



# Chapter 4

Criterion 4

## Acquisition, Discovery and Application of Knowledge

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### **Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge**

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

Since its beginnings as a normal school, MSUM has existed for the primary purpose of advancing life-long learning in Western Minnesota and throughout the broader region. Preserving our origins as a normal school in MSUM's undergraduate and graduate training of teachers and school administrators, we continue to regard learning as more than the accumulation of information. To be valuable, a life of learning must translate into skills and attitudes that inform work, community, and personal life. Consequently, MSUM's commitment to a life of learning is promoted both on campus and within the broader community. The opportunities provided by all of our constituencies complement life-long learning for our students.

Institutions of higher learning cannot advance these goals without high quality faculty, staff, and administrators. MSUM recruits and then provides development opportunities and continuing training that enable us to support independent and creative learning in our students. We place a high priority on faculty-student interaction that extends beyond the traditional classroom, and we seek opportunities to bring students into the process of acquisition and discovery of knowledge, including faculty research.

Our commitment to life-long learning is reflected in our mission statement. In particular, our mission highlights our adherence to a program of general education shared by all students.

The program is designed to support a life of learning in ways consistent with our mission and, through regular revision, remains current with the changing demands of responsible citizenship in the world today. Our recent revisions of this program (the Dragon Core), reflect a renewed commitment to foundational skills, and we are implementing a corresponding process for measuring the effectiveness of the changes we are introducing.

We are mindful that students must learn from and learn to operate within a diverse, global and technological society. Our academic program assessment has been supplemented with a process for continuously assessing our shared undergraduate learning goals. There is a new emphasis on ethical reflection and responsible life choices. We continue to look for new ways to identify and support the unremitting process of revising the curriculum and support services that inform every dimension of the life of learning.

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

Commitment to a life of learning permeates the university, from mission statements, through planning and budgeting, to the activities of faculty, staff, students, and administrators. A report by the six-member AASCU study team who visited the campus in March 2006 commented on the commitment of faculty, staff, and administrators to student success and to teaching and learning at MSUM. In their words, “The important role of consistent and demonstrated commitment to a student-centered environment was clearly and strongly in evidence at MSUM.”<sup>1</sup> This commitment is evident both in the classroom and in successful faculty efforts to engage students in research and service activities outside of the classroom. We maintain adequate facilities to support the learning mission, and provide professional development opportunities for faculty, staff, and administrators. Our faculty are seriously engaged in research and creative activities, and routinely involve students in these projects. MSUM makes extensive efforts to bring a life of learning to the larger community and the region.

The following sets of evidence illustrate Core Component 4A:

- Evidence Statement 4A-1: A life of learning is central to the mission and budgeting of MSUM.
- Evidence Statement 4A-2: MSUM maintains a high-quality instructional faculty with the education and skills required to cultivate a life of learning. Faculty members are heavily involved in undergraduate education and work extensively with students outside of the classroom to encourage and support a life of learning.
- Evidence Statement 4A-3: Adequate facilities for a life of learning are maintained and supported.
- Evidence Statement 4A-4: MSUM provides professional development opportunities for faculty, and staff, and administrators.
- Evidence Statement 4A-5: Faculty are engaged in research and involve students in research activities.
- Evidence Statement 4A-6: MSUM’s commitment to a life of learning is not confined to campus and campus community. Through a variety of programs as well as the efforts of individual faculty, the university brings a life of learning to the community and the region.

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1 [http://www.mnstate.edu/success/aascu\\_report.pdf](http://www.mnstate.edu/success/aascu_report.pdf)

**Evidence Statement 4A-1:  
A life of learning is central to the mission and budgeting of MSUM.**

A life of learning is reflected in the mission statement of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities,<sup>2</sup> is central to the mission of MSUM,<sup>3</sup> and is incorporated in all college mission statements.<sup>4</sup> A full discussion of mission statements is found in our coverage of Core Component 1A (see Chapter 1/Criterion 1).

A successful life of learning demands respect for intellectual freedom. The Minnesota State system/IFO Agreement commits the university to maintaining full academic freedom of inquiry, teaching, and research for faculty<sup>5</sup>. Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board Policy 3.1 grants similar rights and privileges to students.<sup>6</sup>

University budgeting reflects the emphasis on a life of learning. A large portion of MSUM expenditures, in recent years 73 percent, is devoted to academic affairs, which has primary oversight of teaching and learning activities. Student affairs receives over seven percent, and many of its activities are also dedicated to teaching and learning.

In the most recent round of Strategic Initiatives to address the 2007-2011 Master Work Plan, Academic Affairs requested approximately \$400,000 for initiatives to improve student learning.

**Evidence Statement 4A-2:  
MSUM maintains a high-quality instructional faculty with the education and skills required to cultivate a life of learning. Faculty members are heavily involved in undergraduate education and work extensively with students outside of the classroom to encourage and support a life of learning.**

The 2004-2005 HERI Report shows that when asked about whether their interests were primarily teaching or research, MSUM faculty reported “heavily in teaching” at a higher percentage than the comparison group of faculty at public four-year colleges. MSUM teaching methods are similar to faculty at public four-year colleges, but have changed in the following significant ways since 1999: class discussion has risen from 64 percent to 80 percent; cooperative learning has risen from 37 percent to 52 percent; multiple choice exams have dropped from 39 percent to 33 percent; and student presentations have risen from 25 percent to 46 percent.

A high proportion of MSUM’s 303 instructional faculty are on tenure-track appointments. Ninety percent of full-time faculty (86 percent of all faculty) are tenured or on tenure track appointments. In addition to the instructional faculty, MSUM employs 183 adjunct faculty, who have a much-reduced commitment to the life of the university.<sup>7</sup> A reasonable portion of MSUM faculty possess terminal degrees. Seventy-six percent of instructional faculty have

2 <http://www.mnscu.edu/about/missionvision.html>

3 <http://www.mnstate.edu/president/mission.htm>

4 College of Business and Industry: <http://www.mnstate.edu/cbi/>; College of Education and Human Services: <http://www.mnstate.edu/edhuman/mission.html>; College of Social and Natural Sciences: [http://www.mnstate.edu/csns/csns\\_mission.cfm](http://www.mnstate.edu/csns/csns_mission.cfm); College of Arts and Humanities: <http://www.mnstate.edu/cah/mission.cfm>

5 <http://www.ifo.org/Agree05/contract03-05.htm#ART4>

6 <http://www.mnscu.edu/board/policy/301.html>

7 Minnesota State University Moorhead, “Tenure Status for Current Employees.” Online at [http://www.mnstate.edu/institut/faculty\\_staff/faculty\\_staff\\_rank\\_fy06.pdf](http://www.mnstate.edu/institut/faculty_staff/faculty_staff_rank_fy06.pdf)

## Cross-Cutting Theme: The Connected Organization

### The Regional Science Center

The Minnesota State University Moorhead Regional Science Center provides experiential learning opportunities to more than 24,000 area students and community residents each year at its two locations. By involving faculty, staff, and students in the Center's educational programs, MSUM integrates service with our academic programs.

The Buffalo River site, located 15 miles east of Moorhead on Highway 10, features an observatory, interpretive center and miles of nature trails that wind through 300 acres of tallgrass prairie and hardwood forests along the Buffalo River. Regular offerings of public programs allow residents to observe the night sky, monitor bird populations through Project FeederWatch, or explore the plant and animal life of the Center.

The planetarium, located on the MSUM campus in Bridges Hall, offers a regular series of public programs as well as private group events. Multimedia presentations can depict the night sky from any location on earth or show a number of specially designed educational programs.

Through its numerous programs and events, the Center provides significant service activities to the region.

terminal degrees in their disciplines. For adjunct faculty, 58 percent have at least a master's degree.<sup>8</sup>

Faculty are committed to undergraduate education. Sixty-four percent of 100-level and 200-level course sections are taught by tenured or tenure-track faculty. For 300-level and 400-level course sections, this rises to 73 percent.<sup>9</sup>

Faculty work with students outside of regular courses. In the last complete academic year, 1,548 students were engaged in faculty-supervised independent study, senior thesis research, or clinical/internship experiences.<sup>10</sup> Many faculty supervise independent study courses for students. Independent study sections do not count toward faculty workload and faculty receive no payment for them.

Many departments report significant levels of faculty-supervised student research. In the last complete academic year, faculty chaired 131 graduate student committees and supervised an additional 69 graduate students engaged in research<sup>11</sup>. Further, 212 undergraduates were formally engaged in faculty-supervised research, resulting in 24 students co-authoring journal articles or book chapters, and 162 students co-presenting at state, regional, or national professional meetings.<sup>12</sup>

8 Minnesota State University Moorhead, "Highest Education Level for Current Employees." Online at [http://www.mnstate.edu/institut/faculty\\_staff/faculty\\_staff\\_highest\\_edu\\_level\\_fy06.pdf](http://www.mnstate.edu/institut/faculty_staff/faculty_staff_highest_edu_level_fy06.pdf).

9 [http://www.mnstate.edu/ncavisit/4a\\_sections0405.pdf](http://www.mnstate.edu/ncavisit/4a_sections0405.pdf)

10 Delaware Study 04-05.xls, questions 9,10, and 13.

11 Delaware Study 04-05.xls, questions 7 and 12.

12 Delaware Study 04-05.xls, questions 11, 14, and 15.

**Evidence Statement 4A-3:  
Adequate facilities for a life of learning are maintained and supported.**

Maintaining and supporting a life of learning require adequate facilities. In a time of increased costs and budget shortages, ensuring that the needed facilities are and will continue to be available requires careful and deliberate planning. The development of the university planning process is addressed at length in Chapter 2/Criterion 2. That process has resulted in new construction, significant maintenance and remodeling, and new acquisitions that have enhanced university facilities. In addition, library resources and services are adequate and continue to improve, the university maintains adequate technology, and the Regional Science Center offers unusual facilities that support a life of learning.

The MSUM facilities planning process has resulted in requests to the state legislature from the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board of Trustees for funding for campus projects.<sup>13</sup> The university has received funding for several major projects: the construction of a new science lab building (open in fall 2004), the remodeling of Hagen Hall (to be completed fall 2006), and several major projects addressing deferred maintenance across campus.<sup>14</sup> For more details, see Chapter 2/Criterion 2B-9.

The Regional Science Center, with an on-campus planetarium and 300 acres of prairie, woods, and river communities on the Buffalo River, offers programming in PK-12 science and environmental education (serving over 9,000 PK-12 students per year); PK-12 teacher education; college pre-service environmental teacher education; college field and research opportunities in observational astronomy, field biology and geology; and astronomy and natural history programs for the general public.<sup>15</sup>

MSUM maintains adequate library facilities and services. In addition to the holdings of the Livingston Lord Library on campus, MSUM faculty and students have borrowing privileges at the libraries of North Dakota State University and Concordia College through Tri-College arrangements. New acquisitions are driven by faculty requests. Academic departments are regularly sent lists and reviews of new materials, and asked to order those that are needed. The Tri-College libraries coordinate new acquisitions to avoid unnecessary duplication and maximize the benefit from available resources. Through the MnPALS catalog system and inter-library loan (in addition to the public libraries), faculty and students are able to access the collections of colleges, universities, and state agencies across the state, including those of the University of Minnesota. Access to serials collections has been significantly expanded through library subscriptions to a variety of online databases that provide full-text access to journals and newspapers.<sup>16</sup>

The university provides adequate instructional technology to support a life of learning. MSUM maintains 36 computer labs for general student use, offering a variety of equipment and software.<sup>17</sup> Several of these labs are open 24 hours-per-day. Another 18 computer labs have specialized functions (e.g., Speech/Language/Hearing Science lab, the Write Site). The

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13 Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, "2004 Capital Budget Request." Online at <http://www.facilities.mnscu.edu/capital04/2004bondingbook.pdf>; "FY 2006-2011 Capital Budget Request." Online at <http://www.facilities.mnscu.edu/capital/2006/2006BD%20approved%20list.pdf>; "FY 2006-2011 Capital Budget Request." Online at <http://www.facilities.mnscu.edu/capital/2006/2006BD%20approved%20list.pdf>

14 Binder of facilities activities and progress reports.

15 <http://www.mnstate.edu/regsci/>

16 <http://www.mnstate.edu/library/>

17 <http://www.mnstate.edu/it/labs/mapschedule.htm>

university's Technology Master Plan<sup>18</sup> has led to the equipping of a significant number of classrooms with improved technology, as well as replacing faculty desktop computers with laptops that can be carried into the classroom. The university also provides the support necessary to enable faculty and students to make use of the technology available. Instructional Technology Services offers a variety of training programs, technical assistance, and support to faculty, staff, and students.<sup>19</sup>

Some older facilities remain inadequate for the tasks they perform. A particular area of concern is the Center for the Arts. For example, 400 art and design majors use facilities designed for 170 students. Some music ensembles are forced to practice in a public hallway. The theatre program so lacks storage facilities that many props are discarded even if they would be useful in later productions. The two theatres have inadequate electrical systems and sound systems. Plumbing failures are occurring with increasing regularity. The condition of the Center for the Arts is likely to become a major impediment to the continuing vitality of the programs that occupy it. These problems are addressed in the Facilities Master Plan.

***Evidence Statement 4A-4:  
MSUM provides professional development opportunities for faculty, and staff, and administrators.***

Ongoing professional development is explicitly required of faculty in the Minnesota State system/IFO Agreement. The contract spells out a personnel evaluation process in which both tenured and untenured faculty submit regular professional development plans to their academic departments and supervising administrators.<sup>20</sup> Faculty are required to engage in scholarly or creative achievement or research, as well as continuing preparation and study. The contract ensures that improvement funds are available to all faculty for these purposes. Currently, each department annually receives \$1,115 per faculty FTE.<sup>21</sup> Among other uses, these funds can be applied to costs for participation in professional conferences, purchase of professional books, subscriptions to professional journals, and fees associated with the publishing of professional writings.

