group of NDSU faculty, staff and administrators interested in submitting an NSF ADVANCE grant proposal to initiate institutional changes that would benefit and advance women faculty.
- Instructional Services in the Information Technology Division offered 74 training sessions and a [three-day faculty technology workshop in FY2014](#). The faculty workshops focus on using Blackboard and other media in face-to-face or online classes. [Dive In workshops](#) focus on combining instructional best practices with the latest technology.
- Individual colleges and departments also provide professional development opportunities on a regular basis.

NDSU provides resources for faculty to hone their teaching skills:

- The new [Office of Teaching and Learning](#) provides central leadership for teaching and learning-related activities and supports innovative and emerging pedagogies across the institution. It houses the Center for Science and Mathematics Education and DCE. It continues and extends the functions of the previous Center for Instructional Excellence and Innovation in teaching assistant training and faculty instructional development for the new [STEM Building](#) (see 3.D.4).
- The College of Human Development and Education and the College of Health Professions have associate deans for faculty development who provide professional development in teaching and research.
- The College of Human Development and Education has an associate dean for online programs who assists online instructors with choosing best practices and ensuring quality in their courses.
- The Colleges of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences; Health Professions; and Science and Mathematics each have a professor of practice to assist instructors in implementing new technology and evidence-based pedagogies.
- The [College Teaching Certificate](#) provides a structured program in pedagogy for NDSU graduate students who plan to teach at a college or university.
- The [Atomic Learning](#) tutorial library has tutorials on subjects ranging from research paper formatting, to plagiarism training, to specific apps and programs.
- [Instructional Technology Services](#) posts resources related to using technology and conducts [technology training](#) for teachers of both online and face-to-face courses.
- The [Technology Fee Advisory Committee](#) solicits action plans designed to address broad areas of technology related to student, faculty and staff training; multimedia development; and innovative use of technology to improve instruction and student learning.
- Student Technology Fees fund the [Technology Learning and Media Center](#) (see 3.D.4).

Many [accredited programs](#) require faculty to pursue continuing education to maintain licensure, including architecture, athletic training, counseling education, couple and family therapy, dietetics, educational leadership, counselor education, exercise science, hospitality and tourism, interior design, nursing, pharmacy and teacher education.

NDSU provides resources to encourage faculty professional development:

- Benefitted employees have [tuition and fees waived](#), as well as release time to attend one class per semester.
- NDSU employees may apply for [developmental leave](#) for retraining and/or professional development after a minimum of three years of service, providing certain conditions are met.
  - NDSU's 2006 Self-Study noted the faculty participation rate was 3-4 percent. The Advancement Section of the 2006 Comprehensive Report noted this low rate was a concern in 1996 and that NDSU still had "not reached the desired level." Unfortunately, that rate fell to 2 percent in FY2014 and 2015.
- The [Center for Writers](#) provides free, one-on-one writing consultations for all members of the NDSU community. From 2006-07 to 2013-14, the number of [unique clients](#) increased from 1,985 to 3,916.
- NDSU's [Graduate Center for Writers](#), launched in Fall 2014, helps graduate students become more successful writers.

NDSU also has several avenues through which instructors can apply for assistance with travel to off-campus professional development events.

- The [Provost's Research and Scholarship Travel Fund](#) provides funding for travel related to professional development and/or research.
- FORWARD has [leadership development grants](#) for female faculty and [Mentor relationship travel grants](#) for meeting with mentors from outside NDSU to build long-term professional relationships.
- Colleges and departments also fund professional development for faculty and staff. NDSU expenditures for [travel-related professional development](#) in the each of the last three years are:
  - 2012: \$10,252,408
  - 2013: \$10,851,105
  - 2014: \$11,540,857

Tenured and tenure-track faculty responses to the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) Survey in 2011 indicated two areas of concern about teaching for some faculty: [campus-wide recognition for teaching for associate professors](#) and [reasonableness of teaching expectations for women and faculty of color](#).

On the other hand, [intra-departmental discussions of teaching practices and student learning](#); [mentoring](#) and [leadership from the deans](#); and [satisfaction with the balance between teaching, research and service](#) are areas of strength compared to peers. [Clarity of teaching expectations](#) for tenure application is similar to that of peers.

### 3.C.5

Faculty are required to [post](#) and [maintain](#) office hours and to list their office hours on [syllabi](#). Most instructors also are available at other times by email or phone. Instructors teaching online are expected to be accessible for student inquiry through email, phone and web-conferencing.

### 3.C.6

Staff members providing student services are qualified for their positions. They receive initial training

as well as continuing professional development.

NDSU's Department of Human Resources and Payroll has [systematic procedures](#) in place to ensure all staff are appropriately qualified at the time of hiring. Staff must have a [criminal background check](#) and must participate in the annual [responsibility review process](#). Some examples of good practices include:

- In Residence Life, assistant directors are required to have a master's degree with one exception (the position requires a bachelor's degree), and all associate and senior associate director and director positions require a master's degree. Residence hall directors must have a bachelor's degree, with a master's degree preferred.
- Staff in [ACE Tutoring](#) and [TRIO student support services](#) (see 3.D.1) are [certified](#). Undergraduate students who tutor for ACE and TRIO must earn an A or B in any class they tutor and [must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0](#). For ACE, a small number of transfer students who met all other requirements were hired as tutors without meeting a full semester of NDSU residency.
- The Division of Student Affairs has developed its own [new employee orientation](#). All staff providing student services are required to complete a series of annual online or in-person [training on critical topics](#), such as Title IX.

Examples of specialized training include:

- Student staff who manage volunteer and co-curricular service experiences for student organizations, residence halls, fraternity and sorority life, athletics and individual students are trained in customer service, public speaking, database management, student outreach, reflection, civic engagement, leadership development and communicating with nonprofits.
- Tutors are [trained in how people learn](#), [diversity in learning](#) and tutoring [students with disabilities](#).
- The Center for Writers peer tutors are required to take [ENGL 301: Peer Tutoring and Writing in the Disciplines](#).
- NDSU's 26 [professional advisers](#) have experience and/or training in student support services. They have met regularly since about 2000 for mutual support and professional development.

Staff also have access to professional development opportunities. Many of the professional development supports for instructors are also available to staff providing student services. Some examples include:

- Staff may have [release time and tuition and fees waived](#) to participate in one academic class per semester.
- Staff participate in [Information Technology Services' workshops](#) and trainings or use the Atomic Learning tutorial library (see 3.C.4 above) and can participate in various workshops across campus.
- The Staff Senate sponsors occasional [Discover U](#) events.
- Registration and Records posts [Adviser resources](#).

Professional development is also provided in specific units.

- Members of Athletic Academics receive continuing education through attending applicable conferences.
- Student Success Programs provide ongoing training regarding best practices to serve NDSU students.

- [Dining employees](#), including student workers, frontline employees and managers, participate in systematic, regular training to support food safety, customer service, teamwork, ongoing improvement and the development of specific skills needed to perform their jobs well.
- International Student Services and Study Abroad Services staff attend a variety of conferences, including the Power in Diversity Conference, Minnesota OUT Conference, Creating Change National Conference and the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity.

Staff providing student services also are active in professional organizations. A majority of the professional advisers are [NACADA](#) members. Division of Student Affairs staff providing student services are members and officers of more than 40 different [professional organizations](#), including NASPA, ACHA, AALHE and ACUHO-I. They attend and present at conferences, serve as board members and officers, and participate in trainings. International Student Services and Study Abroad Service staff belong to the [Consortium of Higher Education LGBTQ Resource Professionals](#).

### 3.C - Summary

NDSU is student-focused by ensuring that faculty and staff are qualified and able to provide a positive experience for students. Standards and procedures are in place to ensure that qualified staff and faculty are hired and new hires are appropriately oriented and trained. NDSU makes use of qualified professors of practice, lecturers and adjuncts to provide quality instruction in a dynamic institutional environment. A variety of resources are available to faculty and staff to increase their professional expertise. The Office of Teaching and Learning and Student Success Programs are the primary hubs that coordinate support to improve student learning. Many professional development opportunities, both on campus and off, are made available for both faculty and staff.

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## 3.D - Core Component 3.D

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The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

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

## Argument

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### 3.D

NDSU provides support for effective teaching and learning that is suited to its students and addresses their academic needs. Faculty and staff have completed thorough studies on improving student advising and there is progress in acting on these recommendations. Teaching and learning are consistently supported with both physical and human resources. Faculty and staff guide students in how to use research. The support for teaching, learning and ethical decision making is emphasized in the Core Values of NDSU (see 1.B.1 and 3.B.2).

### 3.D.1

NDSU provides comprehensive student support services as well as services intended for particular groups of students. Those services integrate academic and co-curricular experiences, and are based on assessments of student needs.

### Enrollment and Access Support Services

Admission, Registration and Records, Student Financial Services and Student Success Programs support all students.

[Admission](#) educates individuals and addresses their educational needs so they can make informed decisions in the college selection process. Its programs support retention and persistence.

[Registration and Records](#) provides information, systems and services that promote student academic success. It provides services in registration, evaluation of transfer and placement exam credit; advising support and tracking of degree progress, transcripts and diplomas; and commencement. In

particular, the office provides [Military and Veteran's Services](#) to assist in smooth navigation of the university environment and a successful educational experience.

[Student Financial Services](#) (SFS) ensures student knowledge and access to financial aid programs to enable them to pursue their educational objectives at NDSU. SFS provides information and resources for financial literacy education to the students.

## Student Success Programs

Student Success Programs (SSP) supports students through programs and services aimed at broadening access and fostering holistic student success. SSP administers the following:

- [Academic Collegiate Enhancement \(ACE\) Tutoring](#) is a free academic support program available to all enrolled undergraduate students to provide help with homework, tips on studying for an exam or strategies for taking notes. There were over [45,000 visits to ACE](#) in the 2012-13 academic year.
- [Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Prevention Programs](#) educate students and parents about the risks associated with alcohol use, communicate clear messages about the consequences of underage drinking and provide on-campus, late-night activities.
  - All first-year students are required to complete an eCHECKUP TO GO alcohol use assessment within the first six weeks of their first semester.
  - The President's Council on Alcohol and Other Drugs, comprised of faculty, staff and students, emphasizes reducing the harmful effects resulting from alcohol and other drug misuse. The council created and implemented its first [strategic plan in 2009-2012](#). Following the final report in Spring 2013, the council developed a [strategic plan for 2013-2018](#) and implemented it in Fall 2013.
- [Athletic Academics](#) provides additional academic support for student-athletes through grade checks, academic progress monitoring and individual support that encompasses study skills, life skills, career and personal development.
- Family Programs
  - [Family resources](#): NDSU recently hosted Family Weekend each year. Based on a needs assessment conducted in 2013, efforts will shift from one specific weekend to more focused efforts to connect with families through electronic newsletters and a more active web presence with relevant and timely information for families.
  - [Bison Bridges](#) is a newsletter designed as a resource for parents and families of NDSU students.
- [New Student Orientation](#) for first-year students, transfer students and their family members occurs June through August. Students serve as leaders, facilitators and mentors during orientation.
- [TRIO](#) Programs are educational opportunity outreach programs designed to motivate and support students from disadvantaged backgrounds. TRIO includes four outreach and support programs targeted to assist low-income, first-generation college students and students with disabilities, from middle school to post-baccalaureate programs. In 2013-14, NDSU TRIO programs served approximately 470 students. About 380 were current students and 90 were pre-college participants in Upward Bound and Veterans Educational Testing.
  - NDSU is one of 14 original universities chosen in 1989 to host the [Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program](#), designed to increase the numbers of professors from traditionally underrepresented populations. The Program encourages applications from first generation income eligible and/or underrepresented students who have strong

research interests and plan to continue to graduate school. [Since 2006, 93](#) McNair Scholars have graduated from NDSU. Eighteen are enrolled in doctoral programs and 37 have completed an advanced degree.

- [Student Support Services](#) provides eligible students with a range of services including support and encouragement, academic guidance, mentoring, group and individual tutoring services, math and science instruction, reading and writing instruction, accessible tutoring rooms and academic success workshops.
- [Upward Bound](#) supports college access and preparation by providing eligible students in grades 9-12 with tutoring, academic skills development, academic advising, career exploration, ACT preparation, college visits and college application support.
- [Veterans Educational Training](#) is a free program funded by the state of North Dakota to prepare veterans for a certificate, two-year or four-year college degree. Classes and programs are designed to ease the transition into higher education. Classes are located on campus or are available online to individuals outside a campus location.
- [Welcome Week](#) assists new and returning students adjusting to the new academic year. Welcome Week Leaders are returning students who serve as guides throughout the event and as valuable resources about campus. Special events for transfer students are hosted to prepare them for life and study at NDSU.

In addition to the above offices, NDSU provides a wide range of support services for improving students' well-being.

- [Student Health Service](#) provides health care and education, medical laboratory, pharmacy and radiology services. In 2014, 4,322 unique students had 10,435 appointments. Students with mental health concerns often work with multiple offices, including Student Health Service, the Counseling Center and Disability Services.
- The [Counseling Center](#) provides confidential therapy services for individuals, groups and couples, with specialization areas in emotional, career and academic related concerns. The center is staffed by psychologists, counselors, counselors-in-training and a consulting psychiatrist. The consulting psychiatrist is on-site three days per month during the academic year and one day per month during the summer. Services are free to NDSU students and the center presently has no session limits. The center diagnoses Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and career/major concerns for a minimal fee. The center also offers several services for the campus community. Mental Health First Aid Training is offered three times each year, the Introduction to Mindfulness Workshop twice per year and Meditation for Stress Management weekly. In 2013-14, the psychiatrist served 57 students for a total of 250 hours of work. The Counseling Center served 1,195 students in 2012-13, an increase of 360 percent from 2006-07.
- [Sexual Assault Prevention and Advocacy](#) became its own office in 2010. Its helpline has been in operation since 2011. Advocates from Sexual Assault Prevention and Advocacy (SAPA) provide support, resources and guidance to students. SAPA and the University Police offer self-defense classes for women.
- The [Wellness Center](#) provides an environment where students may learn behaviors conducive to making healthy lifestyle choices. Students, staff and faculty are eligible to participate in intramural sports at the Wellness Center. The Wellness Center offers wellness education, fitness/recreation programs and convenient and affordable on-site childcare for students. In 2013-14, there were 319,805 student visits to the Wellness Center, for an average of 896 visits per day. A total of 10,802 unique students used the Wellness Center one or more times during this period.
- The [Career Center](#) educates and provides career resources to students and alumni and

encourages partnerships to connect them with employers. Career specialists are available for resume and cover letter critiques, interview/job search preparation, mock interviews and graduate school preparation. The [Career Closet](#) program allows currently enrolled students to borrow professional attire for interviews and career events. The center reached 9,972 students in 2013-14. Most were reached through the six Career Fairs, which included 753 employers and 5,204 students, through Job Boards, individual appointments and classroom presentations. Sixteen percent of respondents on the 2013 alumni employment survey reported that the Career Center was their initial point of contact with an employer. Employers at the 2013 Agriculture Career Fair rated students who had utilized more Career Center resources as more prepared for the interview process.

- [Disability Services](#) assists both students with disabilities and faculty and staff working with students with disabilities. In 2013-14, Disability Services served 240 students through individual contacts or sessions, an increase of 421 percent from 2006-07.
- [Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) fosters the development of personal accountability and commitment to community by helping students understand how individual decisions affect themselves and others.