A variety of resources are available to faculty for their development:

- Each of the four colleges has a competitive grant program for distribution of other professional improvement funds provided by the contract.<sup>22</sup>
- To support continuing education, the Minnesota State system/IFO Agreement provides faculty with tuition waivers for courses at the Minnesota State system universities. Faculty can take advantage of waived tuition and fees for 30 credits each year, or can seek tuition waivers for those credits for family members.<sup>23</sup> After three years of employment, staff members covered by the AFSCME Council Agreement receive 16 credits of free tuition each year. Spouses and children of eligible staff can share these credits.<sup>24</sup> Similar benefits are provided by the other bargaining agreements.

18 [http://www.mnstate.edu/plans/technology/final\\_report.pdf](http://www.mnstate.edu/plans/technology/final_report.pdf)

19 <http://www.mnstate.edu/instrtech/>

20 <http://www.ifo.org/Agree05/contract03-05.htm#ART22>

21 <http://www.ifo.org/Agree05/contract03-05.htm#ART19>

22 <http://www.ifo.org/Agree05/contract03-05.htm#ART19>

23 <http://www.ifo.org/Agree05/contract03-05.htm#ART27>

24 <http://www.afscmemn.org/resources/locals/contracts/state/StateContract2005-7.pdf> (Appendix R)

- MSUM has an active faculty development program.<sup>25</sup>
- MSUM has an active program of instruction technology training for employees.<sup>26</sup>

The Minnesota State system/IFO Agreement provides faculty with regular sabbatical leaves.<sup>27</sup> Their primary purposes include enhancing professional development and meeting research priorities of the university. Faculty can apply for a sabbatical leave after completing seven years of service, or seven years of service since the last sabbatical leave. Upon faculty request, a sabbatical leave must be granted to faculty after 10 years of service or 10 years since the last sabbatical. Faculty who take a full-year sabbatical receive a reduction in salary during the leave. Based on the budget currently provided for faculty sabbatical leaves, MSUM generally limits sabbatical leaves to faculty who reach the 10 years of service. Furthermore, due to the reduced salaries for full-year leaves, in the current year there is only one faculty member taking a full-year sabbatical. MSUM is the only university in the system to provide any funds to provide replacement faculty for those on leave, and we currently budget \$300,000 annually for this purpose. While this funding minimizes disruptions to student learning, the norm of one semester each decade is inadequate for robust professional development for teacher-scholars.

Administrators and staff members also have development opportunities available, including:

- Sabbatical leaves of three to six months for approved projects are also available to Administrators and Administrative and Service Faculty.
- The President's Office oversees a professional development fund for administrators with an annual budget of \$5,000.
- Administrative Affairs provides an annual budget of \$20,000 and Academic Affairs provides an annual budget of \$10,000 for professional development of staff. Human Resources provides approximately \$7,000 annually for staff development.

**Evidence Statement 4A-5:  
Faculty are engaged in research and involve students in research activities.**

MSUM has a vibrant faculty that is active in research within the immediate intellectual community and throughout the entire United States. There are nearly 300 full-time faculty. Every faculty member is required by the the Minnesota State system/IFO Agreement<sup>28</sup> to be active in research or creative activity. Probationary and fixed-term faculty annually report their research and creative activity. Tenured faculty do so every two years. In the most recent complete academic year, faculty authored 134 refereed journal articles or book chapters, 86 non-refereed articles, and 24 books. Faculty submitted 142 articles to publishers, edited 40 books or collections, and reviewed 139 books, articles, and manuscripts. Faculty participated in 114 juried shows or exhibitions, and in 125 non-juried shows, report 307 works in progress, and made 281 presentations to state, regional and national professional meetings.<sup>29</sup>

In addition to faculty working on their own research, MSUM provides opportunities for students to become involved with research under the direct supervision of the professor. These opportunities are essential to all students who wish to pursue professional positions in academia or even positions within the Minnesota State system. One approach we use to

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.mnstate.edu/faculty/index.htm>

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.mnstate.edu/instrtech/CalendarOfEvents/calendar.htm>

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.ifo.org/Agree05/contract03-05.htm#ART19>

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.ifo.org/Agree05/contract03-05.htm>

<sup>29</sup> Delaware Study 04-05.xls, questions 18-30.



accomplish this fundamental opportunity is through the application of scholarships such as the annual Upper Class/Transfer Honors Apprentice Scholarship<sup>30</sup> that grants \$3,500 in scholarship to the apprentice and allows him/her to work closely with a faculty member for approximately five hours per week. The College of Social and Natural Sciences has instituted a student research grant program to support student research. Students submit formal proposals that are reviewed by the college's student advisory board. Ten proposals totaling \$6,000 were funded during the 2005-2006 academic year to cover supplies and equipment necessary for student research and travel to present this research at professional conferences. These students also present their results at MSUM's Student Academic Conference. In many other departments, students also register for undergraduate research courses.

Another important aspect of the MSUM faculty is that they "model" a life of learning. Many faculty routinely carry their research projects into the classroom, as part of course content, as examples of research or research methods, etc., bringing an excitement and enthusiasm to students that texts and traditional lectures do not convey. Faculty members also serve as "models" for a life of learning by acting as advisors to students participating in the MSUM Student Academic Conference.<sup>31</sup> The Deans' Lecture Series<sup>32</sup> and the Roland and Beth Dille Distinguished Faculty Lecturer Award<sup>33</sup> highlight and recognize the accomplishments of faculty. Beginning with the 2002 academic year, Livingston Lord Library initiated a program to honor faculty members who received tenure and/or promotion at Minnesota State University Moorhead. This program invites the newly tenured and/or promoted faculty member to choose a book for the MSUM library collection; most faculty select a book that helped shape their thinking about a particular topic.<sup>34</sup>

The Student Academic Conference has become a showcase event displaying student accomplishment at MSUM. It has allowed hundreds of students to present scientific findings, papers, and other knowledge that they have gained over the year. For the past five years, 2001-2005, there have been, on average, 153 presentations by an average of 261 presenters each year from disciplines across the campus. Each presenter has a designated faculty member that serves to advise the student on the development and presentation of their work. This faculty involvement shows the willingness and dedication of MSUM's faculty in regard to helping students outside of the classroom.

**Evidence Statement 4A-6:**

***MSUM's commitment to a life of learning is not confined to campus and campus community. Through a variety of programs as well as the efforts of individual faculty, the university brings a life of learning to the community and the region.***

MSUM maintains significant programs designed to make higher education more accessible for students who might otherwise be denied the opportunity. As was discussed in Chapter 3/ Criterion 3, our Corrick Center for General Education<sup>35</sup> provides a path to admission to Minnesota State University Moorhead for students who show promise but fail to meet the usual admission criteria. The Gateway Program, offered by Minnesota State Community and Technical College-Moorhead, provides instruction to those who do not meet MSUM

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30 <http://www.mnstate.edu/finaid/honorsapprentice.cfm>

31 <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadconf/>

32 [http://www.mnstate.edu/csns/news\\_events/deans\\_lecture\\_series.cfm](http://www.mnstate.edu/csns/news_events/deans_lecture_series.cfm)

33 <http://www.mnstate.edu/president/DilleFund/DilleLecturerProgram.htm>

34 <http://www.mnstate.edu/cmhc/HonoringFaculty.htm>

35 <http://www.mnstate.edu/center/>

admission standards. Upon successful completion of the program, students may enroll as regularly admitted students at MSUM.<sup>36</sup>

The Regional Science Center, with a 300-acre prairie site on the Buffalo River and a planetarium on campus, provides programming in PK-12 science and environmental education; teacher education; and astronomy and natural history programs for the general public. About 9,000 students are served each year. The Regional Science Center works closely with local school districts, the Tri-College University, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and area businesses, as well as state and national science and environmental organizations.<sup>37</sup>

The College of Education and Human Services maintains a variety of cooperative programs with the White Earth Reservation designed to improve educational opportunities and success.<sup>38</sup> These are detailed further in Chapter 5/Criterion 5.

A variety of programs make the experience and expertise of the faculty available to the community.

- The Small Business Development Center offers workshops and one-on-one consulting to small businesses and individuals starting a small business. Services include support for financing, accounting, market research, and strategic marketing.<sup>39</sup>
- The Public Affairs Institute offers the research and consulting experience of the department of political science to regional governments and nonprofit organizations. Services offered include survey research, policy analyses, consulting on strategic planning. The most visible of the Institute's activities are a long series of election surveys for local media that contribute to public understanding of local democratic processes. Other clients have included Becker County, Minnesota, the Clay County Sheriff's Department, the Moorhead Police Department, the Moorhead Public Housing Agency, the Fargo Public Library, and the Sustainable Farming Association of Minnesota.
- The Continuing Studies office offers a variety of programs to the region. The Customized Education and Training program<sup>40</sup> tailors programs to the learning needs of individuals and organizations. Recent offerings include programs in ebusiness and technology, organization leadership and development, and essentials of nonprofit management. Continuing Studies also offers courses for PK-12 teachers,<sup>41</sup> distance education courses for students unable to come to campus,<sup>42</sup> and the popular summer College for Kids program, providing educational opportunities to children ages 8-14.<sup>43</sup>
- In addition to College for Kids, MSUM offers a number of outreach programs designed to support K-12 learning. The Center for Economic Education in the

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36 <http://www.mnstate.edu/facguide/AcadInfo.htm#Gateway>

37 <http://www.mnstate.edu/regsci/index.html>

38 <http://www.mnstate.edu/edhuman/teachered/collaboration.html>

39 <http://www.mnstate.edu/cbi/oldsite/SBDC.htm>

40 <http://www.mnstate.edu/continue/customized/>

41 [http://appserv.mnstate.edu/continue/K\\_12\\_Teachers/Default.htm](http://appserv.mnstate.edu/continue/K_12_Teachers/Default.htm)

42 [http://appserv.mnstate.edu/continue/Distance\\_Learning/default.asp](http://appserv.mnstate.edu/continue/Distance_Learning/default.asp)

43 <http://www.mnstate.edu/collegeforkids/default.htm>

## Cross-Cutting Theme: The Learning-Focused Institution

### The Student Academic Conference

What would happen to Sabin, Minn., if it were hit by a nuclear warhead? Curious about the physics of using your head in a soccer game? How can you tell if a corn chip is made from genetically modified seed? Who is the real Scorpion King? And why do life saving drugs cost so much?

Those are some questions MSUM students addressed last year at the eighth annual Student Academic Conference. The annual event features the creative and scholarly work of MSUM students. In 2006, more than 300 students presented research on 250 topics. Many more students attended the conference and numerous faculty and staff are involved—as mentors, facilitators, and organizers. The conference features an alumni keynote address and a student panel at a luncheon, followed by afternoon presentations.

The success of the conference—nearing its 10th year—is due in part to the dedicated work of members of the campus community. The conference has also been supported with contributions from the university’s budget. During FY2006, the conference was identified as a Work Plan Initiative and funded \$10,000 towards its base budget, raising that budget to \$13,000.

MSUM values and supports the creative and scholarly work of its students. The annual Student Academic Conference demonstrates MSUM’s commitment to student learning through scholarship.

Economics Department offers resources for K-12 teachers<sup>44</sup> and conducts the Great Plains Economics Challenge for Minnesota students and the North Dakota State Economics Challenge for North Dakota schools.<sup>45</sup> The College of Social and Natural Sciences conducts the Western Regional Science Fair for students in grades 6-12<sup>46</sup>, the Western Region Science Olympiad Competition,<sup>47</sup> Science and Mathematics Day for high school students,<sup>48</sup> and the World of Change workshops for teachers of science and mathematics.<sup>49</sup>

- MSUM courses are available without cost to senior citizens of Minnesota, and may be taken for credit for a nominal fee of \$20 per credit.<sup>50</sup>
- MSUM offers a robust selection of free public lectures, concerts, exhibits, and other cultural activities. Notable ongoing lecture series include the Tom McGrath Visiting

44 <http://www.mnstate.edu/economic/CEE/resources.cfm>

45 <http://www.mnstate.edu/economic/CEE/2006Challenge.cfm>

46 <http://www.mnstate.edu/scifair/>

47 [http://www.mnstate.edu/csnsoutreach/science\\_olympiad.cfm](http://www.mnstate.edu/csnsoutreach/science_olympiad.cfm)

48 <http://www.mnstate.edu/csnsoutreach/WOC2006.cfm?MonthChange=None&eventid=202&LastDate=05/03/2006>

49 <http://www.mnstate.edu/csnsoutreach/>

50 <http://www.mnstate.edu/facguide/StudtAttenCond.htm#SrCit>

Writers Series,<sup>51</sup> the Glasrud Lecture Series,<sup>52</sup> and an average of one faculty or student music recital each week. The MSUM art gallery occupies a prominent space in the Roland Dille Center for the Arts. It showcases the work of students, faculty, and visiting shows, and is responsible for many public events with visiting artists.<sup>53</sup> MSUM also offers a wide array of performing arts events at low cost. The MSUM Theatre Arts Program offers four main stage productions, numerous student productions, the annual Signature Series that focuses on the work of a single playwright, and an extensive summer series. Annually, approximately 15,000 area school-aged children see the Children's Theatre production. The film studies program presents an annual Summer Cinema Series, a fall Genre Series, and a spring International Series. Finally, the Performing Arts Series is now in its fifth decade of bringing national and international events to MSUM.