### **General Student Support Services for Particular Groups of Students**

NDSU is dedicated to creating and supporting a diverse campus environment. The new Assistant Vice President for Academic Enhancement and Inclusion within the division of Student Affairs administers numerous programs to support all members of the campus community, including:

- [International Student and Study Abroad Services \(ISSAS\)](#) promotes the advancement of international understanding and education.
- [Study Abroad](#) see 3.B.4.
- [Multicultural Programs](#) helps to create a culturally diverse and sensitive campus, connecting with Admission, current multicultural students, faculty and staff and the Alumni Center for recruitment, retention and outreach of multicultural students. (See also 1.C.)
  - The [Bison Bridge Program](#) assists multicultural, first-generation, first-year students adjust to college life.
  - Multicultural Programs also offers a variety of programs, events, trainings, student organizations, faculty and staff organizations and resources. In 2013-14, they provided 119 [diversity-related presentations and trainings](#).
- Cultural diversity tuition discount recipients are required to take AHSS 188, to develop a sense of community among multicultural students, prepare for academic success and foster relationships with faculty and staff mentors.
- [NDSU Dining offers](#) facilities for students with documented special food needs.
- [American Indian Resources](#): NDSU is committed to furthering partnerships with regional tribal people and tribal colleges.
  - The [Tribal College Partnerships Program](#) coordinator directs tribal college and community outreach initiatives.
  - [Nurturing American Tribal Undergraduate Research and Education \(NATURE\)](#) coordinates a two-week summer camp to introduce tribal college students to STEM disciplines and career opportunities. Tribal college faculty and reservation high school teachers simultaneously collaborate with NDSU STEM faculty on developing lesson plans.
  - [Pre-engineering Education Collaboration: Pipeline for Tribal Pre-engineering to Society \(PEEC: PTiPS\)](#) is an NSF-sponsored program (2010 to present) that provides an

- opportunity for Native American students to transition into a career from high school through a community college and NDSU.
- The annual tri-college Woodlands and High Plains Pow-wow brings together American Indian people from the region to celebrate their culture and share it with the campus and local community.
- [International Student and Study Abroad Services](#) (see 3.B.4 for study abroad) provide on-campus activities with an international focus such as Global Awareness Month, the World iView Speaker Series and International Education Week.
  - International students can improve their conversational English skills and learn more about American culture through [Conversational English Circles](#). There have been approximately 225 participants (70 of whom were U.S. students) [in the past three years](#).
- Diversity Initiatives coordinates [LGBTQ programs](#) to serve members of the NDSU community who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning. It strengthens and sustains an inclusive campus community for LGBTQ students, faculty and staff by providing programming intended to reduce homophobia and gender identity oppression.
  - [Safe Zone](#) offers training and resource about sexual orientation and gender identity/expression issues and creates a visible network of Allies to support the NDSU LGBTQ community. It delivers accurate information about sexual orientation and gender identity/expression issues and resources within the community.
  - [LGBTQ and Ally Roommate Matching](#) allows students to request being matched with a roommate who identifies as LGBTQ or an ally.
  - Women and Gender Studies 340: Perspectives in LGBTQ Studies, taught annually, was developed and is taught by the LGBTQ Programs Coordinator/staff. It explores sexual orientation, gender identity, and bodies from multiple contemporary feminist and queer perspectives.
  - NDSU provides [gender neutral restrooms](#).
  - The Wellness Center has Transgender [Patron Guidelines](#) regarding Locker Rooms and Restrooms.
- [Religious Resources](#): To serve the global community, NDSU provides religious resources to the campus. EDGO emails the official employee listserv about significant days for world religions, including the National Day of Reason on May 1 for non-believers. Multicultural Programs now maintains an updated calendar of events including a link to an interfaith calendar.

### **Financial Student Support Services for Particular Groups of Students**

- Persons from select underrepresented groups are eligible for [Cultural Diversity Tuition Discounts](#). The annual assessment report from Admission shows this program, initiated in 2009 to recruit, retain and support students from diverse backgrounds through graduation, is an effective tool.
- [Tuition scholarships](#) are available for international students as well as study abroad students.

### **Academic Services for Particular Groups of Students**

- The [Honors Program](#) has an interdisciplinary design intended to appeal to students of any major. Its core courses follow a seminar model: small classes of no more than 20 students that are highly interactive and emphasize reading and discussion. They focus on big questions such as perceptions of space, freedom, social control or the use of myth. Completion of the program

(it is not a major in itself) requires six honors courses (18 credits) in addition to a senior honors project (3 credits). The program is housed within the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, but faculty are drawn from across the university through course releases. A majority of the students are in majors outside the college, which reflects an important part of the mission: to provide intellectually stimulating courses for any student wishing to enhance his or her undergraduate experience, whether or not the student intends to complete the program. Each year, approximately 75 students enroll in honors courses and an average of eight students complete the program (including the senior project). The program has existed since 1969 and has a part-time director; it has no dedicated faculty positions. Consultations will occur during Summer 2015 with college deans and honors faculty, resulting in a proposal to the Provost to reshape the program.

- [Women and Gender Studies](#): This interdisciplinary academic program focuses on women and gender issues in society, while integrating teaching, research and service goals of the land-grant university. Undergraduate students have the option to pursue a major or minor in Women and Gender Studies.

### **Integrating Academic and Co-curricular Experiences**

The Department of Residence Life offers a variety of programs that integrate living and learning environments. Collaborating with academic units, they establish [Learning Communities](#) on designated residence hall floors for programs including arts, humanities and social sciences; business; engineering; health sciences; human development and education; transfer and international or exchange students; and wellness. The communities feature structured study groups and events with other students and faculty from the programs. In addition, LAUNCH is an early move-in, extended orientation for persons in Learning Communities, creating opportunities to get to know students that they will be living and learning with, acclimate to campus early, and meet some of the faculty and staff within their college.

### **Assessing Student Perception of University "Mattering"**

University mattering is “the feeling that one makes a difference and is significant to his or her university’s community.” In Fall 2014, Student Affairs began the Bison Voice: [Mattering Scale](#) project to better understand new students’ perceptions of mattering to the NDSU community and to identify ways Student Affairs could better support students’ transition to NDSU. Preliminary results showed most students felt they mattered to the NDSU community. Results were used to identify groups of students that face more challenges during the transition to college and to discuss strategies for better supporting those students during their transition to NDSU.

### **3.D.2**

NDSU provides a variety of learning support, including ACE tutoring, TRIO programs, Learning Communities (see 3.D.1) and advising resources (see 3.D.3). In addition, NDSU places students into appropriate courses based on their academic needs and provides transitional support through the College of University Studies and Pathway Program.

## Placement procedures

Based on qualifying exam scores, in accordance with [SBHE Policy 402.1.2](#) and [NDUS Procedure 402.1.2](#), students are placed into mathematics and English courses that are both challenging and for which they are adequately prepared. Students who believe their abilities exceed their placement into entry level math or English courses based on their ACT (or SAT) sub-test scores may demonstrate their ability by taking either (or both) the COMPASS Algebra Math or English test. Students without an ACT (or SAT) score or prior college credits must either take a COMPASS test or begin in MATH 098 for mathematics and ASC 087 for English. COMPASS tests must be taken for placement into higher level courses.

NDSU offers 14 courses that do not count for credit toward graduation:

- ENGL 100: Writing Lab (additional support for ENGL 110)
- LANG 101: Basic ESL: Integrated Skills
- LANG 102: English Structure for Non-Native Speakers
- LANG 103: English for Non-Native Speakers: Intermediate Grammar & Writing
- LANG 104: English for Non-Native Speakers: Vocabulary/Reading
- LANG 105: English for Non-Native Speakers: Intermediate Grammar/Writing II
- LANG 106: English for Non-Native Speakers: Oral Skills
- LANG 107: Language Use in Writing for ESL I
- LANG 108: Studies in American Language and Culture
- LANG 109: Language Use in Writing for ESL II
- LANG 110: Integrated Academic Language Skills for Graduate Students
- LANG 111: Advanced Issues in American and University Culture
- LANG 112: Advanced Issues in English Language for Non-Native Speakers
- MATH 098: Intermediate Algebra (previously numbered 102)

In 2013-14 there were 803 (not necessarily unique) students enrolled in Intermediate Algebra. The DFWI and repeat rates are high: 46 percent DFWI; 11.7 percent repeat. The Math Emporium (see 4.C.3) was created to address the low rate of success in this and similar courses.

## **University Studies**

The [College of University Studies](#) serves two purposes. Students not yet ready to declare a major may take general education courses while exploring majors and options. In Fall 2014, 347 (11.5 percent of total) freshman (both incoming and continuing students) were enrolled in the [College of University Studies](#) with undeclared majors. Students may declare a major and transfer to that major at any time. For students whose needs are not met by a traditional campus major, university studies offers the opportunity to design an individualized degree.

The one-credit hour [UNIV 189](#) course is designed to ease the transition for new students by introducing skills and techniques used by successful college students. In addition to campus resources and governance, topics include study techniques, time management, test taking, note taking, goal setting, wellness, stress management and career orientation. The course is [cross-listed](#) with similar courses in other colleges.

## **Pathway Program**

The [Pathway Program](#) is a collaborative agreement between NDSU and North Dakota State College of Science to prepare students who do not meet NDSU's general admission guidelines. Pathway students typically live on campus at NDSU and are eligible to utilize services and resources on both campuses. Pathway students usually participate in the program for two or three semesters. In order to transition full time to NDSU, Pathway students must pass all applicable academic readiness courses and complete at least 24 college-level credits, earning a minimum cumulative combined grade point average of 2.0. From Fall 2008 to Spring 2014,

- 401 students enrolled in the Pathway Program
- 36 percent successfully transferred to NDSU
- 11 percent six-year [graduation rate for 2008-09 cohort](#)

### 3.D.3

NDSU policies and practices value academic advising as an important element of student support.

NDSU recently joined the Educational Advisory Board's Student Success Collaborative, a consortium of universities committed to improving undergraduate retention and graduation rates. The collaborative features a software platform that provides appropriate dashboards for advisers, analyses of course performance, information about curricular bottlenecks and an early alert system (see 4.C.3).

[PTE policy](#) specifies that effective advising of undergraduate and/or graduate students is one of the criteria for the evaluation of a candidate's contribution to teaching.

Each student is assigned an adviser from the appropriate college or department. If a student has not declared a major, the student is assigned an adviser in university studies. Advisers serve as a primary resource for students, connecting them with academic opportunities and services. During Advising Week each semester, students meet with advisers to discuss academic plans.

Undergraduate advising loads for faculty vary greatly across the campus. In 2012, the percentage of faculty at each rank who advised undergraduates was:

- Full professor – 66 percent
- Associates – 83 percent
- Assistant – 75 percent
- Instructor – 80 percent
- Senior lecturer – 67 percent
- Lecturer – 35 percent

The average number of advisees by rank varied from 17 for associates to 43 for senior lecturers. The maximum number of advisees was 135 for one lecturer and 109 for one full professor.

There are professional advisers (see 3.C.6) in all colleges, although their numbers and roles vary greatly.

The [Advising Resource Center](#) is centrally located in the Memorial Union for help on academic-related issues, such as university requirements and policies, campus academic resources, adding or changing a major or minor and connecting with the student's academic adviser (see 4.C.3).

The Provost's Office established an [Outstanding Academic Advising Award](#) in 2012 to recognize and reward outstanding advising of undergraduates by faculty and by professional advisers.

In 2012, the Council on Improving Advising (see 4.C.3) surveyed faculty advisers and 50 percent reported they did not initially [feel prepared to advise](#). In response, the Coordinator of the Advising Resource Center has begun to provide professional development opportunities for advisers.

### 3.D.4

NDSU provides students and instructors the resources and infrastructure needed to support their teaching and learning. Information Technology Services, the Libraries, laboratories, performance spaces and clinical sites are highlighted here.

#### **Instructional support** (See 5.A.4)

The Provost's Office provides resources for professional development of the faculty.

- Prior to 2015, Instructional Development Grants were offered on an annual basis to support instructional development projects to improve student learning. Preference was given to those including Cooperative Learning and/or improvements using technology in the classroom. This program has been incorporated into the development efforts of the Office of Teaching and Learning (see 3.C.4).
- Annual Professional Development Conference: see 3.C.4.
- New faculty mentoring program: see 3.C.4.
- Professional Development luncheon series: see 3.C.4.

#### **Information Technology Services**

The Information Technology Division provides services and resources, including classroom technologies, learning management systems, telecommunications systems, card-key building access and campus cyberinfrastructure. [Information Technology Services](#) plays a critical role in providing instructional services and training for students and instructors. Classroom Technology provides equipment that is permanently installed in instrumented classrooms and mobile equipment on multimedia carts.

- [Computer labs and classrooms](#): As of Fall 2015, ITS supports 1,035 computers across campus, including 133 Instrumented classroom systems, 46 computer labs, 54 GoPrint release stations and 138 departmental systems.
- [Technology Learning and Media Center \(TLMC\)](#): Funded by Student Technology fees, TLMC (see 3.C.4) provides services for students, staff and faculty. Walk-in services include various multimedia activities, plotting, coursework and skill building. In a [2014 survey](#), students rated "support for technology-intensive class projects" as its most important service and 69 percent rated the quality of TLMC services as excellent or above average. In [FY 2014](#) TLMC staff provided 153 workshops for 2228 students.
- [Videoconferencing rooms](#): Eight rooms are equipped with videoconferencing technology to support online instructions and videoconferences. Videoconferencing rooms are reserved through ITS, with classes receiving scheduling priority.
- [Blackboard](#) has become an essential instructional tool. NDSU keeps the Blackboard system current by installing the most up-to-date versions. Users with Web capabilities on an iPad, iPhone, iPod touch, BlackBerry, Android or HP webOS can access Blackboard information in a format designed for smaller displays. ITS conducts regular Blackboard trainings.
- [Clickers](#) are used in many classes to promote active learning. ITS supports NXT and Turning

Technologies clickers. Both can be used in a mixed environment. Turning Technologies' mobile solution, ResponseWare, became available in Spring 2014. ITS also provides training on using clickers.

- [Software](#): NDSU provides software for university-owned computers through the ITS Software Licensing program. A variety of programs are installed in clusters classrooms and multimedia carts across campus for instructional and learning support. NDSU also licenses programs for use at no charge by faculty, staff and students, including anti-virus, anti-spam, networking, and utility software. Students, faculty and staff can get a free copy of [Read & Write Gold](#), an innovative literacy software designed to help individuals of all ages, abilities and learning styles improve reading fluency and comprehension, writing, studying and research skills. In addition, faculty and staff can purchase one copy of Microsoft Office for home use.
- The [Tegrity Lecture Capture](#) system helps instructors teach an online or hybrid course, or increase flexibility for themselves and/or their students. Instructors can record everything that is said and viewed in the classroom to produce an integrated audio-video product. In FY2014, 372 instructors used Tegrity in 344 classes to create 4,580 unique recordings.
- During FY 2013, four smart boards and 13 smart panels were installed in classrooms across campus. Instructors can write in digital ink and save lectures to allow students to review material outside of the classroom.

### Access to Course Materials

- The Bookstore provides course materials in many formats and offers students a range of payment options.
- Disability Services scans textbooks, provides texts in alternate formats and has [an assistive technology lab](#) with text-to-speech and speech-to-text software.
- Computers with assistive technology are available to students in campus computer labs.

### Libraries

- NDSU libraries house nearly 1 million items, including books, periodical subscriptions, maps, government documents, audio-visual materials and microforms. In addition, the libraries subscribe to over 640 electronic databases and serials that provide access to thousands of scholarly journals across all disciplines. Branch libraries serve the College of Business, the School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, the College of Health Sciences, and hold the NDSU Archives and Institute for Regional Studies
- The libraries provide a variety of [services](#) to students, faculty and staff. The Main Library has 11 group study rooms for two to 12 people, which can be reserved online, and 10 individual study rooms available on a first-come, first-served basis. The libraries also support ILLiad Interlibrary Loan service, 3D printing and course reserves, and provide items for check out to support student learning such as headphones, graphing calculators and markers for white boards.
- The libraries actively develop online [tutorials](#) in response to faculty and student requests. Subject librarians also develop [research guides](#) that provide resources for research in the disciplines.
- The libraries are currently staffed by 13 FTE professional librarians (with an MLS or MLIS degree) and 21 FTE staff. There also are 27 student and part-time workers whose combined hours equal 7.93 FTE.

- With the rise of NDSU as a major research university, the funding level for the library is under pressure as NDSU attempts to acquire core research resources across all areas of research in which NDSU aspires to excel. While all academic libraries must deal with the increasing cost of library materials, this is especially relevant to NDSU because pricing structures for continuing resources are often set by FTE or by research ranking.
- [Comparisons of the library's funding level](#) with peer doctoral institutions have placed NDSU near or below the 25th percentile against doctoral institutions, on the low end of a) print volumes per student FTE, b) percentage of total university budget spent on the library and c) the dollar amount spent per student FTE on library information resources ("collections").
- The Dean of the Library plans to leverage changes in the structure of scholarly communication to stretch the acquisitions budget and to concentrate on services that support content creation and dissemination by students and faculty. The Provost recently supported these efforts with a base adjustment of \$300,000 in appropriated funding.
- The NDSU strategic planning process (see 5.C.3) identified the need to develop the libraries as a 21st-century learning space that fosters interdisciplinary study and meets the information and service expectations of a research-intensive university. Core investments at the end of FY 2015 include a \$1.74 million renovation of the entrance, lobby and service point in the Main Library and a \$500,000 investment in new furnishings for public areas to support single and group study activities. In addition, one-time FY 2015 expenditure exceeding \$480,000 funded access to core electronic journal backfiles across the disciplines, including psychology, agriculture, engineering, business and the humanities, and supported preservation, exhibition and instructional programs in the libraries. In addition, in FY 2015 the libraries invested in two embedded librarian roles (health sciences and business).