At a time of declining numbers of high school graduates, master's-level professional education promises a new group of capable students and significant professional opportunities for faculty. MSUM is working to identify cohort groups at multiple locations in Minnesota who will benefit from our Curriculum and Instruction graduate program. MSUM is actively seeking state approval for an applied doctoral program in nursing. The Academic Affairs Master Plan and Work Plan has directed additional support to selected graduate programs, particularly programs in the College of Education and Human Services. The director of graduate studies was funded for training at a recruiting and fundraising workshop in the summer of 2006, and \$10,000 of additional staff support this year to help with graduate programs. At the same time, MSUM has been less aggressive than it might have been to capitalize on this potential area of growth. MSUM puts minimal resources toward promoting graduate programs. There is no graduate admissions officer or recruitment staff. Some years ago, the position of dean of Graduate Studies was eliminated in favor of a part time director of graduate studies. As a result, the director is no longer a full member of the Academic Affairs Council. Last year the director was assigned to report to the dean of Education and Human Services rather than the vice president for academic affairs. This change is interpreted by some graduate faculty as a downgrading of our efforts in graduate education.

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

The general education program at Minnesota State University Moorhead not only provides a broad base of knowledge for students, but is also concerned with the integration and synthesis of knowledge and ideas. Students are exposed to diverse disciplines, including perspectives, contributions, limitations, and interrelationships of these disciplines. Both the Liberal Studies program and its replacement, the Dragon Core program, provide a basis for life-long learning, including an appreciation of the complexity and interrelatedness of the natural and social worlds, a sense of aesthetic standards, a respect for the rights and values of others, and skills needed to adapt to and contribute to a changing world. The general education program at MSUM is broadly supported in mission, vision, and planning documents and by services that support intellectual inquiry. It is regularly reviewed and revised to remain responsive to the needs of its constituencies. Graduate programs maintain

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51 <http://www.mnstate.edu/english/mcgrath.htm>

52 <http://www.mnstate.edu/finearts/visitingwriters.htm>

53 <http://www.mnstate.edu/art/gallery.html>

a focus on life-long learning in addition to a knowledge base on which to build a depth of expertise.

The following sets of evidence illustrate Core Component 4B:

- Evidence Statement 4B-1: Our mission recognizes the importance of general education.
- Evidence Statement 4B-2: MSUM regularly examines and revises its general education program to ensure that it provides the breadth of knowledge and skills necessary for life-long learning.
- Evidence Statement 4B-3: Graduate programs provide a knowledge base for depth of expertise and for life-long learning.
- Evidence Statement 4B-4: MSUM provides services that support intellectual inquiry and the success of its Liberal Studies and Dragon Core curricula.

***Evidence Statement 4B-1:  
Our mission recognizes the importance of general education.***

The mission, vision, and planning documents at all levels of the organization, from the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system to individual colleges, recognize and emphasize the importance of general education to all students.

**Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System**

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system is committed to providing students systemwide with a high quality general education. The system's mission states that the system offers learning and opportunities for a technologically sophisticated world that result in contributing and empowered citizens; active participants in a democratic society; educated, skilled, and adaptable workers; innovative life-long learners; practical research and development; and strong communities.

The final draft of the 2006-2010 System Strategic Plan includes Goal 2.2 that states that system schools will produce graduates who have strong, adaptable and flexible skills, which include reading, writing, mathematics and speaking, the ability to learn and think critically, and technical and professional expertise that is globally competitive.

**Minnesota State University Moorhead**

Minnesota State University Moorhead's commitment to general education is clearly stated in its mission and aims statements as well as in its Academic Affairs Master Plan.

- In the condensed version of the mission statement, the university asserts that "we develop knowledge, talent, and skills for a lifetime of learning, service, and citizenship," all outcomes of a general education program.
- The extended version of the mission statement states, "the academic programs at the university are founded upon a common Liberal Studies experience."
- Two of the university's aims statements, which support the mission directly, refer to general education. Aim 2 states that a goal is "to provide instruction at all levels that stimulates and promotes commitment to life-long learning and to open inquiry, that promotes development of higher order thinking skills and of multicultural, global and international perspectives. Further, to provide instruction that encourages and empowers students to contribute as educated, compassionate, and responsible citizens within their communities, states, nations and the world." The strongest

commitment appears in Aim 3, “to provide a strong Liberal Studies foundation for all undergraduate programs.”

The MSUM Academic Affairs Master Work Plan for 2005-2010 provides further evidence of our commitment to general education.

- Priority 1 (Increase Access and Opportunity), Goal 2 states, “Academic Affairs will address student writing proficiency in the Liberal Studies program and in all major programs of study.”
- Goal 1 of Priority 3 (Expand High Quality Learning Programs and Services) asserts, “Academic Affairs will prepare both undergraduate and graduate students for fulfilling and productive careers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.”
- Two curriculum objectives under Goal 1 refer directly to general education. Curriculum objective 1 says, “Academic Affairs will provide a strong Liberal Studies foundation for all undergraduate programs.” In curriculum objective 2, Academic Affairs states its commitment to develop a new Liberal Studies program that is consistent with the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum.
- These goals have been translated into action in the 2007 Academic Affairs Work Plan Initiative, where the highest priority requests provide over \$148,000 to support implementation and assessment of the new Dragon Core.

### **Colleges**

Each college in the university has a mission statement that reflects how the college contributes to or builds upon the students’ general education experience.

- The College of Arts and Humanities focuses on core aspects of general education. They “value teaching and learning from creative, critical, historical and multicultural perspectives” and “pursue knowledge through reflective and active engagement with ideas.”
- The College of Business and Industry mission refers to building on a strong foundation of Liberal Studies.
- The College of Education and Human Services is committed to excellence in learning and teaching by building “upon a strong Liberal Studies foundation.” Another goal is to inspire students to pursue life-long learning in order to develop and thrive as individuals.
- The College of Social and Natural Sciences has a goal to provide a strong Liberal Studies foundation for all undergraduate programs, with sub goals of supporting continued improvement of Liberal Studies to relate life experiences to scientific inquiry and to seek support for adequate allocations to improve the Liberal Studies experiences.

### **Other Mission Statements**

The Corrick Center for General Education, which provides a supportive learning community for a selected number of first- and second-year students, prepares students for success in their chosen field of study by offering a college-level curriculum emphasizing writing, critical reading, and mathematical skills.

The mission of the Livingston Lord Library indicates its commitment to general education. Part of the library’s mission is to encourage active, lifelong learning.

**Evidence Statement 4B-2:**

***MSUM regularly examines and revises its general education program to ensure that it provides the breadth of knowledge and skills necessary for life-long learning.***

**Revision of Liberal Studies**

A presidential charge dated Feb. 4, 2005, established the MSUM Liberal Studies Task Force (LSTF) to create a new liberal studies requirement by building on the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum, to define upper level graduation requirements, to develop implementation policies, and to advise on the expertise needed to develop effective assessment strategies. This charge provided explicit and detailed instructions to the LSTF to recommend revisions of the liberal studies requirement, structure, and course offerings and to draft broad, measurable student competencies in each of the categories created. The far-ranging impact of this task and the importance of making recommendations true to our mission, not steering away from controversy, and doing the best for our students were emphasized.<sup>54</sup>

The LSTF was co-chaired by the vice president for academic affairs and the vice president of the faculty association (a senior faculty member from the technology department). Task force members were drawn from Colleges of Arts and Humanities, Business and Industry, Education and Human Services, and Social and Natural Sciences, also from Instructional Resources, the Corrick Center, Academic Affairs Council, MSUAASF support staff, and the community.<sup>55</sup>

The overriding goal of the LSTF, as tied to MSUM's mission, was to develop our students' knowledge, talent, and skills for a lifetime of learning, service, and citizenship.<sup>56</sup> In keeping with this goal, objectives were to:

- Recommend curricular changes true to the mission;
- Define a focused set of broad, measurable competencies; and
- Enable students to demonstrate mastery in each of the areas prescribed.

An ambitious timeline was outlined for the revision process and campus personnel have worked hard to follow this timeline. During spring 2005, members were appointed to the task force and work began. The campus community was involved in a dialogue about the framework of the program and by the end of the semester approval was gained for an overall design. During the 2005-2006 academic year, the campus dialogue and redesign process continued, expanding the focus to include assessment strategies and program policies and procedures.

Partial implementation of the Dragon Core, MSUM's signature curriculum for life-long learning, occurred in fall 2006 for incoming freshman. Full implementation is planned for fall 2007. The liberal studies program established in 1992 will be phased out by fall of 2009.<sup>57</sup>

The general education revision has emphasized consulting widely to create a program that is broadly supported. Involvement of the campus community has been manifold.

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<sup>54</sup> See <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/lstf/>

<sup>55</sup> <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/lstf/committeebios.htm>

<sup>56</sup> <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/lstf/objectives.htm>

<sup>57</sup> <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/lstf/timeline.htm>

## Cross-Cutting Theme: The Future-Oriented Organization

### The Dragon Core Prepares Students for the Future

Today's world demands professionals who communicate clearly and competently, think critically, solve problems effectively, flourish in a team environment, and thrive in a diverse world. The Dragon Core is a signature curriculum for life-long learning that meets these demands by building fundamental skills and knowledge necessary for success.

The Dragon Core is designed to help students gain the most from their college experience. The curriculum structures the first-year around core skills that students will use in future courses. The curriculum provides ample opportunities in subsequent semesters for students to select courses that complement their interests, provide a general overview of the academic disciplines, and extend their foundation skills.

MSUM worked with area business and community leaders to develop our general education curriculum. They believe the Dragon Core will prepare our students for a competitive and rapidly changing workplace by developing life-long learning skills. The curriculum is also designed to encourage students to take a broad view toward the world. The Dragon Core provides a broad array of interdisciplinary knowledge as well as an introduction to global perspectives, ethical and civic responsibility, human diversity, and the environment. A focus on human diversity is integrated throughout the curriculum, fostering open-minded thinking so students appreciate the world's diversity.

The Dragon Core is a striking example of MSUM's focus on our students' futures. This new signature curriculum will not only prepare them for college and career success, but it will also provide them the skills to be tomorrow's leaders.

- As outlined above, this process was launched during the third annual Faculty Professional Development Day on Oct. 14, 2004 “Liberal Studies at MSUM. Where are we now? Where are we going?”
- A number of campus wide dialogues were held on the proposed revision including open forums on April 1, 2005, and May 5, 2005, as the structure of the program was developed during spring 2005 and a second Faculty Professional Development Day event on Oct. 14, 2005. Presentations at these events and extensive question and answer time have encouraged this involvement. Feedback forms were provided at the 2005 Professional Development Day.<sup>58</sup>
- The task force has regularly involved individuals outside the task force for their expertise and perspectives in various tasks including:
  - Drafting goal and competency statements for each of the defined competency areas. LSF<sup>T</sup> members consulted with faculty, community members, and students;<sup>59</sup>
  - Designing the writing-intensive portion of the program and preparing guidelines for writing intensive courses,<sup>60</sup> and

58 <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/lstf/OpenForum4-1-05.pdf>, <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/lstf/OpenForum5-5-05.pdf> <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/lstf/ProfDayQ&As.pdf>

59 <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/lstf/Groups.htm#competency>

60 <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/lstf/Groups.htm#writingintensive>



- Preparing recommendations for committees and policies to support the Dragon Core, for example the assessment subgroup that will be discussed further below<sup>61</sup>.
- LSTF members have made numerous visits to individual departments.
- LSTF activities have also been well documented and readily accessible. Minutes and agendas are posted on web. An email account was set up to provide direct communication to the task force (lstf@mnstate.edu).

After carefully considering a number of program designs, a framework was chosen that would improve on the existing “cafeteria style” design by creating a structure that would promote extending and applying knowledge and skills throughout the program. A minimum of 14 courses or 42 credits comprises the Dragon Core, distributed across 11 competency areas and three (Inner, Middle, and Outer) Clusters.

- Inner Cluster courses are at the 100-level, Middle Cluster courses are at the 100, 200, or 300-level, and Outer Cluster courses are at 300 or 400-level. The Inner Cluster include the Foundation Four courses, which develop foundational competencies in written and oral communication, mathematics, and critical and multicultural thinking. At the same time as these competencies are being mastered, students may take introductory classes (Inner Cluster electives) in several other competency areas. Once the foundational skills have been mastered, students are expected to use them through the Dragon Core and beyond.
- Middle Cluster courses integrate and extend these foundational skills within the context of various disciplines. At least two of the foundational skills are extended in each of these Middle Cluster courses (with the exception of a course with a lab or studio component that must extend and apply the learning outcomes of one of the inner cluster foundation courses) and, in addition, students are exposed to the perspectives, vocabulary, and knowledge of a broad range of disciplines.
- Outer Cluster courses integrate foundational skills together with disciplinary knowledge and perspectives from the Inner and Middle Clusters to examine vital questions facing society today. The structure of this program thus impacts how students learn and how they succeed. By continued practice with skills in multiple contexts, students gain enhanced proficiency with tools that are fundamental to life-long learning. That program is not just a series of courses that students check off but often do not understand how to integrate, but an interconnected curriculum that is very purposeful in helping students to make connections between the courses they are taking.<sup>62</sup>

The first 10 of the 11 competency areas correspond to the 10 Minnesota Transfer Curriculum categories (with area 1 being divided into 1A – written communication and 1B – oral communication).<sup>63</sup> Goal statements and defined competencies under each of these categories have been rewritten, however, to clarify and emphasize components that MSUM values and would like included in our new program.