## Laboratories

NDSU has 461 research laboratories that support student learning and research efforts across campus. A new STEM education building includes 23 state-of-the art teaching labs that will be used by instructors in entry-level and gateway science courses. In addition, the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station has extensive greenhouses on campus, including a high-level biosafety lab. Several engineering teaching labs have recently been renovated, including replacing lab equipment with state-of-the art instruments.

## Performing Arts

NDSU has dedicated studios for students in art, architecture, and interior design, and 45 performance or studio spaces in music and theatre. The Division of Performing Arts, including the Challey School of Music and Department of Theatre Arts, has four performance facilities:

- Festival Concert Hall is a 1,000-seat hall, serving as the concert home for NDSU music ensembles, musical productions, the F-M Symphony, the F-M Opera and touring arts organizations.
- Beckwith Recital Hall is a smaller performance setting with a seating capacity of 200. It serves as a classroom for art and music as well as a recital space.
- Askanase Auditorium: The theatre department uses this 380-seat proscenium theatre for a majority of their productions.
- Walsh Studio Theatre is a flexible studio-laboratory black box space located in Askanase Hall.

- Recent renovations included replacing curtains in both Askanase and Festival concert hall and upgrading their sound systems.

### **Clinical Sites**

- Students in allied sciences (medical laboratory science, radiologic sciences or respiratory care) complete a 12- to 24-month clinical internship in one of the department's 18 nationally accredited, affiliated hospital-based programs located in North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Iowa or Colorado.
- Students in [pharmacy practice](#) and nursing can obtain clinical experience at a variety of sites in North Dakota and Minnesota.
- Veterinary technology students use their knowledge in the [Veterinary Wellness Clinic](#) to work with both in-house animals and with animals from local animal adoption agencies.
- The NDSU [Equine Center](#), situated on 14 acres of land within the North Dakota Horse Park, serves as the epicenter of the NDSU Equine Science Program. It contains an indoor arena, spectator seating and stall accommodations for more than 300 horses.

### **Downtown facilities**

- The 100-year old Renaissance Hall was renovated and opened in 2004 to house visual arts and major components of architecture and landscape architecture. It includes studios, classrooms, a wood shop, computer laboratories, an art gallery, a wood-fired kiln and an outdoor sculpture area.
- Barry Hall, opened in 2009, houses the College of Business and the Department of Agribusiness and Applied Economics. It has 12 state-of-the-art classrooms, an auditorium, student services, the library's Business Learning Center and faculty and staff offices.
- Klai Hall opened in 2008 as a state-of-the-art facility for architecture and landscape architecture. It features studios, classrooms, a computer laboratory, laser cutter facilities and the architecture and landscape architecture library.

### **New STEM Building**

- Currently under construction, the new [Science-Technology-Engineering-Mathematics \(STEM\) instruction building](#) will address the classroom and laboratory needs of students. It will "provide state-of-the-art, safe spaces for science and technology instruction" and "free up and allow for better use of existing space to support research and teaching in STEM areas."
- Spaces in the building will "be devoted exclusively to labs and traditional science and engineering classrooms as well as modular 'open frame' flexible classrooms" ranging "in size from 20 to ... 500 students." The first classes will be taught in the building in Spring 2016. (See 5.A.1)

### **3.D.5**

NDSU provides students guidance on using research and technology through the Libraries, Information Technology and Research Integrity and Compliance.

## Libraries

- To assist student learning and to provide resources for research, the libraries offer online tutorials and research guides (see 3.D.4).

## Information Technology

- ITS services and facilities are described in 3.D.4. ITS also provides [Technology Training and Resources](#) for faculty, staff and students. Classes focus on topics such as Blackboard, Microsoft Office applications, multimedia tools, Adobe software, image editing, digital storytelling and Web authoring. The [Technology Learning and Media Center](#) (see 3.D.4) offers workshops for students.
- [Intellectual Property \(IP\)](#): Creating and distributing knowledge are the fundamental NDSU missions. ITS provides educational information on sponsored research agreements, copyright and IP. (See 2.E.1)

## Research Integrity and Compliance

To maintain eligibility for federal and other research funding, NDSU is required to comply with regulations and laws related to the conduct of research and related policies. Research Integrity and Compliance assists research personnel, including students, with important research details to conduct research safely and ethically. (See 2.E.2 for [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee](#), [Institutional Biosafety Committee](#), and [Institutional Review Board](#).)

## 3.D - Summary

NDSU provides a variety of support services for student learning. Those services are both comprehensive and appropriately tailored to the needs of particular groups of students. It also supplies the infrastructure and resources faculty and staff need to promote high-quality teaching and advising, while recognizing areas, such as adviser training (see 4.C.3 also) and the Libraries that need improvement.

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## 3.E - Core Component 3.E

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

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

## Argument

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### 3.E

NDSU identifies itself as a "student-focused, land-grant, research university" and aims to provide an educational environment to support those claims.

#### 3.E.1.

Multiple co-curricular programs support this identity.

#### Student Focused

[Academic Affairs](#) (see 3.B.1-2) and [Student Affairs](#) (see 4.B.1) have clear learning outcomes statements that are the foundation for developing student-focused co-curricular programming such as:

- **Campus Employment** opportunities enrich students' educational experience. [NDSU Dining](#), for example, has an ongoing training program that rewards students with a pay increase after each semester worked, and also offers Student Supervisor and Student Manager positions for those who display responsibility and leadership skills.
- **Leadership Development.** The Student Activities Office promotes leadership, involvement and success. Through partnerships, programs and activities, students receive training and skill development to prepare them for the real world. The [Memorial Union Leadership programs](#) offer students of all skill levels and backgrounds leadership programs that are based on leadership and developmental theories. In 2013-14, there were 166 participants in the Memorial Union Leadership Programs. As an additional service to students, the Leadership Program and the College of Human Development and Education are developing a leadership certificate combining curricular and co-curricular programs.
- **Residence Halls** offer a variety of positions for [student staff](#) to develop their leadership skills, have positive influences on others and also pay for their college education. Residence Halls employ a formal curriculum to support students' academic success, build community and foster wellness and healthy choices. Learning Communities also are available (see the next section).
- **Service-Learning** is course-based, credit-bearing, experiential learning. Service-learning courses engage students in organized service activity to meet the needs identified by community partners and enhance student learning of specific course objectives. Through reflection, students gain further understanding of course content and a greater sense of personal values and

civic responsibility. During the 2013-14 academic year, NDSU partnered with over 40 community organizations to complete a variety of service-learning projects, resulting in more than 44,000 hours of community service. The [2013-14 Community Engagement Report](#) supplies a complete report of academic service-learning and co-curricular service.

- The [Faculty Service-Learning Award](#) recognizes faculty leadership in service learning.
- **Student Organizations and Clubs.** Students can participate in approximately 300 student organizations and clubs. [These organizations](#) cover academic, cultural, honorary, social, recreational and religious interests.
- **Wellness Programs and Services.** The [Wallman Wellness Center](#) is a state-of-the art facility that includes access to a licensed dietitian, a wellness education coordinator and numerous fitness and wellness programs and events. (See 3.D.1.)

## Land Grant

NDSU's co-curricular programs also support students in advancing the success of the state's citizens in the 21st century. Examples include:

- [Civic engagement](#) programs emphasize working together to make informed public decisions and taking action towards addressing social injustices. Civic engagement initiatives include [Community Engagement Forums](#), [Tapestry of Diverse Talents](#) and [Sustainability Programming](#).
- **Diversity.** See 1.C.1-3 and 3.D.1 for support provided by Diversity Initiatives, Multicultural Programs and International Student Services and Study Abroad.
- [Faculty in Residence Education](#) selects one faculty member each year to live alongside students in the residence hall and interact with them both formally and informally. This live-in option for faculty creates valuable opportunities for students and faculty to interact with and learn from each other.
- The [Living-Learning Program](#) in Residence Life supports students by providing a vibrant, healthy place to live and learn how to become better citizens and scholars within the university community and in life. Programs include [Residential Curriculum](#), [Learning Communities](#), and [Leadership and Involvement Opportunities](#). (See also 3.D.1)
- **Student Government Community Projects:** Each year, Student Government funds a variety of projects and initiatives that will have a lasting impact on the university. The projects display the drive and passion of the NDSU student body toward the university and the greater Fargo-Moorhead community.
- **Tribal College Partnerships Program:** see 3.D.1.
- [The Volunteer Network](#) (VN) helps students find service opportunities in Fargo-Moorhead and surrounding communities. The student staff works with nonprofit agencies to identify individual and group service opportunities that meet the needs of the community, while matching student interests and skills. The VN also coordinates special programs and events throughout the school year to address community needs, engage students in service and educate about social justice issues. NDSU allocates \$90,000 to support an assistant director of service learning and civic engagement, the VN student staff, programmatic costs associated with service learning and civic engagement and one 20-hour graduate assistant dedicated to assist with service learning.

## Research Focused

NDSU seeks to involve students in research and bring top researchers and their expertise into classrooms. Some examples include:

- [Agricultural Technology Exposition](#) provides students the opportunity to select, research and present a project.
- **Business / Industry Partners.** Students and companies interact through multiple mechanisms, such as [Students in Technology Transfer and Research](#), [Operation Intern](#) and the **Internship Program**.
  - Senior design and capstone projects (see 3.B.1-2) in a variety of colleges also provide opportunities for students and companies to work together on projects. [Senior design and capstone project template agreements](#) provide ways for undergraduate students to possess potential intellectual property and discoveries generated from their senior design projects created within for-credit courses. These template agreements permit students who choose to work with companies on projects to select how they ultimately prefer to share and protect their discoveries.
  - **Human Development and Education undergraduates** are included in departmental [research showcases](#) and are encouraged to participate in poster sessions.
- [NDSU EXPLORE](#) is an annual opportunity for undergraduate students in all majors to share current or recently completed research and academic projects. Over 70 students made presentations in 2014.
- [NDSU Undergraduate Research Day](#) gives students a chance to showcase their research at the state capitol in Bismarck, North Dakota.
- **Research and Technology Park's Innovation Challenge** annually recognizes innovative activities by NDSU students. In 2015, 27 teams composed of 66 students submitted proposals and prepared visual presentations/progress reviews and oral presentations. In each of three categories, first place receives \$5,000; second place \$1,000; and third place \$500.
- [Three-minute Thesis Competition](#) allows graduate students to succinctly explain their research in terms that [general audiences](#) can understand.

### 3.E.2.

As a student-focused, land-grant, research university, NDSU contributes to student learning in multiple fashions.

#### **Student Focused**

The rapid growth in NDSU's student population has challenged the institution's commitment to remain student focused, something it prided itself on as differentiating NDSU from much larger land-grant institutions. The institution has responded to this challenge by increasing its use of assessment and institutional data to plan improvements to remain student focused amidst rapid growth.

- The University Assessment Committee and the Student Affairs Assessment Committee provide oversight for assessment of both curricular and co-curricular programs in Academic Affairs and Student Affairs through required annual reports (see 4.B.2).
- The 2014 survey of non-returning students pointed to classroom instruction as a possible area for improvement (see 4.C.2).
- [Research published](#) on three of NDSU's learning communities found the additional faculty and

residential staff interactions with students in the learning communities had a positive impact on students' perceived satisfaction.

- [Residence Life assesses the learning communities](#) and has made numerous changes to them in response to assessment data. Some examples of improvements include expansion of the LAUNCH Program (see 3.D.1), more explicit guidance for and expectations for students and staff, addition of an academic course just for learning community members, increased use of experiential learning and retreats, changes in the location and participation requirements for learning communities and monitoring of retention rates. Analysis of NSSE data, comparing NDSU students who had participated in learning communities to those who had not, found learning community participants
  - Tended to [have higher GPAs](#), and
  - Reported [significantly higher engagement](#) on a range of items, such as
    - “Discussed course topics, ideas or concepts with a faculty member outside of class,”
    - “Worked with a faculty member on activities other than coursework (committees, student groups, etc.)” and
    - “Included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.) in course discussions or assignments.”

## Land Grant

NDSU's land-grant mission is supported through numerous curricular and co-curricular opportunities, including:

- Compared to their NSSE peers, NDSU seniors are more likely to participate in class-based [service-learning projects](#) and more likely to participate in [experiential-learning programs](#) such as internships, co-op, and field experiences.
- Through the NDSU Bison Service Challenge in 2012-13, NDSU students raised \$150,000 and recorded 109,500 curricular and co-curricular hours of service, equating to \$2,246,757.60 in estimated community impact.
- NDSU offers numerous awards and recognitions for participation in community engagement and diversity. Examples include the Tapestry of Diverse Talents, Friends of Extension Award, Green and Golden Globe Diversity Awards, Service Learning Award, Alumni Association Horizon Award, [Diversity Impact Award](#) and Sarah Martinsen Award.
- Local nonprofit agencies were surveyed on how NDSU students support agencies through volunteerism and ways NDSU can continue to promote the work of area nonprofits. Of the agencies that had worked with NDSU volunteers, 100 percent wanted to continue having student volunteers work with their agency and agreed or strongly agreed that student volunteers were an asset to their organization, were reliable in performing the assigned tasks and had an impact on their efforts to meet community needs.
- NSSE results document increasing student community service and volunteer work. From 2002 to 2011, the number of students who did not plan to do community service or volunteer work or were undecided decreased from 40 percent to 22 percent. By 2011, 79 percent of seniors reported they planned to do or already had done service or volunteer work. In 2011, 42 percent of seniors reported participation in a community-based project as part of a course and 77 percent reported NDSU had contributed some, quite a bit or very much to their wanting to contribute to the welfare of their community.

## Research University

Many NDSU students are directly involved in research.

- In the 2013 National Survey of Student Engagement, 21 percent of NDSU's senior respondents reported working on a research project with a faculty member.
- In Fall 2014 there were
  - 882 enrollments in undergraduate courses and 1,481 enrollments in graduate courses with a known research component,
  - 553 graduate students employed as graduate research assistants and
  - 206 students employed in a laboratory setting.
- See 3.E.1 for co-curricular examples.

Students who are involved in research also may qualify for scholarships or other funding such as:

- North Dakota Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research ([EPSCoR](#)) provides funding for graduate research assistants.
- The [College of Science and Mathematics](#) provides opportunities for undergraduate majors to participate in research including the Research Opportunities for Engaging Students ([ROPES](#)) program.
- In the last three years, the College of [Human Development and Education](#) awarded \$1,000 each to five faculty members to support their research work with undergraduates.

## 3.E-Summary

Driven by its identity as a “student-focused, land-grant, research university,” NDSU is dedicated to providing an enriched environment to facilitate student learning through diverse co-curricular programs, ranging from on-campus leadership development, employment, research opportunities and student organizations to service learning, civic engagement and extension services to the larger local and state communities.

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## 3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

### Summary

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NDSU offers rigorous and diverse degree programs that serve its changing student body and provides an enriched environment for students' development. It begins with how students are admitted and guided into the appropriate programs for both new and transfer students. Once on campus, they are offered a wide range of support services and co-curricular programs to enrich their learning and campus living experiences. NDSU provides numerous professional development opportunities for faculty and staff to ensure qualified personnel. Consistent with its land-grant mission, NDSU provides community engagement and extension services.

NDSU's strengths in providing a high-quality education include:

- Formal approval processes for new course proposals and changes in courses
- Student performance standards clearly described in the undergraduate bulletin and graduate bulletin
- Revised Undergraduate Learning Outcomes with a new outcome-based General Education model, NDSU QUEST, under consideration
- At least one high-impact practice for all graduates because capstone courses required in all majors evaluate students' comprehensive learning
- Higher participation rates than peers in two other high impact practices: class-based service learning and experiential-learning projects
- Highly qualified faculty and staff to deliver quality teaching and service
- Clear policies for faculty/staff searches, hiring, evaluation and promotion
- Professional development opportunities for faculty and staff to promote teaching and research
- Study abroad programs and National Student Exchange
- Student-success programs to enhance students' learning and living experiences
- Extensive support services for diverse student groups
- Regular assessment of students' perceptions of "university mattering" and of their needs
- English and math placement tests and the Pathway program to guide students into appropriate courses and programs
- Professional advisers dedicated to undergraduate student advising
- Significant investment in infrastructure and resources to serve the growing student population
- Trainings and workshops for students, faculty and staff to ensure ethical and responsible use of resources
- Co-curricular programs grounded in NDSU's identity as a "student-focused, land-grant, research university" that provide an enriched environment for students' experiences

NDSU also faces some challenges to providing a high-quality education and it is presently addressing some more successfully than others.

- The NDSU Libraries have been underfunded for some time, but as noted in 3.D.4, the Provost's office has allocated significant funds to improve the collection and physical facilities.
- Additional funds from the last two legislative sessions and the new state funding model (see 5.A) are alleviating faculty and staff workload increase due to the rapid increase in student

enrollment.

## Sources

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*There are no sources.*

## **4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement**

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

### **4.A - Core Component 4.A**

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

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

### **Argument**

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#### **4.A.**

NDSU maintains high quality educational programs through regular program reviews, transcript evaluations, clear transfer criteria, policies for course prerequisites and student learning, appropriate specialized accreditations and ongoing surveys of its students and graduates.

#### **4.A.1**

In accordance with State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) policy, all departments and academic units participate in regular program review to obtain feedback for continuous improvement. Many program reviews lead to substantive positive change, and the program review process is reviewed and updated periodically to provide the most effective feedback to those who put it into action.

NDSU's recently revised program review process involves a significant investment of faculty time and energy. Departments frequently use the reviews to improve student learning, but consistent systematic continuous improvement at the institutional level based on the reviews is a goal the campus is still working toward.

Program review policies are established by [SBHE policy](#) (undergraduate programs reviewed at least every seven years and graduate programs at least every 10) and by the [NDSU Program Review Committee](#), a Faculty Senate standing committee that develops criteria and procedures for review, performs reviews and makes recommendations. Reviews focus on program quality, avenues for improvement, relationship of the program to the institutional mission and program productivity. An annual report to the NDUS Chancellor summarizes the instructional program evaluations and provides a statement regarding institutional decisions and actions taken in response. (Please see annual reports for [2005-06](#), [2006-07](#), [2007-08](#), [2008-09](#), [2009-10](#), [2010-11](#), [2011-12](#), [2012-13](#), and [2013-14](#).)

Current NDSU [guidelines for program review](#), approved May 6, 2013, require participation of program faculty in the development of the report. Departments evaluate what, why and how well they meet their mission, disciplinary context and the needs of their students and create an action plan. As a result, faculty are increasingly aware of program-level issues for which they can take shared responsibility. Further, to make multi-year comparisons using consistent measures, reports must include data provided by the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis (OIRA) in the [Compendium](#) and [Success and Progress](#) reports.

[All departments](#) have participated in program review since 2008-09 or [will be participating in 2014-15](#) with the exception of the School of Food Systems. (The School of Food Systems, last reviewed in 2006-07, was dissolved in 2013 and had its degree programs assigned to other departments. Food safety will be reviewed in 2016-17 as an interdisciplinary program and food science will be reviewed in 2018-19 with plant sciences.)

## Use of Program Reviews

The accreditation team's Fall 2014 [survey of department chairs and heads](#) found program review had been used to identify and alleviate resource allocation issues, including hiring additional faculty, staff or graduate assistants and improving facilities. Program review also was used to change program or course structure or curriculum to address gaps in students' knowledge and skills. Examples for how program review has resulted in positive improvements include:

- Making a successful case for new faculty lines to rectify significant understaffing in finance and management information systems,
- Developing additional graduate teaching assistant support in the psychology department,
- Developing a case for a new STEM classroom building (now under construction) designed for active and SCALE UP learning by identifying limited, substandard laboratory space for student instruction and research (see 3.D.4),
- Making significant investments in faculty training through the Howard Hughes Medical Summer Institute to make use of the SCALE UP rooms,
- Developing a new portfolio system and a new capstone course to improve instructional delivery in the School of Natural Resource Sciences,
- Implementing a new technical writing course and closely monitoring learning outcomes related to communication in civil engineering and

- Changing graduate admissions in computer science to include more doctoral students and modifying the emphasis in the M.S. program toward coursework/project degrees and online classes.

### **Continuing Process Improvement**

The Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Improving Quality of Academic Operations Committee (see 4.B.1) recently [evaluated](#) the present program review process and identified strengths (e.g. improvements as a direct result of program review) and areas for [improvement](#) (e.g. program review needs better integration with assessment, planning and budgeting).

The Program Review Committee regularly makes changes to the program review process to address issues. For example, in 2012-13 the Program Review Committee made major changes to the program review template in response to reports that were long and offered little opportunity for reflection. To better close the feedback loop, the [new program review template](#) limits the length of the report and encourages departments to reflect and take action, not simply report data. In the past, some department heads completed the report almost independently from the department's faculty, but the new template uses more open-ended questions to support engagement of all department faculty members in discussing important issues.

#### **4.A.2.**

Registration and Records uses a team of transcript reviewers to evaluate, in accordance with NDUS and NDSU policy, all credits (including experiential and prior learning) with a final comprehensive evaluation before graduation. Departments or committees with program oversight decide unclear or borderline cases, particularly in terms of transfer.

### **Policies Governing Credit Evaluation**

The foundation of credit evaluation is [NDUS Procedures Section 441](#), based on the State Board of Higher Education's [\(SBHE\) Policy 441](#). The procedures establish definitions and requirements for degree credit, non-degree credit, developmental coursework and non-credit instructional activity. They define a degree credit as "the equivalent of 15 hours of traditional classroom instruction per semester hour of credit" based in "instructional activities provided by the institution which result in the award of college credit that can be applied toward a college degree."

NDSU uses the SBHE policies and NDUS procedures to establish policies on credit award and transfer to guide the work of professionals in Registration and Records. NDSU's policies are described in the NDSU [Undergraduate Bulletin](#) and in the [NDSU Graduate School's policies](#). NDSU follows NDUS by defining one semester credit as the equivalent of one lecture period (50 minutes) per week for 15 weeks plus a final examination period or, in the case of laboratories, a minimum of two 50-minute periods per week for 15 weeks. Field experiences require a minimum of 40 hours of experience for each credit.

### **Credit by Examination**

NDSU also awards degree credit through standardized examinations (such as Advanced Placement or the College Level Examination Program), challenge examinations (institutionally-developed examinations that enable a student to earn course credit), evaluated non-college coursework (such as formal instructional programs in the military), prior learning assessment and articulated credit (degree credit activities that have been evaluated and deemed equivalent to specific courses at the institution).

The [NDUS procedures for credit-by-exam](#) set minimum requirements for successful completion of credit-by-exam programs. Institutions in the NDUS are required to use the [Credit-By-Exam Chart](#) to determine the minimum credit-granting score, number of semester credits to be awarded and the course or type of course to be awarded.

[NDSU's policies on credit-by-exam](#) follow the SBHE's policies. Students can receive credit for earning the appropriate score on the [Advanced Placement exams](#), on the [College Level Examination Program](#) exams, [DSST Examinations](#) and [International Baccalaureate](#) higher level exams. Students may receive [credit for lower-level international language courses](#) by completing a higher-level course, if they meet certain conditions.

Students also may receive credit by challenging a course. Students who wish to challenge a course must complete the [Petition for a Course Challenge Form](#); obtain approval from their adviser, instructor of the course and chair of the department offering the course; pay the course challenge fee; and successfully pass the challenge.

### **Experiential Learning Credit**

University studies and the Cooperative Education and Internship Program are the only ways NDSU awards credit for experiential learning. University studies allows students to request credit for “university-level experiential learning...provided the experience leads to university-level learning and is related to educational goals.” Students must complete the [Experiential-Learning Credit Request Form](#) and “be prepared to demonstrate increased knowledge, problem-solving ability, ability to understand people or some other significant personal growth as the result of their experience.”

Students also may receive up to three credits for working 300+ hours per semester in the [Cooperative Education and Internship Program](#). Students must meet with a professional in the Career Center and [complete the necessary forms](#), including a mid-term self-evaluation, an end-of-the-semester self-evaluation and an employer evaluation of the experience.

Non-degree credit is defined as any institutional instructional activities that result in college credit but typically cannot be applied toward a degree. Non-degree credit includes professional development activities and audited courses (degree courses for non-degree credit). With the exception of audited courses (which are recorded with the official course number), all NDSU non-degree credit must be recorded on the official transcript with the course number of 600.

### **4.A.3**

Policies and procedures from the SBHE, NDUS and NDSU assure effective evaluation of transfer credits by creating much consistency and fluidity within the state ([GERTA agreement](#)), as students transfer from institution to institution, but also by providing guidance for transfers from other states

and countries. More finely grained course evaluation processes ensure that less clear transfer credit decisions are carefully made.

### **Policies on Transfer Credits**

The SBHE delegates much of the responsibility for determining transfer credit to the system's institutions. [Policy 402.4](#) requires institutions to review coursework completed at institutions or organizations that are accredited by an association recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation or U.S. Department of Education and make available a written description of policies and procedures for transcript evaluation, including identification of an individual or a department students may contact for transfer information or evaluation. The NDUS procedures have specific requirements for common course numbering and statewide and [systemwide articulation agreements](#), procedures for [institutional articulation agreements](#) and SBHE policy for developing articulation [agreements with secondary institutions](#).

The NDUS has several procedures that support the [transfer of credit between system](#) institutions. [Common course numbering](#), negotiated by academic discipline groups, simplifies the transfer process.

The [General Education Requirement Transfer Agreement \(GERTA\)](#) provides information on an approved set of general education courses that are transferable between NDUS Campuses and North Dakota's five tribal colleges.

SBHE policy for transfer of [general education requirements](#) covers transfer of general education courses between NDUS institutions. It requires the receiving institution to award general education credit if the course met the general education requirement of the institution "from which the student transfers and satisfies the common general education requirement" established by the SBHE. Students who earn Associate of Science or Arts degrees meet the lower division general education requirements established by the SBHE. (Institutions are permitted to establish general education requirements that go beyond those stated in the policy.)

Annually, the NDUS prepares a "[Guide to Transfer](#) within the North Dakota University System and Other Associated North Dakota Institutions of Higher Education". The purpose of the guide is to "improve student access to college degrees and avoid course duplication or loss of credit when students transfer within North Dakota." While not transfer policies per se, the "Guide to Transfer" describes the general education courses that can be transferred to or from the NDUS institutions and six other institutions in the state.

NDSU's [Transfer Admission Requirements and Admission Procedures](#) describe how students enroll and summarize the process of how transfer credits are evaluated. NDSU's Undergraduate Bulletin provides detailed [guidelines on the transfer of credit](#) from U.S. institutions and international institutions.

The [course evaluation process](#) is used when courses have not been previously evaluated or when there is not an articulation or transfer agreement in place. Registration and Records completes these evaluations after a student has been admitted to the university.

NDSU makes available an [informational guide](#) that students can use when planning transfer. The guide includes a search function and covers both U.S. and international institutions. The [Transfer Enrollment Guide](#) provides detailed information for transfer students and covers topics such as

transfer credit information, housing, financial aid and scholarships.

### **Articulation and Reverse Transfer Agreements**

NDSU's articulation agreements are summarized by [NDSU's Transfer Student Services](#). Articulation agreements are available for the North Dakota University System, Bismarck State College, Lake Region State College, Minnesota State Community and Technical College and United Tribes Technical College.

NDSU also participates in the [Tri-College University](#) (see 1.D.3) Exchange and Cooperative Agreement. This agreement allows a properly enrolled student at any of the participating area institutions a way to exchange courses easily among the institutions.

In April 2015, NDSU and North Dakota State College of Science (NDSCS) finalized a [reverse transfer agreement](#) (the first of its kind in the state) that established a policy and process for students who transfer from NDSCS to NDSU to apply credits from both institutions toward an associate degree. The Reverse Transfer is especially helpful for students who planned to, but will not be able for some reason, to earn a bachelor's degree.

#### **4.A.4.**

NDSU's institutional infrastructure is built for multiple checkpoints on prerequisites, rigor, expectations for learning, access to learning resources and faculty qualifications. A combination of faculty leadership at the department level and on campuswide committees, registration and records systems, administrative oversight and state level policy serve to ensure the quality of these areas.

### **Course Prerequisites and Rigor**

NDSU faculty maintain the final authority over course prerequisites and rigor through the [Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee](#), which [approves all new courses](#) and changes to courses, including prerequisites. The [approval process](#) involves multiple levels, including the department and other affected departments, College Curriculum Committee, Graduate Council (if the course or program is to be offered for graduate credit), General Education Committee, Academic Affairs and Faculty Senate (see 1.A.2, 3.A.1 and 5.B.2). Rigor is further verified after course approval by course and/or program-level assessment, guided by the University Assessment Committee (see 4.B.1).

Prerequisite requirements are listed in the [Course Catalog](#) and are enforced by Registration and Records through the Campus Connection course registration system that prohibits enrollment unless the identified criteria are met. Departments monitor and review fulfillment of prerequisites and submit administrative drop requests for those students who do not meet the requirements. [Course placement guidelines and procedures](#) in [mathematics](#) and [writing](#) are set by NDUS procedure and NDSU policy.

### **Expectations for Student Learning**

See 3.B.1 (General Education) and 4.B.1 (University Assessment Committee).

### **Access to Learning Resources**

See 3.D.2.

### **Faculty Qualifications**

[Faculty qualifications approvals](#) originate in each academic department and are subsequently approved by the college dean, Provost and President. (See 3.C.2 for faculty degrees and qualifications and recruitment and hiring procedures.)

### **Dual Credit**

As noted in 3.A.3, NDSU offers no dual-credit courses.

### **4.A.5**

Specialized accreditation is maintained by 60 degree programs through one or more of 25 specialized accrediting agencies. [Specialized accreditation status](#) is reported in the Undergraduate Bulletin. Two degree programs, sport management and Master of Public Health, are preparing for initial specialized accreditation review.

### **4.A.6**

NDSU is a student-focused university committed to graduating students who are prepared for future employment, advanced degree programs, licensure and active engagement in their communities. Consequently, NDSU evaluates the success of its graduates in five different ways:

1. **Career Center's Annual Employment Reports:** Since 1995 the [Career Center](#) has annually reported on graduates earning degrees during the previous academic year. The center contacts alumni electronically, through the mail and by telephone up to six months past their graduating semester. Using these multiple media results in a high response rate – 86 percent in 2014. The survey results include gender and the number of students who are pursuing post baccalaureate and professional education or additional undergraduate majors, entering the job market, are employed in an area related to their major, are active in the job search and the salary range. Results are published on the Career Center website and available to students, departments, degree programs and the public.

2. **Licensure Exam Pass Rates:** OIRA collects pass rate data on licensure exams in architecture, counselor preparation, dietetics, engineering, nursing, pharmacy practice, education and veterinary technology. Pass rates from [2011](#), [2012](#) and [2013](#) are generally very good and often exceed the national averages. Results are shared with the SBHE and the NDSU Provost.
  
3. **NDSU Alumni Survey:** In Fall 2014, OIRA surveyed a [random sample of 5,000 alumni](#) who had graduated between spring 2010 and spring 2014. Respondents were proud of NDSU, felt supported by student services, had a sense of belonging on campus, had meaningful academic and co-curricular opportunities and grew personally and intellectually. Areas of concern for respondents included quality of academic advising, responsiveness of administrators and faculty to student input, opportunities to contribute to scholarship or creative work and general education. In response to these concerns, the 2015-20 NDSU Strategic Vision includes focus areas on improving academic advising and increasing undergraduate research opportunities.
  
4. **Graduate School Survey of Alumni:** In March 2013, the [Graduate School](#), in collaboration with the NDSU Alumni Association, contacted all alumni of record who had earned a graduate degree at NDSU and had a valid email address on file. Respondents were employed in a range of sectors, including higher education, K-12 education, business, manufacturing and government service. A majority of respondents were employed in North Dakota and Minnesota and felt their graduate degrees were very closely or closely related to their employment. Respondents were most positive about the expertise/support of faculty and the relevance of their educational experience for their employment. Possible improvements identified by respondents included professional development and greater degree/course offerings. To address concerns raised in this survey, the NDSU Strategic Vision 2015-2020 includes initiatives to expand professional development and career counseling services for graduate students, provide adequate access to space, resources and infrastructure that support course offerings and expand doctoral education, as well as professional and applied master's program offerings.
  
5. [Noel-Levitz Employer Satisfaction Survey](#) was initiated by the SBHE and administered in 2008 and 2010. Employers were asked about the knowledge and skills of alumni working in their company or agency. This survey was discontinued because the legislature cut the operating budget of the NDUS office.

Many individual departments evaluate the success of their graduates. For example:

1. **University Studies** surveyed alumni who had received [Bachelor of Undergraduate Studies degrees](#) between 1972 and 2008. Alumni were employed in a variety of careers and were satisfied or very satisfied with their current occupation. Ninety-four percent felt well prepared for professional work and their degree was important or very important to their first career choice after graduation.