The last competency area, information literacy, is not included in the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum but is an area we think is critical in preparing students for life-long learning in

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61 <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/lstf/Groups.htm#assessment>

62 <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/lstf/FrameworkGraphic.ppt>

63 <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/lstf/mntc.htm>

the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Importantly, each competency has been drafted with a view toward assessment.<sup>64</sup>

Inner Cluster core courses, known as the Foundation Four, are focused on developing foundational intellectual skills. These courses provide foundations in core communication and thinking skills including both written and oral communication, mathematics, and critical and multicultural thinking (Competency Areas 1A-3). Specific learning outcomes have been developed for each of these core courses. Concurrent with the foundation courses, students are allowed to take up to 12 credits of introductory courses that are not expected to build on core skills within several competency areas.<sup>65</sup> A placement system provides opportunities to create learning environments tailored to the aptitudes and abilities of a diverse student population.

One of the core skills courses, the critical and multicultural thinking course, is an innovative course that aims to respond to the increasingly globalized society that our students will operate in. MSUM has a responsibility to teach students skills that allow them to excel in this new world; learning to think critically about cultural issues will help them to do this.

MSUM's mission statement supports intellectual development and promotes the development of higher order thinking skills, but it also states that we welcome diversity and multicultural, global, and international perspectives. The critical and multicultural thinking course helps students develop analytical skills necessary for an open-minded understanding of problems with a diversity of perspectives. These skills will help students to reason through complex issues of diversity, plus research has shown that diversity experiences have positive influences on critical thinking. As a core course, students will practice and build on these skills throughout the curriculum. As this course is offered by multiple departments, these skills may be applied and learned using varied subject matters thus allowing students flexibility in choosing an area of interest and an effective means of integrating these skills throughout the curriculum.

Competency Areas 3-7, mathematics/symbolic systems, natural sciences, history and the social sciences, the humanities—the arts, literature, and philosophy, and human diversity are represented in the Middle Cluster. Courses in these areas provide an introduction to the various perspectives and ways of knowing that characterize these disciplines. Basic vocabularies of a discipline, its methods of inquiry, its ways of communicating, and distinctive perspectives or knowledge are covered. A required component is a natural science course that provides students an opportunity to experience science through a laboratory experience. The human diversity competency area develops knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for living in and contributing to a diverse world. From 9-21 credits of Middle Cluster courses that extend at least two Foundation Four skills may be taken. Up to 12 credits from these competency areas can be in the Inner Cluster from courses that do not build on the core skills. Students can count no more than two courses per competency area. Middle Cluster prerequisites are based on a competency area rather than a specific course. Middle Cluster courses may require students to have completed one designated competency area, drawn from Areas 3-7, as a prerequisite.

Outer Cluster courses extend both Inner and Middle Cluster outcomes. These courses require the integration of core skills and disciplinary perspectives. As a capstone experience in the Dragon Core, these courses focus on applying these skills and perspectives to current and pressing questions facing the world today. Students are provided multidisciplinary,

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64 <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/lstf/apac.htm>

65 <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/lstf/apac.htm>

interdisciplinary, and multicultural perspectives. Outer Cluster courses fall within the three competency areas (8-10):

- Global Perspective courses explore the interconnected nature of the world and the student's role within the world;
- Ethical and civic responsibility courses focus on an individual's role in democracy and how this is related to other democratic citizens; and
- People and the environment courses address the issue of sustainability from both social and scientific perspectives.

A number of strategies have been developed to encourage creativity in developing effective courses in each of these areas.<sup>66</sup>

A writing-intensive program has been developed in conjunction with the general education revision. This program aims to improve student writing proficiency and to facilitate thoughtful, high quality writing. Effective writing skills are the focus of the Inner Cluster core writing course. These skills will be extended through Middle and Outer Clusters as well focused on in designated writing-intensive (W-I) courses.<sup>67</sup>

Writing intensive courses integrate writing with course content and provide a variety of formal and informal occasions for students to write.

- Students are required to write a minimum of 16 pages of formal, polished writing in multiple assignments within this course.
- For incoming freshman beginning fall 2006, a total of four writing intensive courses will be taken beyond the required Foundation course. Two of these courses must be completed within the Middle and Outer clusters of the Dragon Core. One of these must be at the 300 or 400 level.
- Additionally, these freshmen must complete two additional writing intensive courses, one in the student's major or in a course designated by the major at the 300 or 400 level and the other course at the 200, 300, or 400 level which may be designated by the major.

Opportunities are thus provided for extensive student writing across the curriculum at multiple levels and for intensive writing within a student's discipline. A newly-established full-time writing director will oversee, coordinate, and assess the writing intensive program.

Our most recent National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) data indicate significant improvement between first-year students and seniors in most areas. The Dragon Core has been designed to enrich experiences of students from their freshman year in many ways leading to increased student engagement. For example, in the Foundation Four, students are required to make presentations, to contribute to class discussion, and to include diverse perspectives in class discussions and assignments. Writing intensive courses will result in an increase of written papers and reports expected. The critical and multicultural thinking course will specifically address critical thinking skills, an area that did not improve by the senior year, and these skills will be incorporated in and extended upon by courses in the middle and outer clusters.<sup>68</sup>

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66 <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/lstf/documents.htm>

67 <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/writingmatters/>

68 <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/dragoncore/FF.htm>

Several standing committees will provide support for the Dragon Core. These committees include a University Writing Committee that will serve as an advisory board for the writing director and support and maintain the Writing-Intensive program and a newly created Dragon Core Assessment Committee and assistant vice president for assessment, as outlined below, who will assess the Dragon Core.

### **Assessment**

An assessment subgroup was formed in conjunction with the Liberal Studies Task Force to work concurrently on assessment issues. This group provided input to the LSTF, drafted general guidelines for assessing student outcomes for the new program, advised on expertise needed to develop effective assessment strategies.<sup>69</sup>

The assessment subgroup recommended that an assistant vice president for assessment be hired to direct assessment. An assessment consultant with expertise in general education assessment was hired in March 2006 to guide the Dragon Core assessment process. In fall 2006, the university created and filled a new position—assistant vice president for assessment. The position reports to the vice president for academic affairs.

The assessment subgroup also recommended that a university committee be formed to conduct assessment of the Dragon Core (under this assistant vice president for assessment). This committee would be charged with gathering assessment data, analyzing the data, and making recommendations regarding the program's success in achieving student learning. Ad hoc working groups composed of faculty with expertise in the various competency areas would be consulted by this committee as necessary. The committee would generate a yearly report to the Dragon Core Committee and vice president for academic affairs.

A Dragon Core Assessment Committee (DCAC) was established in May 2006. Membership includes one member from each college, the Library, the Corrick Center, two members from the Dragon Core Committee, and one student. In June 2006, five members of the Dragon Core Assessment Committee attended the Association of American Colleges and Universities Institute on General Education. The assessment committee will report to the Dragon Core Assessment Committee and the vice president for academic affairs once a year. The committee will form ad hoc working groups for content expertise and to share assessment planning and implementation.

The focus of assessment has moved to program rather than course assessment and moving the campus to a model of continuous improvement that is responsive to this assessment data. Revisions of the Dragon Core will thus be made as needed rather than on a 10-year cycle.

The Dragon Core Assessment Committee is in the process of creating a thorough assessment plan focusing initially on the Foundation Four of writing, oral communication, mathematics, and critical and multicultural thinking. The following strategies for assessment have been developed in each of these areas:

- *Written Communication:* The English Department will collect a diagnostic writing sample at the end of the term. These samples will be assessed by a work group in specific areas that align with the Student Learning Outcomes. Data will be available summer 2007.

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69 <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/lstf/Groups.htm#assessment>

## Cross-Cutting Theme: The Learning-Focused Organization

### Assessing the Dragon Core

One of the driving forces behind creating the Dragon Core was our desire to institute an assessable general education curriculum. The design of the curriculum includes a limited number of competencies for each category that are written so that they can be clearly assessed. Additionally, a Work Plan Initiative has provided base funding for an administrative position to oversee the assessment of this program. The assistant vice president for assessment will work closely with the Dragon Core Assessment Committee to assess the new curriculum.

This past summer, the assistant vice president for assessment and members of the Dragon Core Assessment Committee took part in an American Association of Colleges and Universities assessment conference in Washington, D.C. Our team was one of only 18 chosen nationwide to participate in the conference. Over the course of several days, our team members learned from national experts, met with representatives from other institutions, and met as a team to develop plans for assessing our curriculum.

The team came away with an assessment plan for Dragon Core Competency Area 2: Critical Thinking to assess the Critical and Multicultural Thinking course student learning outcomes. This plan was implemented in the Fall of 2006 and consists of three approaches: quantitative assessment using the California Critical Thinking Skills Test and the California Critical Thinking Dispositions Inventory; qualitative assessment using an open-ended, three-page paper built around the Critical and Multicultural Thinking Skills Student Learning Outcomes; and a plan to present faculty round tables with time for discussion and “closing the loop.”

We are committed to assessing our general education program and are developing the capacity to do so.

- *Oral Communication:* A common assignment and rubric is being used. Presentations will be videotaped and a random selection of presentations will be reviewed and rated on this rubric. Data will be available spring and summer 2007.
- *Mathematical/Symbolic Systems:* The Mathematics Department will design a group of common problems that will be given to students as part of their final test. These problems will be designed to show achievement toward the Student Learning Outcomes. Data will be available early spring 2007 and summer 2007.
- *Critical and Multicultural Thinking (CMT):* The most progress has been made on the assessment of critical and multicultural thinking skills. The Critical and Multicultural Thinking Course will be assessed quantitatively and qualitatively.
  - Two products from Insight Assessment, the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST) and the California Critical Thinking Dispositions Inventory (CCTDI), will be given to students in these courses. Faculty who give students the CCTST will have the choice to re-test in week 14 (for credit) or to add the test to the final. They will be asked to give points for the re-test based on improvement of scores as opposed to credit just for taking the assessment. Faculty who gave the CCTDI will not re-test. These students will be contacted their senior year and if they re-test, they will be given 1/2 off their cap and gown rental. Quantitative data analysis for the CCTST will be available fall 2006 (pre-test) and spring 2007 (post-test) and for the CCTDI (pre-test) fall 2006.

- All CMT faculty have been asked to administer a common, but not uniform, assignment. They have been asked to create an assignment that is within the context of each particular course and satisfies Critical and Multicultural Thinking Skills learning outcomes. This assignment will be written (about three typed pages) and designed to include knowledge of more than one culture, to show students' abilities to use their critical thinking skills in solving a problem involving a diversity of cultural perspectives, and to exemplify students' abilities to identify power and privilege. A DCAC work group will assess this assignment using a rubric based on the student learning outcomes. This qualitative data will be available summer 2007.

Assessment data will be added to the Resource Room as it is available.

**Evidence Statement 4B-3:  
Graduate programs provide a knowledge base for depth of expertise and for life-long learning.**

Minnesota State University Moorhead is known as an undergraduate institution, but also has a rich history of providing quality graduate education. For more than 40 years, it has delivered graduate programs to meet the needs of the region. MSUM is committed to expanding and revising programs to meet the needs of the 21st century.

MSUM offers the following graduate degrees: Master of Science in Counseling and Student Affairs, Curriculum and Instruction, Educational Leadership, Nursing, Reading, Special Education, Speech-Language Pathology, and Public, Human Service and Health Administration; Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing; and a Master of Liberal Arts. Master of Science and Specialist degrees are available in School Psychology.<sup>70</sup>

**Mission Statements**

The graduate studies mission statement explicitly recognizes the importance of qualities contributing to life-long learning. The mission of Graduate Studies at MSUM is to promote excellence in research, advanced career preparation and development, as well as personal and creative expression. Graduate study at MSUM introduces students to a community of scholars and learners who foster innovative efforts in the areas of discovery, creativity, scholarship and artistic expression. MSUM graduate studies are committed to excellence in all graduate degree and certificate programs. This mission statement, approved Feb. 13, 2006, was created as result of the self-study process.<sup>71</sup>

Individual graduate programs also emphasize the importance of life-long learning as well as a knowledge base on which to build a depth of expertise. For example, the Master of Liberal Arts program encourages life-long learning and personal enrichment and strives to educate its students broadly in the traditional curriculum of the liberal arts, while also requiring them to pursue concentrated study in one or more disciplines. The program is primarily designed to put M.L.A. graduates in contact with a broader range of cultural and intellectual life as well as with communities of knowledge, problem-solving critical thinking skills, and stimulating forums for the discussion about revolutionary ways of re-imagining their life and their world. The program establishes an environment which encourages the integration of

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70 [http://www.mnstate.edu/graduate/GraduateBulletin\\_2004\\_2006.pdf](http://www.mnstate.edu/graduate/GraduateBulletin_2004_2006.pdf)

71 <http://www.mnstate.edu/graduate>

learning and life experiences and provides college graduates an opportunity to develop further the competencies essential for participation in a world of unprecedented change.<sup>72</sup>

The mission of the Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing program is to provide an environment and instruction that enable students to become creative, proficient, and knowledgeable writers.<sup>73</sup>

The focus of the MSUM school psychology program is to enable graduates of the program to be effective problem solvers in dealing with needs of children and others involved in the learning enterprise.<sup>74</sup>

### **Knowledge Base**

Each graduate program in the university has methods in place to assess knowledge base and depth of expertise. Select examples are provided below:

- *Counseling and Student Affairs (CNSA)*: The Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE), is a multiple choice test that is required of all students in the Counseling and Student Affairs program. The National Board for Certified Counselors developed this test to assess knowledge acquired in master's training programs. Second, CNSA has a written comprehensive examination that covers the content areas that are required areas for CACREP accreditation. Third, students have an oral defense of their thesis. This oral defense ensures that students are knowledgeable in the area in which they conducted their research.<sup>75</sup>
- *Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing*: Students are provided with a knowledge base as well as depth of expertise through a distribution of half the required credits in literature or craft classes, and the other half in skill-centered workshop classes. Students read and write papers about a wide range of literature, and they master the conventions of their chosen genre. This is assessed through a review of thesis introductions, as well as evaluations of papers written in non-workshop classes.<sup>76</sup>
- *Curriculum and Instruction*: Foundation courses, which provide a base of knowledge and depth of expertise, are assessed via course assignments, tests, and projects. The program is based on a thematic approach. Themes are purposes of school, relationship between school and society, learning from inquiry, teacher as decision maker, critical reflection, and improving teaching and learning. Themes are assessed through the program evaluation, capstone paper and student portfolio.<sup>77</sup>
- *Public, Human Service and Health Administration*: At the completion of the final project oral exam, each member of the student's committee is asked to complete an evaluation of the student's performance in terms of analytical skills, oral and written communication and knowledge of the specifics, as well as the context, of the administrative process.<sup>78</sup>
- *Speech-Language Pathology*: Offers a nationally accredited master's degree program that is regionally known for outstanding graduates. The "Knowledge and Skills

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72 <http://www.mnstate.edu/graduate/>

73 <http://www.mnstate.edu/finearts/>

74 <http://www.mnstate.edu/assess/AOldSite/Plans/Assessment/schoolpsy.htm>

75 <http://www.mnstate.edu/cnsa/index.html>

76 <http://www.mnstate.edu/finearts/>

77 [http://www.mnstate.edu/graduate/cie\\_programdesc.htm](http://www.mnstate.edu/graduate/cie_programdesc.htm)

78 <http://www.mnstate.edu/phsha/>

Acquisition (KASA) Summary Form for Certification in Speech-Language Pathology” is used to track a student's knowledge and skills and is part of the new 2004 standards that were introduced by the American Speech Language Hearing Association and that are followed strictly to maintain national accreditation. Additionally as part of this graduate program, the Regional Assistive Technology Center (RATC) provides hands on training. It is the only such center serving the tri-state area.<sup>79</sup>

### **Creative and Independent Learners**

Graduate work at MSUM requires that students demonstrate that they are creative and independent learners. All students enrolled in a graduate program are required to complete an original research project, which is assessed by the graduate faculty. Original research projects are presented in the form of a thesis or project option. Additional requirements include the defense of research, verbal presentations, reflective essays, program portfolios and exit interviews.<sup>80</sup>

**Evidence Statement 4B-4:**  
***MSUM provides services that support intellectual inquiry and the success of its Liberal Studies and Dragon Core curricula.***

### **Write Site**

The Write Site provides assistance with any step in the writing process for all academic levels and majors, including students completing the Liberal Studies and Dragon Core curricula. As discussed above, a newly established writing director who was previously the director of the Write Site, will oversee, coordinate, and assess the writing intensive program and assume primary responsibility for MSUM efforts to improve the writing proficiency of its students.

In 2005, the 11 tutors from the Write Site conducted 2,080 sessions with students referred by 121 professors in 29 departments. Write Site tutors gave 15 class presentations on the Write Site services and how to use those services effectively. The Write Site director gave 23 lectures across campus. These varied from an hour lecture on research methodology and writing literature reviews to an hour lecture on writing conventions in the sciences.

### **Mathematics Learning Center**

Beginning in the early 1990s, the percentage of students that succeeded (grade of D or better) in the College Algebra course (a Liberal Studies course) became a significant problem. By fall semester 2000, only 47 percent of the students enrolled in the course succeeded and only 37 percent earned a grade of C or higher. Survey data at the time also indicated that if a student did not succeed in his/her first college level mathematics course, the student was unlikely to succeed at MSUM. In response to this growing problem, in July 2000, MSUM developed a Mathematics Learning Center (MLC), which was in operation by fall semester of 2001.

Another change that took place in the Mathematics Department at this time was that the Minnesota State system mathematics placement exam scores be used to determine mandatory placement in beginning mathematics courses. All students with exam scores below a certain cut-off would be required to complete at least one developmental algebra course. During the last four years, between 35 and 40 percent of new entering freshmen

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79 <http://www.mnstate.edu/slhs/Forms/Graduate%20Handbook%202004-2005.pdf>

80 <http://www.mnstate.edu/graduate/generalreqs.htm>



were placed in one of these developmental courses. Approximately 30 students are placed in each section and the class meets four times per week. Two of the weekly classes are held in regular departmental lecture rooms and the other two weekly meetings are laboratory sessions held in the MLC. During the lab sessions, students are expected to solve (and submit to be graded) additional problems related to the previous lecture.

The MLC has been highly successful in improving success rates in mathematics—the success rate has risen from about 47 percent in 2000 to nearly 70 percent in 2005. The percentage of students that succeed in College Algebra after completing one of the developmental courses is approximately 80 percent.

### **Supplemental Instruction**

Supplemental Instruction (SI) courses are not selected because they are part of the general education program, but in fact many SI courses are general education courses. For the 2005-2006 school year, three-fourths (12/16) of the courses chosen for SI were liberal studies courses. Exceptions were the introductory accounting sequence required for all business majors and upper-division chemistry courses. At MSUM, students who participate in SI regularly (five or more sessions/semester) achieve a half to full letter grade higher than students in the same classes who do not participate. Results from individual classes range as low as no difference to a high of two full letter grades higher for regular participants. In the past, even more liberal studies courses have been served and requests to serve other courses are plentiful. Limitations are due to funding, supervision time, and, for some areas, the availability of qualified student leaders.

### **Livingston Lord Library**

As detailed in the preceding consideration of mission, part of the Livingston Lord Library's mission is to encourage active, life-long learning. They also provide resources and services that “sustain research, support curricula, teach critical thinking, advance information literacy skills, encourage reading, advocate intellectual freedom, and enhance thoughtful, informed citizenship.”

The library staff conducts library instruction sessions for general education courses. During 2005-2006, a total of 71 classes were offered to 1,230 students in liberal studies courses. There were 52 sessions offered to English 101 and 102 sections; approximately 925 students attended these sessions. In Liberal Studies Division D, a total of 200 students in six different classes attended the Library Sessions. Nearly 90 students attended five sessions offered to English 287 classes.

### **Corrick Center for General Education**

Approximately 20-25 percent of freshmen who enroll at MSUM enter through the Corrick Center for General Education, an alternative-entry, general education program for freshmen and sophomores. Students selected for the program demonstrate potential to succeed in college but may not meet MSUM's standard admission criteria and would benefit from a non-traditional approach to beginning their university studies. The center's mission indicates that it offers a college-level, general education curriculum emphasizing writing, critical reading, and mathematical skills. Corrick Center faculty are hired specifically to teach lower division general education courses and for their fit into the special mission of the program. About 90 percent of the courses offered by Corrick Center faculty have a Liberal Studies or Dragon Core designation. Students enrolled through the Corrick Center must take at least two general education courses outside of the center, but most students take approximately

half of them outside of those offered by the Corrick Center. Most students transfer into their major during their third semester at MSUM.

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

The mission of Minnesota State University Moorhead is “to develop knowledge, talent, and skills for a lifetime of learning, service, and citizenship.” The university strives to assist students in their personal and intellectual development, is a campus that welcomes diversity, encourages life-long learning, and prepares students to compete in today’s society. These tasks are accomplished through programs in general education, natural and social sciences, business and technology, the fine arts, and professional degree programs.

MSUM has solid policies and procedures to assess the relevancy and currency of its curricula to students who will live and work in an increasingly global, diverse, and technological society. This is evidenced in a variety of ways such as through program reviews; assessment in capstone courses and internships; academic service learning; advisory boards; surveys of graduates, employers, alumni, and the larger community; international programs and through the integration of technology on campus.

The university has a variety of methods to assess the usefulness of the curricula through program reviews, advisory boards, and various surveys. The Minnesota State University Moorhead Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Guide states, “Assessment of student learning will become part of the MSUM culture, allowing us to monitor our quality and drive us to achieve our mission” (p. 3). Accrediting bodies, such as NCATE and CSWE, and program review processes require departments to connect their learning outcomes with their respective college and departmental mission statements and that of the university. Each program’s review process requires an external evaluator to assess the strengths and limitations of the departments and make recommendations. The self-study process allows opportunities for each department to assess learning outcomes, make curricular and/or pedagogical changes, and determine whether or not the curriculum is meeting the needs of job market demands.

The following sets of evidence illustrate Core Component 4C:

- Evidence Statement 4C-1: MSUM regularly assesses the relevancy and currency of its curricula.
- Evidence Statement 4C-2: MSUM assesses students’ skills to live and work in a diverse, global, and technological society.
- Evidence Statement 4C-3: MSUM assesses students’ learning from a global, diverse, and technological society.

**Evidence Statement 4C-1:  
MSUM regularly assesses the relevancy and currency of its curricula.**

As discussed in Chapter 2/Criterion 2C and Chapter 3/Criterion 3A, the university has a well-established process for evaluating the usefulness of its academic programs.

Each department and program at the undergraduate and graduate level is required to provide a report every two years throughout a six-year reporting cycle. We are moving to an annual reporting and planning cycle that will still include a major review every six years. There are three major components of a six-year review: a self-study, evaluation by an external consultant, and post-review analysis and planning. The evaluative reports of external

consultants include evaluation of a program's standing in comparison with national peers.<sup>81</sup> Assessment reporting will also be done annually. These reports and the six-year program reviews offer the university and individual programs regular opportunities to examine the critical link between the assessment of student learning and department/program planning and goal-setting. In addition to the programs of the School of Teaching and Learning, 13 of our programs have assessment plans in which assessment involves ongoing participation by alumni, employers, and other external constituents. These are accounting, business administration, chemistry, construction management, finance, graphic communications, industrial technology, international business, management, marketing, mass communications, paralegal, and physical education.

A number of programs are accredited by external agencies (See Appendix I). These include undergraduate programs in nursing, education, art and design, music, construction management, and social work. The accrediting agencies are prominently identified at the start of the university bulletin. Four graduate programs are accredited by external agencies. These programs regularly engage in rigorous examination of their programs to satisfy the standards of the respective reaccrediting bodies. Academic Affairs receives copies of their reaccreditation documents.

Many of the programs and departments at MSUM use employer surveys to assess the relevance of their curricula. For example, teacher education programs including the elementary and early childhood education, special education, and various secondary education programs survey school administrators who hired graduates of their programs. School administrators provide their opinions on the teaching performance of MSUM graduates in their schools.<sup>82</sup> The School of Social Work utilizes a standardized questionnaire that is given to employers annually (documents are available in the Resource Room). Construction management sends employer surveys that accompany their alumni survey mailings. The survey asks for input for any curriculum changes from the employers' perspectives based on their evaluation of how well the program prepared employees in various content areas.

The use of advisory boards by colleges, departments, and programs is growing. Some notable examples include:

- Each of the colleges utilizes student advisory boards.<sup>83</sup> The student advisory boards provide feedback and input on a variety of issues to the respective colleges. For example, students from the College of Social and Natural Sciences discuss courses they have taken and in what ways particular classes help them. They also provide input on what classes they think would be beneficial for the general education program (Sept. 19, 2005, meeting minutes).<sup>84</sup>
- Department/Program Advisory Boards: Many of the programs and departments at MSUM utilize advisory boards to assess the relevance of their curriculum and/or their effectiveness in meeting the needs of various constituents. Education programs subject to NCATE accreditation involve community professionals in oversight of their programs. The School of Business has an advisory board that

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81 [http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/Departments/reports/2005-2006/6-YearProgramReviewProcess.htm#Consultant%92s\\_Report\\_and\\_Questionnaire](http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/Departments/reports/2005-2006/6-YearProgramReviewProcess.htm#Consultant%92s_Report_and_Questionnaire)

82 <http://www.mnstate.edu/edhuman/teachered/accredlink.html>

83 e.g. [http://www.mnstate.edu/csns/student\\_advisory.cfm](http://www.mnstate.edu/csns/student_advisory.cfm),

84 [http://www.mnstate.edu/csns/news\\_events/sab\\_meeting\\_minutes.cfm](http://www.mnstate.edu/csns/news_events/sab_meeting_minutes.cfm)

draws on local business leaders.<sup>85</sup> The construction management program has an advisory board comprised of twelve business leaders in the field. The industrial technology and operational management programs share a similar advisory board.

- Nonacademic programs also seek ongoing evidence about the relevancy and currency of their services. For example, Instructional Resources has an advisory group that serves as an extended “focus group.” The advisory board reviews issues concerning relevant services and resources, including their relationship to the curricula of all departments and programs at the university. Also the advisory board makes recommendations concerning policy changes and budget that facilitates instructional resources to the students, faculty, and service region of the university. The director of instructional resources uses the feedback from the advisory board to help in short- and long-range planning.
- Another exemplary advisory board has been utilized for the Academic Service Learning program, which has helped to increase campus-community partnerships to expand its civic engagement role in the community. In addition, several departments and colleges have external community advisory boards. The School of Social Work has a program advisory committee comprised of representatives from the following: current social work students, program graduates, social work regulatory agency, professional association, field instructors, social work faculty including adjunct faculty, and faculty from other academic disciplines. Regular feedback from the board provides information as to what curricular improvements the department can make.

University committees also play an advisory role. Some examples include:

- The Cultural Diversity/Affirmative Action Committee, which reports to the President, monitors the present cultural diversity efforts, and provides input into the Racial and Ethnic Diversity Plan. The committee also evaluates programs and events to determine the extent to which these meet MSUM’s cultural diversity goals.
- The Technology Committee advises the University Planning and Budget Committee regarding policies, procedures, technology advances, and the relevant uses of technology at MSUM. In addition the committee evaluates proposals referred to it by the University Planning and Budget Committee.
- The Global Studies and International Affairs Committee “develops or makes recommendations involving the global/international content of the curriculum; monitors international faculty and student exchange programs now in force and filters proposals for other programs. It monitors and reviews MSUM’s involvement in the International Student Exchange Program (ISEP) and submits selected applicants to ISEP.”<sup>86</sup> The committee also examines issues affecting international students and was instrumental in the design of the new major in international studies.