2. **The Teacher Education Program** surveyed [alumni who had graduated](#) from the Advanced Program in Teacher Education from 2008 to 2011. In 2012 and 2013 it also participated in a Bush Foundation-sponsored project, the Network for Excellence in Teaching. One aspect of this project included [surveys of supervisors](#) of alumni who had graduated from the teacher education program in [2010-11](#) and surveys of students who graduated during [2010-11](#) and [2011-12](#).
3. In addition to licensure pass rates, **the School of Pharmacy** tracks the percentage of graduates with offers of employment or post-graduate residency and compares the post-graduate residency [match rate of graduates](#) after one year with national rates.
4. Departments in the **College of Engineering** survey recent graduates as part of their accreditation process. They focus on students' perceptions of how successfully departments met their ABET program outcomes.

#### 4.A - Summary

NDSU has numerous well-established processes and structures in place to ensure, evaluate and improve the effectiveness of its educational programs. All educational programs are routinely reviewed and these reviews are used to make revisions, including improvements to admission requirements, program or course structure and faculty or staff hiring. Although there is not a long history of using program review systematically at the institutional level, NDSU has made changes to the program review process to make it more effective and efficient, and may be making additional improvements in the coming years by acting on the recommendations of the Improving Quality of Academic Operations Committee. NDSU has rigorous processes in place to: evaluate all transcribed credit (primarily Registration and Records and transfer agreements), establish course rigor and prerequisite course requirements (departments, university committees), hold high expectations for learning (departments, university committees), set requirements for faculty qualifications (departments, deans, provost) and provide access to substantial learning resources (multiple campus offices, including the Center for Writers and ACE tutor services). Specialized accreditation is maintained as appropriate. Several examples of assessment of the success of graduates show NDSU's commitment to student success after graduation.

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## 4.B - Core Component 4.B

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

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

## Argument

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### 4.B.

As a student-focused institution, NDSU is committed to ongoing educational achievement and improvement through assessment. The University Assessment Committee (UAC), Office of Institutional Research and Analysis (OIRA), Student Affairs Assessment Committee (SAAC) and all Academic and Student Affairs departments play key roles in ongoing assessment and improvement of student learning.

### 4.B.1

#### Goals

NDSU's commitment to student learning and improvement is evident in its two sets of goals for student learning:

#### Academic Affairs

From 1992 to 2013, NDSU's goals for student learning were contained in the seven [General Education Intended Student Outcomes](#). They were changed in 2013 to [Five Core Questions](#) to Frame Undergraduate Learning Outcomes for NDSU Undergraduates and [Undergraduate Learning Outcomes](#) (revised in 2014 and 2015) (see 3.B.1-2).

#### Student Affairs

The original Student Affairs Learning Agenda (SALA) (see 3.E.1) contained "six principles intended to educate students in all settings." It was implemented in 1997 and revised in 2007. In 2015 the SALA Revision Task Force incorporated the original six principles of SALA into the "Student Affairs

Learning Outcomes.” The [Student Affairs Learning Outcomes](#) are closely linked with the Undergraduate Learning Outcomes and include seven categories. The task force also developed a list of six Service Outcomes that describe how the division and its services support students from pre-enrollment to post-graduation.

## Processes

The [University Assessment Committee](#) (UAC) coordinates the processes for assessing student learning. Established in 1992, the UAC is a Joint Standing Committee of the Faculty Senate. It reviews annual assessment reports from 44+ academic units, 15 student affairs units and the Extension Service. Until 2014, reviews of Extension relied on annual state and federal program reports, which include information on learner outcomes. Extension reports of learning now use a format similar to other units.

The membership and responsibilities of the UAC are currently being reviewed. On [March 25, 2013](#), the Faculty Senate approved the Ad-hoc Committee on Curriculum Approval and Review [subsequently renamed Improving Quality of Academic Operations Committee (IQAOC) (see 4.A.1 also.)]. It was given [two primary charges](#):

- “Examine the goals for academic programs and the curriculum” shared by four Standing Committees: Academic Affairs, Assessment, General Education and Program Review.
- “Consonant with Higher Learning Commission’s Criteria for Accreditation Criteria 5.C.2. ‘The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting,’ evaluate to what extent these committees and their tasks can be re-structured and re-organized to achieve the shared goals more efficiently, ideally with fewer committees and fewer reports.”

IQAOC is composed of 11 members, including six former or present Faculty Senate presidents. It first met in February 2014, and expects to make its recommendations to the Faculty Senate in December 2015.

The UAC’s campuswide strategic plan for assessment was adopted in 1995 and [updated in 2011](#) and [2014](#). From 2000-12 (see sample guidelines for [2012-13](#)) departments responded to three specific questions in their reports:

1. What were your assessment results the last time you evaluated this learning outcome?
2. What changes did you make based on the results of your last assessment report?
3. What are your assessment plans for the next two years?

For [reports on the 2013-14 academic year](#), the UAC asked academic departments to reflect on the essential student learning for their graduates, to note their alignment with the [Undergraduate Learning Outcomes](#) and to describe where and how student learning occurred and was supported. (Please see reports from [Biological Sciences](#), [English](#), [Pharmacy Doctorate](#) and [Theatre Arts](#).) [Reports for 2014-15](#) will again focus what departments learned from their assessment activities.

For various reasons, not all departments submitted reports annually. In September 2012, [30 academic units were late](#) with their reports. Due to the leadership of the deans and the former Provost, all departments are currently up-to-date. Previously, departments were able to choose from four possible

due dates for their reports and easily got off track. With the agreement of the department heads and chairs, the UAC established a single due date, September 15, for reports on assessment activities in the previous academic year.

#### 4.B.2

The UAC, assisted by the Office of Accreditation and Assessment, organizes regular assessment of the achievement of student learning outcomes for curricular and co-curricular programs.

- The UAC updates and distributes guidelines for reports annually.
- A UAC member completes a primary review of each annual report using one of two standardized templates, either for [Academic Affairs](#) or for [Student Affairs](#).
- For the 2012-13 reports ([reviewed in 2013-14](#)) and 2013-14 reports ([reviewed in 2014-15](#)), the UAC employed Qualtrics to gather patterns of cross-campus and longitudinal assessment evidence from the primary reviewers' evaluations.
- The director of accreditation and assessment prepares a cover letter combining his analysis with that of the primary reviewer. The letter goes to the department, the dean and the appropriate vice president. (Please see sample letters to [Biological Sciences](#), [English](#), [Pharmacy Doctorate](#) and [Theatre Arts](#).)

Each department in Academic Affairs has a current assessment plan and submits an annual assessment report. Almost all academic departments employ a mixture of direct and indirect assessment methods and regularly cite improvements they have made based on assessment. The quality of assessment plans and reports, however, varies tremendously. Generally, plans and reports from the 60 academic degrees or programs that have specialized accreditation are comprehensive and well organized. Because some reports were collections of pre-and post-test data from individual courses, without coherent vision of how these are linked to program learning goals, the UAC's guidelines for 2013-14 reports (see above) emphasized the "big picture" of the essential learning they expected for their majors.

Likewise, every department in Student Affairs submits an annual report assessing student learning and development. The [Student Affairs Assessment Committee \(SAAC\)](#) coordinates assessment in the Division of Student Affairs with the support of the Office of Student Affairs Assessment. Departments receive feedback on their annual assessment reports from the SAAC and the UAC. From 2008-14, Student Affairs departments conducted 758 assessment survey projects using Campus Labs Baseline to measure student satisfaction or gather feedback on their programs. Student Affairs departments with more sustained contact with students, such as [Residence Life](#) and [Dining Services](#), are more likely to have direct evidence of student learning.

In addition to the UAC, NDSU supports assessment of curricular learning by:

- Administering the [Student Satisfaction Inventory](#) (SSI) to 3,203 students
- Hosting a Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) Academy in 2011 for 25 faculty from NDSU and UND.
- Funding positions in four of the seven academic colleges to assist in assessment and course design.
  - A fifth, the College of Engineering, provides summer salary support for faculty in its six departments to attend discipline-specific assessment workshops and coordinate assessment activities in their respective departments.

- Requiring all [general education courses](#) (see 3.B.1) to provide examples of student activities that address the general education learning outcomes and include that information on their syllabi.
- [Requiring all syllabi](#) to list course outcomes.
- Revising [Policy 332 Assessment of Teaching](#) in 2014 “to emphasize the improvement of teaching and learning.”

In addition to reports to the UAC, student curricular learning is assessed in the following:

- As a Voluntary System of Accountability (VSA) campus, NDSU assessed broad student learning with the CLA in 2007, 2009 and 2011 and the CLA+ in 2013 for 768 unique students over the course of 864 administrations (some administrations were longitudinal with a student completing the assessment more than once).
  - For [2007-11](#), the value-added results (effect sizes) were at or near the 50th percentile in Total CLA score, Performance Task and Analytical Writing Task. They were above the 50th percentile for Make-an-Argument, but below the fifth percentile for Critique-an-Argument.
  - For the CLA+ in 2013, the value-added results were in the middle 50s in all areas, with the least gain in [Critical Reading and Evaluation](#).
- Homegrown [general education assessment](#) of actual student work from the [capstone courses](#) is just beginning.
- Since 2004, the English department has annually assessed a 10-15 percent sample of student portfolios from 150-200 First Year Writing sections to systematically evaluate to what extent students met the two general education outcomes for the course, “communicating effectively in a variety of genres for a variety of audiences and contexts” and “integrating knowledge and ideas in a coherent and meaningful manner.”
- In 2016, NDSU will participate in both the undergraduate and graduate modules of SERU, a survey instrument that assesses student outcomes in research universities.
- In 2011, NDSU was selected as a [Cohort Three Pioneer Institution in the Pathways Demonstration Project](#). NDSU tested the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) by asking departments to compare student learning in their capstone experiences, embedded in the major, but required as part of general education, with the DQP benchmarks for “Applied Learning.” Of the 86 capstone courses for 65 majors in 41 departments:
  - 88 percent require research
  - 97 percent require a final product, project or performance
  - 45 percent use a rubric to evaluate that product, project or performance

The DQP project also highlighted real world experiences (13 examples), internships (5 examples) and senior theses (4 examples) as best practices in capstones.

NDSU supports assessment of co-curricular learning through the Office of Student Affairs Assessment, led by the director, a position created in 2013. The office provides services such as:

- Staff development activities, such as the Student Affairs Assessment Academy
- Support in creating proposals to present on assessment at conferences
- Consultation on survey development, instrument selection and creation of assessment approaches
- Data analysis and statistical support
- Assessment resources, such as the website, rubrics and books
- Communication of assessment data and its use to a broader audience (such as through the Twitter account, poster campaigns and infographics)

- Leadership of divisionwide assessment activities, such as the Financial Wellness Study led by Ohio State University and the Bison Voice Mattering Scale.

The [Student Affairs Assessment Committee](#) of 11 members includes both a student and a faculty representative and provides feedback on reports in addition to the feedback from the UAC.

In addition to annual assessment reporting, examples of how student co-curricular learning is assessed include:

- Campus recreation, mental health and counseling and Residence Life employ national surveys such as NASPA Consortium and the Educational Benchmarking Inc. to identify areas for improvement.
- Supervisors of student employees in the Memorial Union evaluate students using [rubrics linked to the learning outcomes](#) in the Student Affairs Learning Agenda. Student employees improved the most in demonstrating initiative and proposing solutions.
- The [CORE Alcohol and Other Drug Use survey](#) assists in identifying critical issue areas related to alcohol and other drug (AOD) use and tailoring prevention strategies and programs. Data demonstrate that negative consequences related to AOD use are consistently declining among NDSU students.
- Data collected by the Wellness Center demonstrated that students [earned higher GPAs](#) and were [more likely to graduate in](#) four years if they used the Wellness Center in their first semester.

#### 4.B.3

NDSU is committed to conducting meaningful assessment and using the results to improve student learning in both curricular and co-curricular programs. Two recent examples demonstrate how NDSU uses information from assessment to improve student learning:

- In Fall 2014, the accreditation team [surveyed academic department chairs and heads](#) for examples of how they used assessment to improve student learning. The most common response was identifying gaps in students' knowledge or skills, and consequently:
  - Adding or restructuring courses
  - Providing students additional opportunities to improve their problem-solving or research skills
  - Increasing learning support via personnel, software and/or hardware
  - Aligning curriculum with professional or industry standards
  - Building interdisciplinary collaborations, especially to improve communication skills.
- In the [2012-13 Student Affairs reports](#), at least eight departments (from ACE Tutoring to the Wellness Center) noted specific changes they have made based on assessment results to improve student learning. For example, the Residence Life Curriculum was significantly changed based on data from staff-completed rubrics evaluating the development of community, academic success and wellness on each residence hall floor.

#### 4.B - Summary

Since the 1990s, NDSU has had an effective campuswide assessment process, grounded in clearly stated goals for student learning in Student Affairs and Academic Affairs at the departmental and

university level. Both its long-standing University Assessment Committee and its new Student Affairs Assessment Committee focus on providing meaningful feedback to assist units in improving student learning. The campus also employs national instruments such as the CLA, NSSE and NASPA Consortium surveys to assess academic and co-curricular learning. Units in both Academic and Student Affairs can cite specific examples of how they use assessment to improve student learning. Though some departments have struggled in the past to complete meaningful assessment reports in a timely fashion, recent efforts have addressed the timeliness of assessment reports and provided guidance toward collecting manageable and meaningful data. NDSU is continuing to explore changes to highlight cross-departmental trends in assessment by using Qualtrics to gather information on the quality of assessment across campus and to make assessment more manageable and meaningful by streamlining the reporting burden.

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## 4.C - Core Component 4.C

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

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

### Argument

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#### 4.C.

NDSU collects, analyzes and uses retention, persistence and completion information to make decisions in the best interest of its students and the institution. Faculty and staff have used that information to analyze problems of retention, persistence and completion in recent years and recommended specific actions. NDSU is in the process of implementing recommendations and defining its goals for retention, persistence and completion within the framework established by the state system.

- The Advancement Section of the 2006 Final Report of the Comprehensive Evaluation Team reported, "the HLC team concluded that the six-year cohort graduation rates are low and need to be improved."
- The six-year graduation rate reported in the 2006 Self-Study for the 1998 cohort was 50.4 percent. Since that time, the six-year graduation rate for the 2008 cohort increased to 56.2 percent. Despite these gains, however, the six-year rates remain 9-10 percent lower than NDSU's IPEDS peers.
- This is a matter for ongoing concerted focus and improvement, and several new initiatives are being implemented to address this critical area. The Associate Vice Provost for Enrollment Management is responsible for overseeing retention. She is in the midst of creating a Strategic Enrollment Management plan that will set appropriate, but ambitious, goals for retention and graduation rates. Her work will be supported by NDSU's participation in the Student Success Collaborative (see 3.B.3 and 4.C.3).

#### 4.C.1

NDSU consistently tracks rates of retention, persistence and graduation to inform institutional level

initiatives for improvement at the university, department and program levels. At the institutional level, an effort is underway to establish ambitious but attainable goals to guide strategic efforts.

### **State Framework for Goals**

The SBHE provides a framework for retention, persistence and completion goals. Its [“Framework for Transformational Change: 2015-20”](#) directs institutions to “increase students’ overall attainment rates through increased participation, retention and completion.” It does not set specific targets, but mandates increases in retention and four-year and six-year graduation rates.

### **NDSU Framework for Goals**

NDSU has struggled to identify specific goals for student retention, persistence and completion. In 2011, the [Division of Student Affairs](#) proposed defined goals, but the President did not adopt them. The March 2014 Proposed Plan for Improving Retention from the [Council on Improving Retention](#) recommended developing an “overall goal for undergraduate student retention, including goals for student subpopulations.” In October 2014, the new Provost formed three Strategic Planning Task Forces (see 5.C.3). One set of guiding questions for the [Learning Task Force](#) focused on retention and graduation:

- a. To what can we attribute our low graduation rate and high transfer-out rate for undergraduate students?
- b. Does our course schedule enable students to graduate in four years?
- c. Do we adequately support pedagogy, teaching and innovation on campus?

The completed [Strategic Vision 2015-2020](#) specifically includes a charge to “Establish a Strategic Enrollment Management process” that will set targets for retention and graduation rates aligned with those of comparable institutions. Further, a concerted effort to improve retention and graduation rates is included in the plan and discussed further in 4.C.3. The effort includes designating the Associate Vice Provost for Enrollment Management to monitor retention efforts.

In sum, while NDSU’s goals for student retention, persistence and graduation have been less well coordinated recently at the institutional level than is desirable, with the new Provost's direction, the recent reorganization of enrollment management (see 4.C.3) and the new strategic vision providing direction, there will be more clearly defined goals.

### **4.C.2.**

The six-person OIRA regularly collects and analyzes data and distributes reports on student retention, persistence and completion. These include:

- [Academic Capacity for Undergraduates](#) (ratio of grade points to number of courses)
- [Annual Success \(graduation\) and Progress](#) (retention) Rates by departments and campuswide, with additional analyses by demographics and comparison to IPEDS peers.
- [College Navigator of IPEDS](#)
- [College Portrait](#)

- [Common Data Set](#) (in collaboration with the Office of Admission)
- [Credit Earned/Attempted Ratio](#) for Undergraduates
- [Data compendium](#): campus, college and department descriptive variables (enrollments, completions, time to degree)
- GPA calculation and two other undergraduate academic performance measures
- [Graduate Student Success and Progress](#)
- [IPEDS Feedback](#) Report
- [National Survey on Student Engagement](#) (NSSE) and [NSSE Student Activities and Involvement](#)
- [NSSE Advising Module](#)
- [Student Achievement Measure](#)

In Fall 2014, NDSU hired Harstad Strategic Research Inc. to conduct in-depth phone surveys of over 400 students who left NDSU and did not return, including students who left NDSU in good academic standing and who subsequently enrolled immediately in another four-year institution. This rich dataset revealed that, though students like NDSU and would recommend it to a friend, dissatisfaction with classroom instruction and advising quality are major causes of attrition. (See 4.C.1, 4.C.3, and 5.C.5 for responses to these issues.)

Previously conducted OIRA studies also include:

- Advising study utilizing [student focus groups](#)
- [Current status of advising and advisers at NDSU](#) and student and [faculty feedback](#) about advising at NDSU [with Office of Student Success Programs]
- Periodic Graduate Student Success (graduation) and Progress (retention) rates segmented by master's and doctoral degrees
- Mid-term grading effectiveness
- Grades in repeated coursework
- [Qualitative comparison of previous institutional data](#) results with general education survey on potential learning outcomes (see 5.B.3).

These extensive studies are shared with the campus community and administrators. They have been consulted by, and informed the work of, for example, the Council on Improving Advising, Council on Retention and the Learning Task Force, whose report was a component of NDSU's newly developed Strategic Vision 2015-2020. Members of campus may request these reports or additional ad hoc studies from OIRA to inform continuous improvement discussions and initiatives.

The Division of Student Affairs also collects and analyzes data, maintaining a [database on students who cancel](#) after enrolling or who withdraw to zero credits. Retention was also a priority in each unit's Annual Assessment Reports for [2013](#) and [2014](#) in Student Affairs.

#### 4.C.3

NDSU has used information on student retention, persistence and completion in several major studies and improvement efforts in the areas of advising, retention, completion, student success in "gateway" and mathematics courses and organizational structure and resources.

1. In December 2011, the previous Provost and the previous vice president for student affairs appointed the Council on Improving Advising (CIA) with members representing both Academic and Student Affairs. The CIA was charged to prepare an inventory of existing NDSU student advising activities and propose a holistic framework for undergraduate advising at NDSU.
  - The CIA relied heavily on existing OIRA data and additional specially commissioned research in its August 2013 [Proposed Plan](#) for the Improvement of Advising. Relevant special research in that report included students' academic advising experiences, faculty advising experiences and summaries of transfer student assessments.
  - The CIA recommended creating an "Advising Hub," headed by a senior level administrator, to coordinate campus policies, procedures and training of advisers.
  
2. In December 2012, the previous Provost and the previous vice president for student affairs appointed the Council on Improving Retention (CIR). The CIR was charged to investigate low retention rates among first-year and transfer students, as well as design a support program for students on academic warning or probation.
  - Like the CIA, the CIR made extensive use of OIRA data, including Success (graduation) and Progress (retention) Tables, the ACT Withdrawing/Non-returning Student Survey and retention disaggregated by major subpopulations (transfer, first-generation, multicultural and conditional admissions).
  - In its March 2014 final report, the [CIR](#) made four overall recommendations (e.g. establish an "institutional approach to retention") and nine specific recommendations related to its charge (e.g. implement "systematic early-warning/intervention system," a "structured intervention program" and "mandatory orientation programming for transfer students"). While these recommendations were not implemented immediately following the release of the CIR report, they provided critical information for the recent strategic planning process and resulted in the initiation of several programs and strategies for improving retention (discussed below).
  
3. In December 2014, the current Provost and current vice president for student engagement and inclusion appointed a "15 to Finish" Task Force. Basing it on the national Complete College America campaign, they charged the task force to design "a campaign focused on student completion of 15 credits each semester."
  - The task force analyzed data on first-year students enrolled in Fall 2014, examining the number of credits enrolled and completed, number of remedial credits, students' admission status, race, high school GPA, ACT Composite Score, college of enrollment and date of orientation session attendance.
  - In their February [2015 report](#), they noted the challenges for this campaign, outlined possible internal and external communication efforts and made 12 recommendations for campus action.
  - Consistent communication with advisers and incoming students regarding this initiative commenced for summer orientation in 2015 and assessment is underway to determine the effectiveness of the campaign. In support of this effort, the vice provost for academic affairs was given \$1.3 million to allocate to extra course sections.

4. The [Gateways to Completion](#) (G2C) Initiative is through the John Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education, but the campus foundation was laid by the reports on grade distribution for general education courses that OIRA began providing in 2008.
  - In Fall 2012, the former Provost commissioned the [Ad Hoc Committee to Analyze Grades in GE Courses](#) to “analyze, inform and propose action” on courses with high rates of Drops, Failures, Withdrawals, or Incompletes (DFWI) and significant enrollments. Members examined possible predictive factors (e.g. high school GPA) for students’ grades in several key general education courses and surveyed students in two of those courses. In addition, the OIRA created a dashboard revealing courses with large student populations and high DFWI rates.
  - Based on the above Ad Hoc committee’s work, NDSU applied to and was selected by the Gardner Institute as one of 12 “Founding Institutions” to pilot the G2C, a three-year “structured course transformation process ... [to] allow faculty and staff at NDSU to analyze student and institutional performance in lower division gateway courses.” The goal of analyzing high-risk courses is to create and implement evidence-based course transformation plans to improve student learning, retention and success rates. For NDSU, the heart of the G2C is exploring ways to transform high-enrollment traditional lectures into engaging, learner-centered courses. NDSU’S G2C initiative focuses on courses in biology, chemistry, history and psychology.
  - In June 2014, the first year’s [comprehensive report](#) by NDSU identified 15 institutional-level recommendations for action and 3-8 short-term and 2-4 long-term goals for each course. The Gardner Institute made an additional 4-5 recommendations for each course.
  - In January 2015, OIRA reported on the effectiveness of [G2C predictive analytics](#) in identifying students who would benefit from early intervention in G2C classes. Additionally, OIRA reported on a [decrease in DFW grades](#) in each of the four G2C classes from Fall 2010 to Fall 2014 and a higher level of [perceived student learning gains](#) and student satisfaction among students in all G2C classes in 2014, as compared to 2013.
  
5. Math Emporium
  - To address very high DFWI rates in college algebra and trigonometry, in fall 2015 NDSU inaugurated a Math Emporium, located in the Main Library. It is an active-learning laboratory for pre-calculus math courses where students receive individual “just-in-time” assistance from instructors, graduate TAs and undergraduate TAs as they work through problems. It is designed to ameliorate the DFW rate of students taking the courses. Student skills and confidence levels should improve to make them more successful in subsequent courses such as calculus and this should improve students’ progress toward their degrees.
  
6. Student Success Collaborative
  - One of the commitments made in the NDSU strategic vision is to improve undergraduate retention and graduation rates. To further that goal, NDSU has joined the Education Advisory Board (EAB) Student Success Collaborative (SSC). The SSC “combines technology, consulting, and best practice research to help colleges and universities use data to improve retention and graduation rates. At the center of SSC is a proprietary predictive model that identifies at-risk students as well as an analytics engine that isolates systemic barriers to degree completion.” The SSC team leader is the associate vice provost for enrollment management. An

initial data analysis of student progress towards degree, bottleneck courses and problematic course sequencing will be available in Fall 2015. The technology platform and advising modules for SSC will be enabled in February 2016.

#### 7. Reorganization of Enrollment Management

- As of July 1, 2015, the Office of Admissions, Student Financial Services, the Registrar and Bison Connection (NDSU's one-stop student service desk) report to the Provost rather than the vice president for student engagement and inclusion. This reorganization was intended to more closely align enrollment functions with the curriculum, faculty governance, academic mission and strategic goals of NDSU. NDSU's leadership believes achieving goals for retention and graduation begins with the admissions decision and is integrally linked with course scheduling, availability of financial aid and a closer connection between the faculty and these offices.

#### 8. Creation of the [Advising Resource Center](#)

- In response to concerns about advising by both students and in task force reports, NDSU created the Advising Resource Center in 2011. The center's director has traditionally offered drop-in advising assistance and on-going advising to University Studies students. However, the report of the Committee to Improve Advising (see 4.C.3) noted there has been little collaboration among advisers, organized professional development for advisers or on-campus networking opportunities. To respond to these concerns, the Advising Resource Center director recently moved from reporting to the associate dean of university studies to the vice provost for academic affairs. The director was asked to create a universitywide program for collaboration among and professional development for advisers. Recently, she conducted several training sessions for advisers who would be working with first-year students during orientation.

#### 9. Steps to Success

- This new initiative applies social norming methodology to promote successful college student academic behaviors and attitudes. [NDSU surveyed](#) a robust and representative sample of NDSU undergraduates and found students misperceive (underestimate) the extent to which their peers engage in positive academic behaviors and attitudes. NDSU aims to decrease this misperception via a [campus-wide messaging campaign](#) reinforcing the actual academic norms of NDSU undergraduates in order increase positive academic behaviors and attitudes.

#### 4.C.4

Previous sections document NDSU's extensive collection and analysis of student retention, persistence and completion data.

#### 4.C - Summary

NDSU serves its land-grant mission by enrolling students with a wide range of academic backgrounds. While NDSU has made progress in improving its retention rate, its rate still lags behind peer institutions. NDSU currently does not have carefully “defined goals for student retention, persistence and completion rates,” but it carefully tracks retention rates through extensive research by OIRA and Student Affairs Assessment and has used them to inform efforts in three areas.

1) Three recent major investigations (CIA, CIR, 15 to Finish) have explored how to improve advising, retention and completion.

2) Several recent initiatives (Math Emporium, Gateways to Completion and Student Success Collaborative) focused on improving the rates.

3) The new Strategic Vision demonstrates NDSU’s future commitment to “improve retention and graduation rates for undergraduates” by establishing it as one of the three initiatives under “Learning and Student Success.” This includes the charge to establish clear retention and graduation rates goals and providing additional resources, e.g. the Student Success Collaborative, and charging someone with overseeing retention efforts.

While there are improvements to be made, NDSU meets this core component by showing numerous, sustained, ongoing efforts to examine retention data and to support students’ retention and persistence.

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## 4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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

### Summary

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NDSU is a public, land-grant institution that serves a wide range of students through numerous undergraduate and graduate degree programs and through extensive student support services. NDSU meets this criterion through a variety of mechanisms.

- 1) NDSU has a well-established program review process to systematically evaluate all academic departments and interdisciplinary degree programs. Many departments have used feedback from program review to make appropriate changes.
- 2) NDSU has strong systems in place to evaluate and guarantee academic quality of the credits it awards and accepts in transfer.
- 3) NDSU maintains specialized accreditation for its programs and communicates these accreditations clearly and consistently.
- 4) NDSU regularly evaluates the success of its graduates through a variety of institutional, college and department tools.
- 5) NDSU regularly and effectively assesses both curricular and co-curricular learning. Both academic departments and student affairs units have made improvements based on assessment results.
- 6) NDSU has a developing culture of institutional research that is employed to analyze problems in student success, retention, persistence and graduation and is moving forward with implementation of several key efforts to address concerns about retention and graduation rates.

NDSU recognizes a need to build on these six mechanisms to make them even more effective. The most critical issue is to ensure consistent follow-through for using the results of these evaluations. Although the new Provost plans a more systematic approach, until recently program review results were only employed in campuswide decision-making during times of financial crisis. Another important area of focus is developing specific goals for retention, persistence and graduation. The recommendations for improving advising (2013) and retention (2014) were consulted in creating the Strategic Vision 2015-2020, but how and to what extent they will be implemented is still under discussion. NDSU is aware of these shortcomings and the recently completed Strategic Vision sets forth steps to address them.

### Sources

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*There are no sources.*

## 5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

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

### 5.A - Core Component 5.A

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

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

### Argument

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NDSU has sufficient fiscal and human resources and the technological infrastructure needed to meet its mission. NDSU faces a significant amount of deferred maintenance that is being addressed through the replacement and renovation of its old buildings, along with adding new buildings as funds are available. The State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) and state legislature approve NDSU's budget. The President and his cabinet, and Faculty, Staff and Student Senates all contribute to governance and policy. A variety of representatives of internal constituencies have been involved in universitywide strategic planning since 2011. NDSU is aligning its budget process with its strategic vision, getting more faculty input through a new [Faculty Senate Budget Committee](#) and will be systematically linking program reviews and assessments to the budget. Regular internal and external evaluations at multiple levels provide feedback the campus uses to improve its institutional effectiveness.

### 5.A

In 2014-15, NDSU had an annual budget of \$443,733,558. In FY 2014, actual operating and non-operating revenues are composed of state appropriations (32 percent), tuition income (26 percent), grants and contracts (22 percent), auxiliaries (11 percent) and miscellaneous revenue sources (9 percent). The operating and non-operating expenses for FY 2014 were 66 percent salaries, wages and benefits; 26 percent operating expenses; 5 percent depreciation expense; and 3 percent miscellaneous expenses. The Vice President for [Finance and Administration's Annual Report](#) includes details on the financial position of NDSU, current and historical enrollment, costs and financial aid, budgetary

highlights, financials and information on NDSU's economic impact and continued strategic growth. During the 2013-15 biennium, NDSU received \$6.4 million in equalization funding; in the coming biennium, NDSU will receive \$3.8 million in excess of expenses for the salary policy, utilities, etc. due to increases in credit hour production. These funds were and will be expended to enhance, expand and strengthen academics at NDSU as guided by the strategic plan.

### 5.A.1

#### Fiscal Resources

[NDSU's Annual Financial Report for June 30, 2014](#), summarizes the university's overall financial picture. It confirms NDSU has a fiscally sound financial base and the necessary infrastructure to support its current operations. The following three measurements confirm this conclusion:

- **Higher Learning Commission – Composite Financial Indicator (CFI)** NDSU's composite financial index (CFI) was 4.25 in 2014. Per KPMG's Strategic Financial Analysis for Higher Education, seventh edition, a 4.25 puts NDSU in the broad range of sufficient “direct institutional resources to allow transformation” and “focus resources to compete in future state.” NDSU has the resources to implement its new strategic plan, focusing on strengthening program quality to compete in the future.
- **Moody's Investors Service** On May 27, 2015, NDSU received an Aa3 rating from Moody's on the university's series 2015B housing and auxiliary facilities revenue bonds. This rating was based on NDSU's status as a land-grant university with growing research activity combined with strong state support and favorable enrollment growth.
- **Standard and Poor's** On May 29, 2015, NDSU received an AA- rating from Standard and Poor's on its 2015 B housing and auxiliary facilities revenue bonds. The rating reflects their view of NDSU's strong enterprise and healthy financial profiles (specifically its position as the designated land-grant and flagship institution and leading research university in North Dakota), growing and geographically diverse enrollment base, good operating performance and adequate financial resource ratios for the rating category.

NDSU relies on multiple sources of revenue including the following primary sources: 1) state appropriated funds, 2) revenue generated from students, 3) grants and contracts and 4) separate appropriated funds for related agencies.

1. Effective FY 2014, North Dakota implemented a new funding formula under [N.D.C.C. 15-18.2](#) that provides an equitable and objective method to allocate resources to higher education institutions, based on completed credit hours. Consequently, NDSU will now receive additional funding when more students enroll and succeed. Funding would decrease if NDSU were to have a decline in student hours, but this decrease would be limited to four percent of funds received during the previous fiscal year. NDSU is not anticipating a decrease in student hours. With the implementation of this new funding formula, effective FY 2013-15, NDSU received \$6,431,392

to equalize general fund base funding levels between the research institutions. This equalization payment was allocated directly to Academic Affairs and then distributed according to the base funding priorities of the Provost and deans. For the 2015-17 biennium, NDSU received a base funding increase for a 3 percent salary increase, fully funded fringe benefit package, utilities increase and will have approximately \$3.8 million remaining that will be allocated to Academic Affairs.

2. Revenue from students has increased over time primarily through rate increases of tuition, fees, room and board, and from enrollment increases.