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<sup>85</sup> <http://www.mnstate.edu/schoolofbusiness/>

<sup>86</sup> [http://www.mnstate.edu/stusen/uni\\_comm/Committee%20Purposes.doc](http://www.mnstate.edu/stusen/uni_comm/Committee%20Purposes.doc)

## Cross-Cutting Theme: The Learning-Focused Organization

### Connecting Curriculum and Work

Academic internships and field experiences are key ways of connecting the life of the mind with the life of work. Nearly every academic program has these opportunities available to students. Some majors, including education, criminal justice, social work and gerontology require that all majors complete internships or field experiences that are formally evaluated by field supervisors.

Internships and field experiences are invaluable opportunities for students to apply classroom learning to authentic work settings. Partnerships developed with schools, hospitals, businesses, and social service agencies ensure that our students are getting quality experiences that are effectively preparing them for future careers. Our partners speak highly of our students and the preparation they receive at MSUM. In fact, Sarah Green, an MSUM senior majoring in accounting and finance, was recently named the top intern in the nation for the Northwestern Mutual Financial Network. Other interns receive job offers from their hosts.

MSUM is developing key contacts to enhance the ability of our students to have these experiences. Through internships and field experiences, our students are developing the capacity to apply classroom concepts, skills, and knowledge to the workplace.

***Evidence Statement 4C-2:  
MSUM assesses students' skills to live and work in a diverse, global, and technological society.***

**Skills for a Diverse Society**

As evidenced in its Academic Affairs Master Plan for 2005-2010<sup>87</sup> MSUM strives to develop and support a learning community that embraces diversity and bases relationships on tolerance, civility, and affirmation. To achieve this, Academic Affairs has outlined the following objectives:

- Creating and/or revising existing curricula to increase the multicultural experiences to available students;
- Assessing the effectiveness of its current ESL strategy and, if needed, revising and strengthening the program;
- Increasing outreach efforts to recruit students of color or economically disadvantaged students;
- Providing opportunities for students to learn from and work with diverse populations in field experiences, internships, clinical placements, and academic service learning assignments;
- Continuing to support and emphasize multicultural and antiracism training and awareness; and
- Emphasizing multiculturalism when new acquisitions are made for the library, as well as focusing more book displays and library presentations on diverse cultures.

Other evidence demonstrating MSUM's commitment to develop students' skills for a diverse society is found in the new Dragon Core program. One of the competency areas that all

<sup>87</sup> <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/>

MSUM students are expected to master directly addresses the issue of human diversity. The goal for the human diversity competency is to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes central to living in and contributing to a diverse world (as discussed in Criterion 4B).

The university and departments/programs assess students' skills for a diverse society by including the skills as part of learning outcomes or performance criteria in various employer, alumni, and community surveys, internship supervisory evaluations, and post graduation employment surveys.

- Many departments/programs utilize employer, alumni, and community surveys to assess their students' learning outcomes and the effectiveness of their program in meeting their departmental or program goals. Those surveys often include items related to students' skills for a diverse society. For example, the various programs in Teacher Education use surveys for school administrators who hired their graduates and for their alumni. The forms for both surveys include questions on whether their graduates "demonstrate multicultural, gender-fair and gender sensitive values."<sup>88</sup> As evidences of the competency in this area, the surveys provide examples as follows:
  - 1) Classroom environment promotes fairness, equality and justice in all interactions;
  - 2) Classroom environment promotes acceptance and appreciation of child differences;
  - 3) Children are accepted regardless of their style of self-presentation; and
  - 4) Lessons include examples of women, minorities, and those with disabilities.

Additionally, the business administration program conducts telephone surveys of alumni to assess skills such as utilizing technologies and understanding the culturally diverse nature of business.<sup>89</sup>

- In addition to employer, alumni, and community surveys, MSUM also utilizes internship supervisory evaluations to assess students' skills for a diverse society. Many departments/programs incorporate internships or field experiences into their program and assess students' learning outcomes from those experiences and at the same time the program's effectiveness in meeting student learning outcomes. For example, the field experiences at various stages in the Teacher Education programs involve cooperating teachers' evaluation of teacher candidates' performances in various areas. One of the criteria used for cooperating teachers' evaluation is teacher candidates' skills recognizing individual differences and giving opportunities for diverse learners.<sup>90</sup> As such, the university assesses students' skills for a diverse society.

### **Skills for a Global Society**

The university is committed to prepare students for a global society. MSUM's commitment to develop students' skills for a global society is demonstrated in the new Dragon Core program (see Criterion 4B). One of the competency areas that all MSUM students are expected to master specifically addresses the importance of having global perspective.<sup>91</sup> The goals for the global perspective competency include: increasing students' understanding and appreciation of the world's nations and peoples, increasing understanding of the

88 <http://mnstate.edu/assess/Reports2/EECE99.htm>

89 <http://www.mnstate.edu/assess/Reports2/BusAdmin02.pdf>

90 <http://appserv.mnstate.edu/fieldexp/finaleval/start/>

91 <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/lstf/CompetencyAreas.pdf>

| <b>Table 4-1: Classroom Technology Upgrades in 2006-2007</b> |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| <b>Classrooms by Buildings</b>                               | <b>Amount Allocated</b> |
| Weld: 102, 16, 17, 2, 3                                      | \$21,500                |
| Lommen: 78, 79, 85   | 12,900                  |
| Center for Business: 106                                     | 3,200                   |
| Bridges: 164, 267, 264, 269                                  | 17,200                  |
| Center for the Arts: 33, 144, 146, 148, 151                  | 20,400                  |
| Nemzek: 104, 202, 101  | 11,800                  |
| Murray: 233N   | 4,300                   |

interconnectedness of the economic, social, political, cultural, artistic, and environmental systems at the global, regional, and local levels, obviating fear generated by the unknown, and increasing the ability to function in a globalized world. Specific examples of meeting the needs of students working in a global and diverse society include courses such as NURS 347: Transcultural Nursing, and classes offered in American multicultural studies, international studies, and humanities.

MSUM has a unique program designed to assist new international students at university. International students returning to campus and students who have studied abroad combine their talents and experiences to become Diplomats for new international students. Diplomats are volunteer peer advisors who assist new international students through orientation, registration, and the first semester at MSUM. Diplomats have the experience and understand what it is like to be new in a new country. They, also, undergo a two day intensive training including cross-cultural and leadership training. This is an opportunity for both international students and U.S. students to share their own culture while learning about the other. Diplomats are an excellent resource for international students during their adjustment to U.S. university life. Diplomats serve as "cultural informants," answering a variety of questions concerning everyday life. In return for their assistance, Diplomats have the opportunity to learn about other cultures and experience intercultural communication skill-building first hand.<sup>92</sup>

### **Skills for a Technological Society**

As evidenced in its biennial report and the Academic Affairs Master Plan,<sup>93</sup> the university is committed to developing students' skills for a technological society. The university continues to support integration of technology in curriculum by increasing the number of courses and faculty using technology and number of classrooms with upgraded technological capabilities. Table 4-1 shows the amount of money Academic Affairs has allocated for classroom upgrades for the current year.

The Educational Foundations program reported in their Institutional Assessment Report (January 2004)<sup>94</sup> that students are assessed "on the basis of their demonstrated competency in the following areas: desktop publishing, website construction, presentation software and hardware, and ability to locate, use, and evaluate online sources appropriate to the grade level

92 <http://www.mnstate.edu/intl/student-services/Programs/DiplomatProgram.cfm>

93 <http://www.mnstate.edu/president/StrategicPlanning/June2005WorkPlanReport.DOC>

94 <http://www.mnstate.edu/assess/Reports2/EDLdrsp04.htm>

at which they plan to teach. Evidence of students' competencies in three areas is collected in the following courses: ED 205 (desktop publishing, website construction, and online resources), ED 294 (presentation software and hardware), and ED 443 (website construction).” Data is collected in the form of checklists, rating scales, and sample of work.

The university also provides resources to growing technology-supported majors. These include online and distance delivered programs in biosciences, nursing, the music industry, graphic design, film studies, mass communications, and technology. For example, the new bachelor's degree in nursing admitted its first 36-student cohort and students started the program in fall 2005.

More importantly, the university assesses students' skills for a technological society. Many learning improvements have been instituted as a result of assessment of student learning.<sup>95</sup> Some of these improvements have been funded by Instructional Improvement Grants and other internal sources as well as through the Minnesota State system Teaching and Learning Grants. These learning improvements have enhanced student's technology skills both within and across departments and programs. Examples of learning opportunities and improvements related to technology include the following:

- The library has worked on developing relationships with academic departments to strengthen information literacy skills. This has resulted in a number of training sessions on effectively searching the Internet, utilizing the online database services, and evaluating and citing electronic resources.<sup>96</sup> More information can be found on these sessions by accessing the library website.<sup>97</sup> Over the period from fall 2005 to spring 2006, 183 separate classes with 3,210 students were involved in such training sessions.
- As of all 2006, the library has offered a six-module information literacy tutorial in association with CMST 100. This tutorial, called Searchpath, is completed by all students enrolled in this course. As CMST 100 is a Dragon Core foundation course, this tutorial is being required of all new incoming freshman. In addition to the Searchpath tutorial, students take a library tour. An innovative addition this year is an MP-3 based self guided tour.
- In addition, every incoming freshman must acquire adequate technology skills to take the required course Alcohol and College Life (HLTH 122), which is taught online through collaboration with the University of Minnesota.<sup>98</sup>
- Students enrolled in the First Year Experience course have the opportunity to obtain assistance in developing e-folios and are required to complete a technology assignment.<sup>99</sup>
- In 2004, the anthropology program purchased laptops and projectors through an Instructional Improvement grant and used these to provide opportunities for improving student oral presentation skills. Oral communication skills of anthropology majors were identified through assessment as an area that needed to be strengthened.
- In 2004, the mathematics department created a new course, Computer Calculus, to help students better understand abstract calculus concepts.

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95 <http://www.mnstate.edu/assess/LrningImprovs.htm>

96 <http://www.mnstate.edu/plans/technology/section2.htm>

97 <http://www.mnstate.edu/library/instruct/instruct.htm>

98 <http://www.mnstate.edu/aod>

99 [http://www.mnstate.edu/advising/course\\_topics.htm](http://www.mnstate.edu/advising/course_topics.htm), <http://www.mnstate.edu/advising/FYE/>



- In 2004, the College of Social and Natural Sciences purchased a site license for SPSS software. A university-wide survey was conducted to determine the types of statistical programs being used. The results of this survey were used in the selection of this statistical package.
- In 2006, the psychology department purchased additional computers to provide more practical experience for students in conducting technologically-assisted research projects. This change was instituted as a result of assessment of student learning outcomes.
- Computer science offers an introductory course to the Internet (CSIS 101) and Computer Concepts and Applications (CSIS 103). Six different majors require CSIS 103 for their degree, all five majors in the School of Business require Spreadsheet and Database Applications (CSIS 104), and six other majors require at least one other course in computer science.

### **Livingston Lord Library/Instructional Technology**

Instructional Technology offers technology training for students in a variety of areas such as “PowerPoint presentation software, the Minnesota State system's E-Folio system, listservs, WebCT orientation, Inspiration, FrontPage and Dreamweaver webpage development, and a variety of other software.”<sup>100</sup> Paper and/or online surveys are used to measure the effectiveness of faculty and staff training.

In addition, the library's instruction program offers a wide variety of library instruction opportunities for the MSUM community. Course-integrated instruction makes up the majority of library instruction sessions, including sessions involving ENGL 101, ENGL 102, MDS 109, and a wide variety of courses throughout the curriculum. On average, librarians conduct 475 workshops a year, serving 5,000 students. These workshops ranged from general library orientations (e.g., ENGL 101; MDS 109; "Learn How to Use WebPALS" workshops) to subject-specific instruction (e.g., art and design, biology, counseling and student affairs, economics, education, legal assistant program, nursing, psychology, speech language pathology, social work, special education).<sup>101</sup>

### ***Evidence Statement 4C-3: MSUM assesses students' learning from a global, diverse, and technological society.***

MSUM has developed a guide for academic programs, MSUM Student Learning Outcomes Assessment: A Guide for Academic Programs (available in the Resource Room), which outlines the policies and procedures of assessing student learning outcomes. It states, “MSUM's teaching and learning processes should cohere in ways that are meaningful to students. Departments and programs should regularly gather evidence of student learning and make decisions regarding the program using this [documented] evidence. Woven throughout the MSUM decision-making and planning processes should be a commitment to student learning and reflection on the evidence that documents student learning at MSUM.” One of the planning forms indicates that departments are to identify various goals addressed by specific learning outcomes. These goals include multiculturalism/diversity and global understanding. This guide is one example of the movement toward institutionalizing assessment as a central value in MSUM's culture of teaching and learning.