For the 2015-17 biennium, NDSU plans on modest tuition increases of 2.4 percent each year of the biennium. The increase in tuition revenue will be used to cover the costs-to-continue, mainly the compensation package not funded by the legislature. According to the NDUS [Student Affordability Report for 2014-15](#), NDSU tuition and mandatory fees for a resident undergraduate are approximately 8.8 percent less than the regional average. NDSU's room and board rates are approximately 21.2 percent less than the regional average. Thus, the total student cost of attendance remains competitive.

3. NDSU is [North Dakota's first and only top tier research university](#) based on both the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education and the National Science Foundation rankings. NDSU is classified by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education as "Research University/Very High Research Activity." In FY 2013 NDSU reported \$150,173,000 in research expenditures in the National Science Foundation Higher Education Research and Development (HERD) Survey.

4. As part of its land-grant mission, NDSU extends education throughout the state through the NDSU Extension Service. As part of NDSU's research mission, the Agricultural Experiment Station performs research at sites across the state. In addition, the Northern Crops Institute supports the land-grant mission by promoting crops grown with the region. Each receives separate appropriated funding through [N.D.C.C. 4-05.1](#), [4-08](#) and [4-14.2](#).

## Human Resources

NDSU's faculty numbers reflect its significant investment in human infrastructure:

- From 2006-14, IPEDS full-time faculty increased from 754 to 869. In Fall 2014, NDSU had an IPEDS student to faculty ratio of 19:1. From 2008-13, NDSU's ratio remained between 19 and 21, which was higher than the median ratio of 17 to 18 across NDSU's 15 peer institutions (see 3.C.1).

## Physical Infrastructure

The NDSU campus in Fargo includes more than 109 buildings on 261 acres. The campus has expanded into downtown Fargo, adding three buildings. Statewide, NDSU is located on 18,488 acres of North Dakota land, including the Research and Technology Park, the main Agricultural Experiment Station in Fargo and seven research centers throughout the state.

The [campus master plan](#) must accommodate both growth in programs and renovation of older buildings, some dating from NDSU's inception in 1890. In 2014 the NDUS estimated that the campus would need \$244 million for [deferred maintenance](#) in the next six years. However, NDSU has had approximately \$370 million in new or renovated capital projects over the last 10 years. For example, Minard Hall was renovated to provide adequate space for departments in the Colleges of Science and Mathematics and Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. The campus master plan, updated every other year, is integrated into the [North Dakota University System \(NDUS\) master plan](#) for all campuses. The systemwide plan is used for requesting additional appropriated resources for new buildings and deferred maintenance. The NDUS master plan found that [NDSU's heating plant](#) needed a combination of investment in major repairs and replacement. Consequently, NDSU is replacing [one of its four boilers](#) by December 2015.

NDSU has completed significant building projects including adding Klai Hall, Barry Hall and Renaissance Hall and updating Minard Hall and Steven's Hall in order to address concerns about quality of space. Faculty concern about the "amount of lab, research, and studio space" can be found in the [2011-12 COACHE Survey](#). In addition, according to a January 2015 NDUS Facilities Inventory, [NDSU had 1,779,193 assignable square feet \(ASF\)](#) or 138 per full-time equivalent (FTE) student. This is at the low end compared [to an average 213 of ASF per FTE student](#) for approximately 50 major universities. NDSU is continuing to address physical infrastructure issues.

- During the 2013-15 biennium, NDSU received funding for a \$29,367,709 new state-of-the-art STEM instructional building to address classroom and laboratory needs of students. It will provide 23 new teaching labs (both wet and dry), new active-learning classrooms and a much-needed auditorium (see 3.D.4).
- NDSU also received legislative authorization for self-funded projects. Some of the major self-funded projects include the nutrition, dietetics and hospitality lab (\$750,000), residence hall bathroom renovations (\$2.03 million), Memorial Union Food Court redesign (\$975,000) and the Sanford Health Athletic Complex (\$41 million).
- The 2015-17 major capital project request included three projects: 1) Dunbar II for \$45.9 million to replace chemistry's aging Dunbar Hall; 2) Sudro Hall addition for pharmacy, nursing and allied sciences for \$32.7 million; and 3) Engineering addition for \$27.2 million to alleviate their space shortage.
  - The legislature approved Dunbar II if actual state general fund revenue for the period beginning July 1, 2015, and ending Dec. 31, 2016 exceeds the legislative estimates by \$200 million. Despite their importance, projects 2 and 3 were not funded during this biennium. To manage the space issues in Sudro, the nursing program has moved into leased space. Engineering's needs have been partially met by the renovation of Ehly Hall. NDSU is exploring private fundraising for some pieces of the master plan for the College of Engineering.
  - NDSU also received authorization to build an \$11 million aquatic addition to the Wallman Wellness Center, a student-led project approved by them in April 2013.
  - NDSU's Agricultural Experiment Station received funding for a new \$18 million veterinary diagnostic building. To help address the deferred maintenance needs on the campus, NDSU received an additional \$3.5 million in one-time deferred maintenance money.

## **Technological Infrastructure**

NDSU's Division of Information Technology reports to the Provost. Its primary funding is from

allocated appropriated funding and student fee revenue. Student Government approved increases in the NDSU Technology Student Fee from \$82.50/semester in Fall 2011 to \$101.22 in Fall 2013. This enabled critical upgrades to campus wireless infrastructure during 2014. The [NDUS Information Technology Strategic Plan](#) includes NDSU as a component. One of the goals listed in that strategic plan for NDSU was to provide [reliable emergency backup power supplies](#), which was [completed in 2013](#).

Information technology infrastructure related to teaching is discussed in 3.D.4. Other recent information technology improvements are:

- Wireless connectivity: In FY 2014, Network Engineering completed a major overhaul of NDSU's wireless network, upgrading the core infrastructure and replacing wireless access points in classrooms and in high-traffic public areas on campus.
- NDSU is a member of the [Northern Tier Network](#), an ultra high-speed regional network supporting research and education.
- NDSU's [Center for Computationally Assisted Science and Technology](#) provides onsite hardware, software and file systems for researchers and their private and public sector partners.
- Sanford Health nursing merger: To provide students, faculty and staff at NDSU Nursing at Sanford Health in Bismarck, North Dakota, with the same teaching and learning experience as those at the Fargo campus, NDSU invested significant information technology resources at the Bismarck location. NDSU Network Engineering and Technical Support Services installed infrastructure to connect to the state network, a new wireless system and new classroom and videoconferencing technologies.
- Data management resources: Based on input from faculty and the NDSU Research Data Working Group, NDSU Information Technology improved and expanded storage infrastructure and plans to significantly increase quotas on network drives for all employees. Additionally, in FY 2014, NDSU added two new file storage and collaboration options through Microsoft Office 365 and Google Apps for Education.

## 5.A.2

Legislative appropriations designate NDSU as a separate subdivision from other colleges in the NDUS and the system office. Funds appropriated to NDSU are to be used for the mission of NDSU.

This state appropriated revenue is available for all NDSU programming, whether provided on the main campus, online or located at an additional location such as NDSU's Nursing at Sanford Health in Bismarck, North Dakota.

## 5.A.3

[NDSU's Strategic Vision 2015-2020](#) incorporates NDSU's mission and values. The Strategic Vision outlines goals in the areas of research, student success and outreach.

In research, NDSU's goal is to maintain its Carnegie Very High Research University ranking. This will be accomplished by investing in collaborative research and interdisciplinary cluster hiring related

to three Grand Challenges prioritized in the plan – Food Systems and Security; Healthy Populations and Vital Communities; and Sustainable Energy, Environment and Societal Infrastructure. These were chosen because NDSU has existing research strength in these areas, they define state and regional areas of need and they are emerging areas for federal funding. Specifically, rather than building research capacity across the board, NDSU aims to use its resources to build strategic areas of research excellence.

In student success, NDSU's goal is to increase its retention and graduation rates to align with its peers. The strategies outlined in the plan build on NDSU's current organization and structure, supplemented with an investment in data analytics. (See 4.C.1 and 4.C.3.)

In outreach, NDSU's goal is to promote engaged scholarship by building on its successful Extension Service presence in North Dakota (see 1.D.S). Again, the goal leverages current strengths.

NDSU's [Core Values](#) guide internal and external communities of stakeholders in understanding the goals NDSU uses to prioritize its resources. Examples of how the Core Values are woven into the fabric of NDSU's culture are:

- Land-grant: As a land-grant institution, NDSU recognizes and responds to the needs of the global community and the state of North Dakota. NDSU's newly developed [Strategic Vision](#) outlines proposed commitments to human and financial resources to address the three Grand Challenge themes identified as priorities.
  
- People: Through recruitment, programming and resources housed in many departments and offices, NDSU supports a diverse community of faculty, staff and students (see 1.C). [Shared governance](#), transparency of governing bodies, and community engagement (See section 1.D.3) provide opportunities for including diverse perspectives in the governing of NDSU.
  
- Teaching and Learning: The Office of Teaching and Learning (see 3.C.4) provides opportunities for faculty and graduate students to develop their pedagogical skills. New programs to be launched with support from a recent NSF grant include on-going teaching assistant training, faculty learning communities, and support of active learning. (See 3.D.4 for teaching and learning infrastructure.)
  - Faculty are encouraged to pursue [excellence in teaching](#) through several university-, college- and department-level awards (see 3.C.4).
  - The University Assessment Committee, a standing committee of Faculty Senate, and the director of accreditation and assessment are available to assist faculty in developing and implementing assessment. Additionally, the director of Student Affairs assessment provides guidance for assessment of co-curricular activities. (See 4.B.2)
  
- Accountability: Through the NDUS structure, NDSU is directly accountable to the citizens of North Dakota.

Based on information provided in 5.A.1, NDSU has adequate fiscal, technological, physical and human resources to implement the goals of NDSU's Strategic Vision 2015-2020 and fulfill its mission

and core values.

#### **5.A.4**

NDSU's processes for recruiting, hiring, orienting and providing ongoing training for faculty and staff are described in 2.A, 3.C.2, 3.C.3, 3.C.4 and 3.C.6. NDSU requires all employees to complete safety, preventing sexual harassment, Title IX and fraud awareness training courses annually (see 2.A and 3.C.6). Additionally, employees who supervise others or work with specialty equipment or hazardous materials are required to take additional training courses related to their position responsibilities. NDSU automatically tracks trainings to assist employees and supervisors with training compliance.

#### **5.A.5**

##### **Budget Process**

NDSU's budget process is subject to legislative authorization of appropriated funds, SBHE approval and NDUS guidelines. NDSU's budget process includes budgeting for the academic mission and for associated programs of the Forest Service, Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute, Agriculture Extension Services, Experiment Stations and Northern Crops Institute. The process of the biennial budgeting is:

- The SBHE sets operating budget request priorities in April of even numbered years. The operating priorities approved for recurring base funding are included in the submission. The biennial operating base budget generally includes salary and non-salary expenditures, deferred maintenance and extraordinary repairs. The SBHE also ranks and approves priority requests for the system for consideration in the biennial budget proposal submission. Examples of requests for legislative funding include the Governor's Higher Education Funding Model and Campus Security and Emergency Preparedness. The SBHE prioritizes capital project requests in June of even numbered years and includes them in the biennial budget request.
- After priorities are set by the SBHE, NDSU develops its budget proposal and submits it to the state's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in July of even-numbered years. After OMB review, NDSU's budget request, as part of the NDUS package, is then forwarded to the governor for review and executive recommendation to the legislature, usually in December of even numbered years. Beginning in January of odd numbered years, the legislature analyzes, discusses, revises and approves the NDUS budget request. The approved budget request is set for the upcoming biennial period starting July of odd years (e.g. July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2017).
- Once the legislature approves the biennial budget, the SBHE sets annual budget guidelines, including criteria for room and board, salary and operating, tuition and fee rates for the upcoming fiscal/academic year. When determining budget guidelines, the SBHE reviews the operating budget request and tuition and fee proposals by NDSU and the other institutions. The tuition and fee proposals by the institutions also may include student approval (see 5.B.1-2). Once approved by the SBHE, the guidelines are distributed by the NDUS.

At NDSU, the President, with input from the cabinet, may establish additional guidelines, including salary administration guidelines. NDSU's Budget Office prepares a comprehensive annual budget for all funds according to the established and approved guidelines, for room and board, salary and

operating, tuition and fee rates. All units prepare and review annual budgets, which must reflect all revenue and expense activity, based on the best information available at the time of submission to the Budget Office, which reviews and compiles them to ensure accuracy and compliance with guidelines. The Budget Office prepares schedules and projections, assembles necessary documents and performs a comparison of budgets submitted to available funding. NDSU's President approves the final budget submitted to the NDUS Chancellor, who reviews and approves on behalf of the SBHE.

As part of the annual budget planning process, during FY 2015, the Provost had two budget meetings with each dean to review the current fiscal-year budget and to plan for FY 2016. At the second meeting, deans were asked to outline needs for the upcoming fiscal year. Those needs, along with the strategic plan, will guide the allocation of the additional funds available to NDSU during the biennium.

In summer 2015, the Provost issued calls for [research](#) and [learning and student success](#) proposals that align with the Strategic Vision.

- Up to \$1,000,000 is available for research proposals that will build on the research strength of NDSU and will guide faculty hiring during the biennium. Research proposals must be submitted by faculty to deans, who must support the proposals with matching funds for any new faculty hires. Submitted proposals will be vetted by the Research Advisory Council (comprised of faculty members), deans, the Provost and President.
- Up to \$500,000 is available for learning and student success proposals. They must be collaborative approaches to enhance student success. They also require a match and will be ranked by a review committee.

Various levels in the organization (department, college, division or vice president, agency appropriation and university) are responsible for budget review and monitoring on a regular basis, including comparisons of actual revenue and expenditure activity.

Each level of the organization is assigned responsibility for operating within the approved budget. The Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) financial system provides a real-time budget reporting environment for monitoring and tracking the budget expended and remaining. The system provides controls for disallowing expenses to post against budgets once they have been fully expended. Numerous reports are available within the financial system for monitoring budgets. Accounting and Human Resources/Payroll provide training for utilizing the software.

## **5.A - Summary**

NDSU's strong financial position, as demonstrated by improving financial ratios and bond ratings, provides evidence of its ability to fulfill current academic and operational needs while also preparing for future challenges and opportunities. NDSU continues to provide a solid human resource, facility and technology infrastructure to meet the needs of teaching, research and service. Additionally, NDSU has the necessary infrastructure for budgeting and monitoring expenses to ensure the ability to plan and respond to meet the needs of the institution.

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## 5.B - Core Component 5.B

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

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

### Argument

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#### 5.B.

NDSU, like many land-grant institutions, has a highly decentralized administrative structure. However, numerous changes in recent years have resulted in a more formal administrative structure, with improved policies, procedures and processes. This has led to a more open and equitable decision-making process.

#### 5.B.1-2

[Policy 100.6](#) outlines the SBHE (see 2.C) authority in overseeing NDSU's financial and academic policies and practices. The SBHE appoints a Chancellor, who is the chief executive officer of the SBHE and NDUS, and exercises powers as necessary for SBHE and NDUS governance and functions. The Chancellor's duties and responsibilities are defined in [Policy 304.1](#) and other SBHE policies or directives. NDSU's President is the chief executive officer of the institution and a member of the Chancellor's executive staff. The President's duties and responsibilities are described in [Policy 305.1](#) and other SBHE policies or SBHE or Chancellor directives.

SBHE members learn about NDSU through new member orientation and interactions with the President and other members of the cabinet. NDUS personnel interact with NDSU administrators, staff and faculty through regular meetings of NDUS Councils, including the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Administrative Affairs Councils, as outlined in [SBHE Policy 302.4](#).

NDSU's shared governance is facilitated through regular meetings that include administrators, faculty, staff and students.

- [President's Cabinet](#) meets approximately weekly. Members lead NDSU's major campus constituencies.
- The [Senate Coordinating Council](#) coordinates the routing and adoption of policies and policy changes for the NDSU Policy Manual. The voting members include the presidents and two representatives from the Faculty Senate, Staff Senate and Student Government.

- After extensive study, the University Senate, which included all deans and representatives of the Staff and Student Senates, became a faculty-only Senate, effective September 2010. The [Faculty Senate](#) is responsible for the review and approval of policy for curricular matters, research, admissions standards, teaching quality, etc. (see 1.A.2, 3.A.1, 3.B.1 and 4.A.4) It also participates in formulating policy regarding institutional priorities and other matters of interest to faculty. The Faculty Senate has 20 [standing committees](#) that recommend changes in curriculum and policy for the Faculty Senate's approval. The committees also provide direct input on various university planning initiatives such as [budget](#) and [campus space and facilities](#). The Faculty Senate has one member elected for every 15 eligible faculty by academic unit and meets monthly during the academic year. The [Faculty Senate Executive Committee](#) meets two weeks prior to the Faculty Senate. The Provost and President attend most Faculty Senate and Faculty Senate Executive Committee meetings and may address each group. The President and Provost meet regularly with Faculty Senate leadership, and with the Executive Committee for 30 minutes prior to each committee meeting. Faculty Senate minutes demonstrate the breadth of issues considered by this body, including recent discussions of the general education curriculum (see 3.B.1-2) and grievance policies (see [Faculty Senate Minutes for April 13, 2015](#) and [Attachment 6](#)).
- The [Staff Senate](#) represents broadbanded employees and meets monthly. Its membership consists of 60 elected members (approximately 5 percent of the broadbanded staff on campus) from the categories of Professional; Technical; Office; Crafts and Trades; and Service. Each member serves a two-year term, including membership on one or more of the [Staff Senate standing committees](#). It advises the President and university administration on employment conditions and practices such as the tuition waiver for spouses and dependents (see Staff Senate Minutes for [June 12](#), [September 4](#), and [October 2](#), 2013), acts as an active [communication link](#) between staff and administration and provides a means for staff to have a responsible voice in university affairs.
- The [Student Senate](#) represents students and reviews, recommends and participates in the formulation of university policies of interest. It reviews items related to delivery of student services, academic affairs, institutional priorities, etc. In addition to officers, it has [30 senators and meets weekly during the academic year](#). Students provide input to proposed tuition and fee increases. When NDSU requested an 8.8 percent tuition rate increase in 2011-12, the Student Senate passed a resolution in support of the request. The Student Fee Advisory Board within Student Government authorizes any mandatory student fees that are requested. It approved increasing the NDSU Technology Fee in Fall 2012 and 2013, but did not approve an increase in any mandatory fees for the 2015-16 academic year.

### 5.B.3

In addition to the standing bodies noted in 5.B.2, administrators, faculty, staff and students were all significantly involved in three recent major initiatives:

- The [committee revising general education](#) held almost 70 campus meetings, attended by approximately 1,000 faculty, staff and students. It also surveyed 1,370 alumni, employers, faculty, staff and students on potential learning outcomes and more than 300 faculty on the proposed model.
- The [Accreditation Report Writing Team](#) had 61 face-to-face meetings and surveyed 105 individuals with institutional expertise to identify evidence for this Assurance Argument.
- The process for creating NDSU's Strategic Vision 2015-2020 is described in 5.C.3.

In addition, a broad cross-section of the campus is engaged with new buildings:

- NDSU's Facilities Management includes stakeholders when designing a new facility to ensure the building meets their expectations. The Advisory Committee for the design phase of NDSU's new STEM building (see 3.D.4) included faculty, staff, students and Facilities Management employees. The committee also received additional feedback through various small group meetings.

## 5.B. - Summary

NDSU's shared governance among the President; President's Cabinet; and Faculty, Staff and Student Senates provides effective leadership.

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## 5.C - Core Component 5.C

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The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

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

### Argument

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#### 5.C

Since 2011 NDSU engaged in two cycles of strategic planning, most recently in 2014, with implementation of the new strategic vision beginning in 2015. Consideration of NDSU's historical and current strengths and challenges, and the evolving needs of the institutional, state, national and global community shaped the strategic planning process. NDSU's [Strategic Vision 2015-2020](#) is a comprehensive plan informed by many stakeholders, specifying a new set of measurable, attainable goals.

#### 5.C.1

See budget process under 5.A.5

#### 5.C.2

The recent strategic vision (see 5.C.3) illustrates how NDSU links processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting. The strategic vision is grounded in the analysis of campus data, surveys and program reviews. This drew attention to two issues: unsatisfactory student graduation rates and shifts in federal funding for research. The new strategic vision delineates tasks and strategies to respond to those concerns.

- Federal funding is increasingly focused on interdisciplinary research with broad societal impact. As a land-grant, NDSU is committed to research that improves people's lives. Therefore, new monies will be strategically invested to encourage collaborative research to help to solve complex and evolving grand challenges in three interdisciplinary themes that align with NDSU's mission as well as the needs of the state and region. This research is also likely to garner external funding.

- NDSU recently joined EAB's Student Success Collaborative to understand and address barriers to student success on campus (see 4.C.3).

In both cases, a process of review, assessment and planning was carried out to determine the allocation of resources to activities to improve NDSU's ability to carry out its mission.

Increased allocation of resources for assessment and evaluation activities across campus demonstrates institutional commitment to linking assessment and evaluation with planning and budgeting. This includes additional OIRA staff, assessment coordinators in each department in engineering and human development and education, funding for the offices of director of accreditation and assessment and director of Student Affairs assessment.

The Program Review Committee (see 4.A.1) performs periodic reviews of academic programs and makes recommendations to the Provost. The University Assessment Committee (see 4.A.2) reviews assessment of student learning in academic programs, Division of Student Affairs and NDSU Extension Service.

Survey results indicate academic departments [use results from the assessment and program review](#) processes to guide changes to improve student learning. However, these changes depend on departmental culture, not institutionwide systems. For example, when IQAOC (see 4.B.1) [evaluated the present program review process](#), it concluded that although faculty invest a tremendous amount of time and energy, the process was weakened by the lack of big picture analysis and systematic follow through or tracking. IQAOC'S final recommendations should be completed by December 2015. In the meantime, the new Provost has more explicitly addressed recommendations and action plans in the end-of-the-review meetings with departments.

### 5.C.3

In 2014, the NDUS completed a [new strategic plan](#), to guide its decisions for 2015-20. (See 2.C.1)

Because NDSU had not completed a formal strategic plan in recent years, in March 2011, NDSU's President formed a broadly representative Strategic Planning Committee, based on nominations from deans and vice presidents. The committee's goal was to identify programs to be considered for possible future enhancement funding to extend existing programs of excellence or make it possible for programs with the most immediate potential to reach excellence.

The Strategic Planning Committee forwarded three criteria for program excellence based on a program's past record of success and its capacity for improvement:

1. Human capital – excellence of students and faculty.
2. Opportunity – support for academic opportunities, creative activities and research opportunities.
3. Outcomes – evidence of impact of program on state, region, nation and world.

Using the above three criteria, the former Provost, with input from deans and academic vice presidents, produced a set of institutional priorities, the [Academic Roadmap](#). The deans and vice presidents also suggested funding a number of "[Overarching Initiatives](#)." The Academic Roadmap and Overarching Initiatives were used to determine the utilization of the \$6,431,392 (biennial) equalization payment related to the new state funding formula (see 5.A.1). Although this effort guided resource allocation, the Provost stepped down before completing a strategic plan to guide future

decisions.

To continue this effort, the new Provost formed three task forces broadly focused on student success, outreach and service, and research excellence to engage with faculty, staff and students through town hall meetings, one-on-one discussions and online surveys. Final reports were submitted to the Provost, who combined them and circulated them to faculty, staff and students, and gathered subsequent input through a survey, open forum, campus group meetings, and an open meeting with Faculty Senate. The [final document](#) sets goals in learning and student success, outreach and engagement, and research and discovery.

Most units, programs and colleges also conduct regular strategic planning exercises. Many academic departments have external advisory boards to guide planning.

#### 5.C.4

NDSU's budget is based on a conservative estimate of future revenue sources. This includes forecasts of student enrollment, expected appropriations and anticipated grant spending. SBHE policy 810.1 requires the university to maintain a reserve to cover unexpected decreases in revenues. (See 5.A.1 and 5.A.5)

#### 5.C.5

Both the President and Provost have stated publicly that the strategic plan is not written in stone, but must remain flexible to accommodate emerging factors that affect NDSU. The strategic vision does, however, anticipate the future needs of NDSU, students and external constituents.

- For example, a recent workforce report anticipates 30,000 unfilled jobs in the Fargo-Moorhead area. As part of Strategic Vision 2015-2020, NDSU has planned on enrollment growth in both graduate and undergraduate students to meet this increased employment need.
- The strategic vision also anticipates changes in the federal funding landscape, recognizing that future research funding will require teams of interdisciplinary scholars whose work has broader impacts on society. Hence, NDSU will enhance its research visibility and capacity through selective investments in areas of strength that have the potential to garner future funding.
- Additionally, the strategic vision recognizes that student success is a shared enterprise among students, staff and faculty. NDSU will support programs that lead to enhanced retention and improved graduation rates.

NDSU maintains active memberships in organizations such as APLU, ACE and NACUBO that provide opportunities for networking and discussing national trends facing research universities.

#### 5.C - Summary

NDSU engages in systematic planning as evidenced by the prior Strategic Planning Committee during 2011 and NDSU's new Strategic Vision 2015-2020. In addition, NDSU has established processes for assessing programs, learning, and operations to improve its educational offerings and to meet future challenges and opportunities.

## Sources

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- Accreditation Report Writing Team Survey of Dept. Heads - 12.17.14
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- NDUS Strategic Plan 2015-2020 - accessed on 07.28.15
- Overarching Initiatives for Academic Roadmap
- Strategic Vision 2015-2020 - May 2015

## 5.D - Core Component 5.D

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The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

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

### Argument

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#### 5.D.1

As a public institution, NDSU is required to develop and document its performance. As noted earlier, NDSU undergoes regular financial and performance audits; creates public reports for bond rating agencies; and reports and analyzes student performance statistics. It surveyed employees using the Campus Quality Survey in 2004-10 (please see [2004-08 results](#), [2010 analysis](#), and [2010 overall satisfaction](#)) and the Chronicle's Great Places to Work Survey in 2015. NDSU also conducted climate surveys of faculty, staff and students (see 1.C.2) and numerous surveys focused on particular topics or populations (see 1.C.2, 3.C.5, 3.D.3, 4.A.6, 4.B.2, 4.C.2 and 5.B.3). Many of these reports are available on NDSU and NDUS/SBHE websites. For example, NDUS publishes [Student Affordability](#) and [Accountability Measures](#) reports and annual [Financial Reviews](#). An [annual report](#) includes details on the university's accomplishments, enrollment information, costs and financial aid, budgetary highlights, financials and information on NDSU's economic impact and continued strategic growth.

NDSU belongs to the [Voluntary System of Accountability/College Portrait](#) (4.B.2) and employs the [Student Achievement Measure](#) to provide information to the public about student costs and performance.

The [Office of Institutional Research and Analysis](#) (OIRA) produces numerous reports that document performance at the department or college level, including measures such as faculty credit hour production, number of students and graduates by department and college, and aggregate student ratings of instruction. The OIRA site contains links to the NSSE, IPEDS feedback report and the College Learning Assessment (see 4.C.2).

[Enrollment Reports and Student Statistics](#) reports also are available from Registration and Records.

#### 5.D.2

##### Academic Processes

NDSU investigates and adopts technologies and processes to increase the efficiency of its academic work:

- Academic Analytics supplies benchmarking data on faculty productivity to “support strategic decision-making.”

- [Compendium](#) dashboard of university data facilitates program evaluation (see 4.A.1),
- Digital Measures streamlines faculty activity reporting (see 3.C.1),
- [Document Imaging](#) promotes paperless offices,
- IQAOC analyzes academic operations in Faculty Senate committees (see 4.B.1) and
- Leapfrog Technologies coordinates and streamlines catalog and curriculum management.

## **Financial Affairs**

NDSU evaluates its own processes to ensure best business practices are utilized and it implements [recommendations](#) it receives from the annual financial audit, biennial federal audit and various [audits](#) authorized by the State Legislature.

## **Human Resources**

Since 2013, NDSU has implemented or is implementing paperless processes to

- Make benefit changes
- Enter new hires or terminations
- Register for campus training
- Approve leave requests
- Eliminate time slips

## **Information Technology**

In October 2011, two external consultants conducted an environmental scan to provide a [benchmark comparison of NDSU's IT with peer institutions](#). The scan revealed the need to explore new funding sources and models and to strengthen relationships between IT and faculty. After the scan, the vice president for IT initiated a series of listening sessions with academic, administrative and auxiliary departments. The meetings began an ongoing dialogue between IT and other departments aimed at improving communication and building relationships with students, faculty and staff.

## **Research and Creative Activity**

NDSU's high research profile necessitates increased attention to related resources and services. In the last two years, the:

- Business Development unit has been further developed to promote more private partnerships,
- Export Controls Office was established to meet federal guidelines,
- Office of Sponsored Programs Administration began transitioning to electronic research administration (see 3.C.1),
- Research Development unit was created to enhance new faculty development and collaborative grant efforts and
- Center for Computationally Assisted Science and Technology's research capabilities (see 5.A.1) were enhanced by a National Science Foundation award to implement a new generation of

advanced research computing infrastructure.

- NDSU is building a model for partial appropriated funding of four [core laboratory facilities](#) to ensure they can provide research services to the campus community.

## Student Affairs

Student Affairs requires all units to report on operational effectiveness in their annual reports. Recent improvements include:

- Admission held one-on-one interventions with Presidential Scholars who were at risk of losing their scholarships. The number of Presidential Scholarship recipients who received GPAs below 2.0 fell from 13 to 1.
- Counseling Center and Student Health Service initiated electronic appointment reminders to decrease no-show rates.
- Wellness Center analyzed usage data and found lower usage by women. In response, they created women-specific programs, such as “Women on Weights,” to better serve all students.

## Student Success

Improving student success is a major goal of the new strategic vision. Based on institutional studies, NDSU is already pursuing systematic changes to improve student success:

- [Academic Advisement Reports](#) help students and advisers track degree progress,
- Advising Resource Center provides drop-in advising and coordinates adviser training (see 4.C.3),
- [Bison Connection](#) provides one-stop student services (see 1.A.2),
- Enrollment Management Reorganization (see 4.C.3),
- Post-Enrollment Requisite Checking (PERC) verifies that students enrolled in a course prior to finishing a prerequisite for that course successfully complete the prerequisite,
- Student Success Collaborative detects bottlenecks to student success (see 4.C.3) and
- [Transfer Course Equivalency](#) (TES) allows students to see how courses from almost 1,800 domestic institutions transfer to NDSU.

## Teaching and Learning

Engaged learning, reflective/integrative learning, higher order learning and satisfaction with classroom teaching have historically been lower than desired as reported by multiple sources, including the [NSSE](#), the [SSI](#) and [Alumni Survey of 2014](#). Students’ desire for a more interactive, enriching classroom experience is being addressed through several initiatives on campus:

- Constructing the STEM Building with flexible-use classroom space to address the need for additional classroom and teaching lab space (see 3.D.4),
- Establishing the Office of Teaching and Learning to offer professional development opportunities and resources for instructors – from graduate assistants to professors (see 3.C.4),
- Participating in the Gateways to Completion program of the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education to promote more engaged learning in large classes with

high DFWI rates (see 4.C.3), and

- Developing the Math Emporium to address high rates of failures and repeats in foundational courses (see 4.C.3).

## 5.D - Summary

Multiple units collect and analyze performance data and employ those analyses to drive improvements. The new strategic vision provides the mechanism for campus improvements based on more systematic and comprehensive performance data.

## Sources

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- Student Affordability Report 2014 Rev Oct 2014
- Transfer Course Equivalency - accessed 08.26.15

## 5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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

### Summary

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NDSU has sufficient fiscal and human resources and technological infrastructure. It has a sound financial base and diverse revenue streams. However, it has a high amount of deferred maintenance on a number of its buildings. NDSU is replacing and renovating its old buildings, along with adding new buildings as funds are available.

NDSU's budget is subject to legislative and SBHE approval and NDSU is aligning its budget with its new Strategic Vision. It also is getting more faculty input in the budget process through its new Faculty Senate Budget Committee.

The SBHE; NDSU's President and the cabinet; and the Faculty, Staff and Student Senates all contribute to the governance of and setting of policy at NDSU. NDSU administrators, faculty, staff and students also have been involved in major initiatives and in universitywide strategic planning in 2011 and more recently starting in October 2014 and culminating in the new Strategic Vision.

NDSU regularly utilizes numerous analyses and systematic processes to improve the quality of its operations and the education it provides.

- NDSU is subject to a number of audits, with recommendations for improvements, which it implements.
- The Program Review Committee regularly evaluates programs and the University Assessment Committees assesses student learning.
  - Academic departments make changes based on the program reviews and assessments.
  - NDSU is working to more directly link these reviews and assessments to planning and budgeting.
- From academic processes to teaching and learning, NDSU systematically seeks to improve its operational effectiveness by investigating and adopting systematic solutions.

### Sources

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*There are no sources.*