Our commitment to learning appropriate to a global, diverse, and technological society is particularly strong in the College of Education and Human Services, the School of Teaching

<sup>100</sup> Retrieved May 12, 2006, from <http://www.mnstate.edu/plans/technology/section2.htm>

<sup>101</sup> <http://www.mnstate.edu/library/instruct/>

and Learning. Programs subject to NCATE oversight address both diversity and technology in multiple ways. A shared Conceptual Framework shapes all aspects of undergraduate programs in teacher education, and it endorses our shared commitment to prepare educators who live and work in a diverse, global, and technological society.<sup>102</sup>

### **Learning from a Diverse Society**

Students average approximately 2,500 hours of service learning activities per year. Some of the academic service learning opportunities available include a variety of organizations: the Migrant Health Services, nursing homes, Regional Science Center, People Escaping Poverty Project, Easter Seals, homeless shelters, CHARISM Community Resource Centers, and battered women's services. This year the Academic Service Learning Board is developing processes to gather outcome and impact data related to service learning projects, including developing a survey to be completed by community agencies to gain their perspectives of the impact of service learning activities. Currently student and faculty evaluations are completed to assess the service learning experiences.<sup>103</sup>

Many areas, such as health services administration, the paralegal program, and the School of Social Work, require the completion of an internship prior to graduating. Evaluations are completed by the student interns as well as the intern sponsors or field instructors. One of the areas assessed in social work include the ability to "develop and maintain professional relationships with people from diverse, cultural, ethnic, and economic backgrounds".<sup>104</sup> In the School of Business graduating seniors are assessed for their understanding of the global and culturally diverse nature of business.<sup>105</sup>

### **Learning from a Global Society**

Through the International Programs Office, MSUM has established many programs to promote intercultural interaction and encourage students to become more accepting of diverse cultures, which is vital in an increasingly interdependent world. Following are some of the examples of many programs run by the International Programs.

- *International Study Programs:* Eurospring is an annual 12-credit humanities program involving five weeks of study in Oxford, England, and a three-week tour of the continent during spring semester. MSUM has active exchange programs with universities in England, Japan, China, Mexico, and Australia.<sup>106</sup>
- *Study Tours:* MSUM's International Programs Office, in coordination with different academic departments, runs a number of faculty-led study tours to various parts of the world. Recent tours have visited China, Mexico, Tanzania, Kenya, England, Ireland, Iceland, Costa Rica, and Brazil. Tours planned for year 2006 include: 2006 Hiroshima Peace Tour, Discovering Paris Study Tour, Tour of Brazil, 2006 China Business Trip, and Cuernavaca, Mexico Summer Program. These study tours have and will broaden MSUM students' understanding of different cultures around the globe.<sup>107</sup>

102 <http://www.mnstate.edu/edhuman/teachered/forms/ConceptualFramework.doc>.

103 <http://www.mnstate.edu/asl/forms/studentevaluation.pdf>

104 <http://www.mnstate.edu/socialwk/fieldmanual.pdf>

105 <http://www.mnstate.edu/assess/AOldSite/reports/Assessment/Accounting2002.htm>

106 <http://www.mnstate.edu/intl/abroad/Programs.cfm>

107 [http://www.mnstate.edu/intl/abroad/summer\\_tours.cfm](http://www.mnstate.edu/intl/abroad/summer_tours.cfm)

- *Celebration of Nations*: This is an annual event at MSUM in which international students set up booths displaying art, clothing and information about their countries. The students also cook traditional foods to sample, and provide entertainment of traditional music, dances, and a fashion show.<sup>108</sup>

Most of the international programs mentioned above incorporate assessment of student learning by utilizing surveys or evaluation forms at the end of each program.

### **Learning from a Technological Society**

- *DragonNet Wireless Network*: DragonNet wireless network<sup>109</sup> is an extension of the campus network that provides students, faculty, and staff with wireless access to the campus network and the Internet in the following areas: the library, the Dragon Den, the link between Frick and MacLean Halls, the Center for Business Atrium, the Science Lab Building, some classrooms and the lobby in Nemzek, areas within Lommen Hall, rooms 163, 167 and 168 in the Center for the Arts building, and the Comstock Memorial Union second floor.
- *Laptop Initiative in Construction Management (CM)*: Effective 2007, the construction management program requires each of its incoming students to purchase a laptop computer for use in every course in the program. Thanks to \$900,000 in donated software, students will have access to the same software used in industry, and wireless technology will allow the CM program to better emulate industry practice and have more flexible access.
- *Online Courses*: In February 2005, a request for institutional change was submitted to Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Peer Evaluation Team to consider offering the following degree programs online:
  - Nursing R.N. to Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program;
  - Master of Science degree in Educational Leadership: General Leadership with Educational Technology;
  - Certificate Program: Teaching and Learning with Technology; and
  - Bachelor of Science in Technical Management

These changes have been proposed to enhance access for students in rural areas, provide students with practice in a technological medium, and modeling online course instruction.<sup>110</sup> The factors that led to these proposed changes grew out of the 2003-2005 Strategic Plan, the Academic Affairs Master Work Plan, and the university's Technology Plan.<sup>111</sup>

The university has developed a solid foundation through policies, procedures, and practices that are currently in place for assessing the usefulness of its curriculum. MSUM also has opportunities to create even more meaningful assessments of students' preparation to live in a global, diverse and technological society.

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108 <http://www.mnstate.edu/intl/celebration/CelebrationofNations.cfm>

109 <http://www.mnstate.edu/it/Wireless/index.htm>

110 <http://www.mnstate.edu/assess/LrningImprovs.htm>, p. 3

111 <http://www.mnstate.edu/distanceed/DistanceAccredS05/Request%20For%20Institutional%20Change%20OnLine%20Program%20FINAL%20copy.pdf> (Request for Institutional Change report).

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

The university is a social organization and, as such, we share collective responsibility to see that its activities are held accountable to appropriate moral and ethical standards. Because the university is a public institution for the creation and dissemination of knowledge, its ethical stance towards this central dimension of university life is a serious matter. So in evaluating Core Component 4D, we understand the adverb “responsibly” to be the central issue. As discussed throughout earlier chapters (particularly Core Components 2B, 3B, and 3D), the university fulfills its mission in promoting the acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge. But this would be an empty accomplishment if we did not ensure that it was informed by appropriate standards.

The final section of this chapter provides evidence that MSUM supports responsibility in the life of learning by prominently emphasizing it in the mission statement, by promoting a general environment of open inquiry, and by encouraging and overseeing student opportunities for independent learning and good citizenship. MSUM monitors student learning and faculty and student research activities to ensure that we acquire and discover knowledge responsibly. Finally, we provide guidance and oversight to support applying knowledge responsibly.

The following sets of evidence illustrate Core Component 4D:

- Evidence Statement 4D-1: MSUM recognizes the importance of this standard in its mission statement.
- Evidence Statement 4D-2: The general environment at MSUM promotes responsible citizenship and open, free inquiry.
- Evidence Statement 4D-3: MSUM provides support to ensure that we acquire knowledge responsibly.
- Evidence Statement 4D-4: MSUM provides support to ensure that we discover knowledge responsibly.
- Evidence Statement 4D-5: MSUM provides support to ensure that we apply knowledge responsibly.

***Evidence Statement 4D-1:  
MSUM recognizes the importance of this standard in its mission statement.***

The condensed version of the MSUM mission statement brings together our emphasis on knowledge, learning and citizenship: “We develop knowledge, talent, and skills for a lifetime of learning, service, and citizenship.” By bringing citizenship into the equation, we clearly indicate our expectation that every member of the MSUM community will behave responsibly when acquiring, discovering, and applying knowledge. The extended version of the mission statement makes this even more explicit, specifying our pledge to develop women and men in ways that develop their capacity to act responsibly. The aims accompanying the full version emphasize the importance of recognizing “the ethical bases” of each academic discipline.

***Evidence Statement 4D-2:  
The general environment at MSUM promotes responsible citizenship and open, free inquiry.***

A knowledge community cannot succeed if the general climate does not actively support free and responsible inquiry and supports the highest standards of responsible behavior

throughout the university community. Given the relatively homogenous population of the region, these efforts require a special emphasis on awareness of support for diverse viewpoints within the learning environment. MSUM employs multiple ongoing efforts to create the proper environment. Much of this has been covered in our previous discussion of Core Component 1E. Here are some highlights of efforts to support responsible citizenship within the university and in the university's relation to its many constituents.

Annually, President Barden sends a letter to every employee emphasizing that MSUM adheres to the highest standards of civility. The importance of a civil and ethical campus climate is indicated to all potential MSUM employees. All Vacancy Notices and Job Descriptions for faculty and staff positions include language to alert all applicants of the importance of ethical responsibilities of the educational setting.<sup>112</sup> For example, recent vacancy notice for a faculty position in elementary and early childhood education *required* applicants to demonstrate “experience identifying and responding to systemic nature of problems confronting low-income communities” and “demonstrated ability to work successfully with students of diverse backgrounds, including sensitivity to their needs and concerns”.<sup>113</sup> All job descriptions for position descriptions of classified, MSUAASF and Administration employees contain the following language: “Be respectful of and sensitive to the rights, responsibilities and duties of other, and respectful of the human rights of all racial, ethnic, and religious groups, including but not limited to protected groups as defined by Minnesota state statute.”

Selected state statutes govern ethical conduct. All employees of MSUM are governed by Minnesota Statutes. MSUM is subject to the code of ethics for employees in the executive branch, which governs use of state property and state time, technology, and conflicts of interest.<sup>114</sup> All relevant state statutes are found in the Faculty Guide to Resources and Policies.<sup>115</sup>

All of the five criteria for faculty evaluation involve oversight that promotes responsible behavior. As explained in Core Component 2C, MSUM has a well-established process for regularly evaluating faculty, staff, and administration. Faculty are the most directly responsible for acquisition and discovery of knowledge. Their professional activities are governed by Article 22 of the Agreement, which specifies five criteria for the evaluation of faculty effectiveness.<sup>116</sup> Student evaluation of faculty teaching is required, not merely optional. This requirement provides ongoing student commentary on the faculty behavior as it relates to students' acquisition of knowledge. Faculty are themselves required to conduct research and to engage in ongoing learning. Faculty are required to “contribute to student growth and development,” a task that clearly requires faculty to engage in ethical oversight of student activities. Finally, faculty are required to apply their knowledge through service to the community and university, another area that clearly implies awareness of responsible behavior in the application of knowledge. The full scope of service activity is explained fully in our discussion in Chapter 5/Criterion 5.

Well-organized and functioning student government and organizations give students an opportunity to apply knowledge responsibly under the supervision of faculty and student services personnel. As discussed in Core Component 1D, MSUM has an active culture of

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112 <http://www.mnstate.edu/vacancy/>

113 Vacancy 0617P, 2006

114 Minnesota Statutes Section 43A.38 (Supp. 1997): <http://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/>

115 <http://www.mnstate.edu/facguide/Ethics.htm>

116 <http://www.hr.mnscu.edu/LR/Contracts/ifo03-05/ifoContract.pdf>, Article 22.

student government and student organizations. Although it has oversight over these activities, the Office of Student Affairs Mission Statement does not currently include language that addresses promoting responsible behavior.<sup>117</sup>

The university engages in multiple projects supporting a responsible climate for the acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge.

- For example, TOCAR actively works to advance multicultural understanding and competence and to confront ethnic/racial prejudice and discrimination and institutional racism. These activities are discussed at greater length in Chapter 2/ Criterion 2A.
- Other important initiatives include the Safe Zone project (creating a campus climate that supports community members who may be dealing with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and/or questioning issues).<sup>118</sup>
- MSUM enforces Alcohol and Drug policies<sup>119</sup>, has instituted a new required course on alcohol, and enforces Non-Discrimination policies.<sup>120</sup>

**Evidence Statement 4D-3:  
MSUM provides support to ensure that we acquire knowledge responsibly.**

Support is provided to students so that they are aware of ethical behavior in the acquisition and discovery of knowledge.

- The Minnesota State system has set the following policy for all state universities, including MSUM: "Annually, and upon amendment, colleges and universities shall notify students of the availability and location of the code of conduct and a copy of the code shall be posted at appropriate locations on campus and on the college/ university website. Allegations of discrimination, harassment, sexual violence, fraud or dishonest acts as defined in Board Policy 1C.2 shall be resolved pursuant to Board policy. Allegations of academic dishonesty may be resolved under separate procedures in accordance with an institution's policies on those issues."<sup>121</sup>
- The university uses new student orientation as a forum for alerting students and parents to the university's expectations concerning academic honesty and relevant student conduct codes. Every student who participates in on-site orientation receives a copy of the Student Handbook, including virtually every incoming freshmen and the majority of incoming transfer students. The university's standards are clearly articulated in the Student Handbook.<sup>122</sup> Not every student attends such orientation. In addition, the Student Handbook is posted online and is easily accessible to every student.<sup>123</sup>

One hallmark of responsible knowledge acquisition is proper citation of one's source material. Concerned about the increasing use of the Internet as an uncited source of student work, the university licensed Turnitin.com and started a pilot trial by training 22 faculty for

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117 <http://www.mnstate.edu/stdntaff/mission.htm>

118 <http://www.mnstate.edu/safezone/>

119 <http://www.mnstate.edu/humanres/policy/Alcohol&DrugPolicy.pdf>

120 <http://www.mnstate.edu/affirm/>

121 <http://www.mnscu.edu/board/policy/306.html>

122 <http://www.mnstate.edu/sthandbook/>

123 <http://www.mnstate.edu/sthandbook/>

immediate use during spring semester 2004.<sup>124</sup> Encouraged by the results, the use of Turnitin.com has been licensed in each of the following years.<sup>125</sup>

Standards concerning academic honesty are communicated via individual syllabi. Following Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board Policy 3.22,<sup>126</sup> each student enrolled in each MSUM course receives a course syllabus during the first week of class. For courses offered in a condensed format, the time frame for distribution is adjusted accordingly.<sup>127</sup> The Board Policy is included in the Faculty Guide to Resources and Policies.<sup>128</sup> Although not required by Board Policy, all faculty are asked to place appropriate information about academic honesty on each syllabus. Approximately 50 percent of all faculty comply with this request.<sup>129</sup>

The university has appropriate enforcement of violations of the student conduct code. The university judicial officer has responsibility for investigating reports of violations of the student conduct code. If warranted, the case is referred to the Student Conduct Committee, who can conduct a formal hearing and make a disciplinary recommendation. Every student member of the committee receives training in ethical standards and principles, and in student disciplinary rights. The university judicial officer ensures that students understand and respect the due process rights of those accused of violating the conduct code.<sup>130</sup> Numerical data on enforcement of the student conduct code is found in annual reports of the university judicial officer.<sup>131</sup>

Policies and procedures are in place to ensure that faculty acquire knowledge responsibly. MSUM has Intellectual Property Guidelines and supports copyright enforcement. The Minnesota State system has established policies concerning enforcement of copyright law. The system provides a general online resource explaining legal standards concerning copyrighted materials,<sup>132</sup> and provides guidelines concerning:<sup>133</sup>

- Classroom Use and Copying of Books and Periodicals;
- Use of Music Materials;
- Performance of Copyrighted Works in the Classroom, Distance Education and Public Settings;
- Use of Computer Software and Other Electronic Works; and
- Use of Trademarks.

This information is clearly linked on the home page of the MSUM Library,<sup>134</sup> and workshops on these guidelines are periodically provided to faculty and other interested employees. The

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124 <http://www.turnitin.com/static/home.html>

125 Levels of usage are available at [http://www.mnstate.edu/ncavisit/images/Data\\_Docs/TurnitinStats11-15-05.pdf](http://www.mnstate.edu/ncavisit/images/Data_Docs/TurnitinStats11-15-05.pdf) and <http://www.mnstate.edu/ncavisit/Trunitinstats05-15-06.pdf>

126 <http://www.mnscu.edu/board/policy/322.html>

127 <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/Departments/policies/coursesyllabusPolicy.htm>

128 <http://www.mnstate.edu/facguide/InstrInfo.htm#CrsSyllPlcy>

129 A large sampling of recent course syllabi is available in the Resource Room.

130 <http://www.mnstate.edu/sss/sjs/>

131 Recent reports by the university Judicial Officer are available in the Resource Room.

132 <http://www.copyright.mnscu.edu/>

133 <http://www.copyright.mnscu.edu/guidelines.htm>

134 <http://www.mnstate.edu/library/>

system's Office of General Counsel serves as a primary resource to the intellectual property coordinator.

The director of instructional resources, serves as the MSUM intellectual property coordinator. She has given workshops to faculty on copyright and intellectual property. She advertised and facilitated discussion after a copyright/intellectual property teleconference given by the system. Working with the system's Office of General Counsel as a primary resource, she answers all copyright and intellectual property-related question from faculty. She reports that she receives an average of about one inquiry per week.

Faculty are held accountable through Progress Reports, Sabbatical Reports, and peer and administrative review.

- The IFO contract formalizes the expectation that faculty will engage in continuing study of their discipline. Faculty are subject to a well-defined set of policies for reporting their annual activities. These reports are submitted simultaneously to the department and to the college dean or other supervisor. Faculty are expected to document their activities. This process provides for ongoing supervision by both peers and administrators.<sup>135</sup>
- Faculty who receive a sabbatical leave must submit a written report at the end of the leave, providing an opportunity for administrative oversight.
- Faculty are held accountable with Student Appeals/Complaint procedures against faculty.

Just as faculty have responsibility to ensure that students acquire knowledge responsibly, students are in the best position to observe whether faculty behave responsibly in the education process. MSUM has established procedures by which students can communicate concerns about faculty misconduct as it relates to their teaching assignments. The most important aspect of this process is the course grade appeal policy, which allows students to rectify arbitrary, prejudiced, and/or erroneous evaluation of student performance.<sup>136</sup> This policy is made known to students in the Student Handbook, as is the policy that student concerns about faculty should be taken directly to the college dean.<sup>137</sup>

**Evidence Statement 4D-4:**  
**MSUM provides support to ensure that we discover knowledge responsibly.**

Discovery of knowledge is primarily the province of students and faculty, so we will concentrate on their activities. MSUM ensures responsible discovery of knowledge through the operations of three established committees: the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), and the Radioisotope Safety Committee. MSUM files an annual report to the Federal Office of Research Integrity.

- The Institutional Review Board has oversight over all research involving human subjects. Policies and procedures are readily available.<sup>138</sup> It meets regularly throughout the year and minutes of all meetings are now available online.<sup>139</sup>

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135 <http://www.hr.mnscu.edu/LR/Contracts/ifo03-05/ifoContract.pdf>, Article 22.

136 <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/Departments/Policies/coursegradeappealpolicy.htm>

137 <http://www.mnstate.edu/sthandbook/2005studenthandbook.pdf>

138 <http://www.mnstate.edu/irb/>

139 <http://www.mnstate.edu/irb/>



- The IRB is officially registered with the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP). To conform to its standards, the IRB recently improved its oversight with a new procedure. Beginning in the fall semester 2006, principal investigators and co-investigators are required to complete an online training program before submitting any proposals for IRB review. This policy includes all students involved as co-investigators. This change in policy is in keeping with recent recommendations made by the OHRP. The training program is required for all full reviews and expedited reviews. For proposals dealing with special populations, such as, children, people with disabilities, etc., both the principal investigator and co-investigator(s) must take the training course.
- The IACUC is another federally mandated MSUM Committee. It monitors the use and care of all animals used for teaching, research, or other activities on campus and at satellite facilities, and it is responsible for submission of the annual Animal Welfare Assurance Statement.<sup>140</sup>

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the IFO contract formalizes the expectation that faculty will engage in discovery by pursuing scholarly or creative achievement or research.<sup>141</sup> The same process that oversees that faculty acquire knowledge responsibly provides oversight for the discovery of knowledge. Faculty must report on and supply documentation of their relevant activities. Faculty receiving sabbatical leave must file a written report at the end of the leave. As a result, supervising administrators are regularly made aware of the knowledge discovery underway among faculty.

MSUM has established policies on grant application, management, and reporting. These policies are posted on the website of the Academic Affairs office,<sup>142</sup> and summarized in the Faculty Guide to Resources and Policies.<sup>143</sup> All grants require consultation with (and the signatures of) department chair/director, college dean, and either the Grants Office (for grants and contracts) or the Development Office before submission to the president. The associate vice president serves as grants officer, and the MSUM Business Office is in charge of grants management oversight.<sup>144</sup>

The university has an established tradition of ensuring that students are aware of the ethical responsibilities related to research.

- To support responsible and ethical discovery of knowledge, the university had an established practice of introducing all students to our expectations in ENGL 102: Composition and Literature II, a course required of every student. Students were required “to make use of library and other research sources that require crediting the writing of others in a responsible manner.” The university’s recent decision to drop ENGL 102 as a required course does not mean abandoning the task of introducing students to responsible research. Effective fall semester 2006, the same oversight will occur in the required freshman course, CMST 100: Speech Communication.
- Until recently, the university had no general statement of expectation about students’ responsible discovery of knowledge. As part of the design of the Dragon Core program, the campus community endorsed a new set of goals, Competency

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140 <http://www.mnstate.edu/iacuc/>

141 <http://www.hr.mnscu.edu/LR/Contracts/ifo03-05/ifoContract.pdf>, Article 22.

142 <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadgrants/Index.htm>

143 <http://www.mnstate.edu/facguide/ProfDvlpmtResch.htm#Grants>

144 <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadgrants/MP/GrantsMgmt.htm>

Area 11, Information Literacy, aimed at fostering researchers knowledge about and accountable to ethical standards involving the use of information. Adapted from competencies developed by the Association of College and Research Libraries,<sup>145</sup> the outcomes specify that all students will demonstrate their ability to “access and use information ethically and legally.” The new student competencies were approved by APAC on Jan. 24, 2006, and accepted by President Barden on Feb. 28, 2006. These new learning competencies went into effect fall semester 2006.

- Every graduate degree granted by MSUM requires either a thesis or integrative project that is directed by a member of the MSUM graduate faculty.<sup>146</sup> Each graduate student is assigned an advisor appropriate to the student’s research. Each graduate program requires a final oral discourse or oral examination in which an examining committee of graduate faculty discusses the thesis or project research, the creative endeavor, or the integrating paper. At least one member of the examining committee is an “outside” member from a department different from the one in which the student is pursuing the degree.
- The Institutional Review Board (IRB) has the responsibility for monitoring all student research projects that involve human subjects. The Graduate Studies Office does not allow a committee to begin oversight of graduate research until the project has been approved by the IRB.

Together, these policies and processes ensure that each graduate student is made aware of, and held to, the appropriate research methods and standards for discovering knowledge responsibly.

**Evidence Statement 4D-5:**

***MSUM provides support to ensure that we apply knowledge responsibly.***

Service learning courses and student organizations are two important avenues for applying knowledge responsibly. Under the supervision of faculty, approximately 1250 undergraduate students have participated annually in service learning projects. Under the supervision of faculty and staff advisors, 33 different official student organizations have their membership engaged in regular volunteer work. In the last academic year, for example, those organizations directed approximately 900 students into volunteer projects and provided over 1400 volunteer hours. Our commitment to service learning was recently reaffirmed when the university created a half-time position in Academic Affairs—the director of service learning.

By their senior year, 55 percent of undergraduate students have taken, and an additional 23 percent plan to take, a practicum, internship, field experience or clinical assignment. Active supervision ensures that these students apply knowledge in a setting that requires them to do so responsibly.<sup>147</sup>

As students expand their horizons and gain new knowledge, a responsible university does not presume that students will intuitively grasp the ethical ramifications of that knowledge, nor of its application. Until 2006, the task of addressing ethical issues was left to individual departments and programs. Students could choose from 45 courses in 21 departments, ranging from PHIL 115: Contemporary Moral Issues, to more specialized examinations of applied knowledge, such as CSIS 370: Social, Ethical, and Professional Issues in Computing or NURS 318: Ethics in Nursing.

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145 <http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlstandards/informationliteracycompetency.htm>

146 <http://www.mnstate.edu/graduate/generalreqs.htm>

147 NSSE 2006 at [http://www.mnstate.edu/institut/fact\\_book\\_home\\_page/msum\\_fact\\_book.htm](http://www.mnstate.edu/institut/fact_book_home_page/msum_fact_book.htm)

As a result of these efforts, a majority of MSUM seniors report that their MSUM experience has contributed “very much” or “quite a bit” to developing a personal code of values and ethics.<sup>148</sup>

As part of the Dragon Core, the campus community endorsed a new set of goals, Competency Area 10: Ethical and Civic Responsibility.<sup>149</sup> As a result, all entering students effective fall semester 2006 are required, in completing an associate or baccalaureate degree, to complete an approved course on ethics and civic responsibility. One of the student learning outcomes is that students will be able to “make responsible personal, professional, and civic decisions and evaluate how these affect other people,” which would include responsible application of knowledge acquired by attending MSUM.<sup>150</sup>

In addition to overall efforts to support responsible use of knowledge, the university receives oversight from 12 accrediting agencies besides the HLC/NCA. These agencies are prominently featured on the first page of the MSUM Bulletin.<sup>151</sup> Responsible application of knowledge is a major concern for many of these organizations. For example, the Council on Social Work Education, which reaccredits the MSUM School of Social Work every eight years, provides an extensive list of values expected of social workers. In turn, the School of Social Work communicates its detailed expectations about responsible behavior to its students in a department handbook.<sup>152</sup> These processes of external oversight and continuing re-accreditation demonstrate our commitment to professional standards of responsible behavior.

Co-Curricular activities are an important forum for learning to apply knowledge responsibly. Among its many components, the MSUM Office of Student Activities offers regular Leadership Programming.<sup>153</sup> The Activities Resource Center in the student union is a student-centered facility that fosters leadership. The Senior Year Experience offers an eight week course that addresses the transition from student to professional life. A more detailed discussion of co-curricular activities can be found in Chapter 5/Criterion 5.

Student employment is frequently overlooked as an arena of campus life in which students learn to apply knowledge responsibly. However, MSUM treats student employment as an opportunity for developing responsibility. One example is the standard employment agreement that must be reviewed and signed by students employed by the Comstock Memorial Union. The Student Employee Agreement includes multiple reminders of MSUM expectations of integrity and responsible behavior.<sup>154</sup> Student employees who work with confidential material receive FERPA training and are required to sign a statement indicating their understanding of, and responsibility to uphold, the attendant responsibilities.

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148 NSSE 2006 at [http://www.mnstate.edu/institut/fact\\_book\\_home\\_page/msum\\_fact\\_book.htm](http://www.mnstate.edu/institut/fact_book_home_page/msum_fact_book.htm)

149 <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/APAC/2005-2006APAC/Official/11-15,12-6,12-13Notice.pdf>

150 <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/Istf/CAs.htm#Ethical>

151 <http://www.mnstate.edu/home/bulletin/accred.pdf>

152 <http://www.mnstate.edu/socialwk/studenthandbook.pdf>

153 [http://www.mnstate.edu/osa/leadership/leadership\\_programming.cfm](http://www.mnstate.edu/osa/leadership/leadership_programming.cfm)

154 Detailed information is available in the CMU Student Employment Leadership Guide in the Resource Room.

## Chapter 4/Criterion 4: Chapter Evaluation and Summary

### **Our Strengths:**

- MSUM has a high-quality faculty committed to undergraduate education and supported by good professional development opportunities;
- MSUM students and faculty are involved in variety of academic pursuits, many outside of the classroom and are engaged in bringing a life of learning to the larger community;
- A new Dragon Core curriculum improves general education and adjusts to changing needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This signature curriculum includes an innovative course that lays the foundations for learning to think critically about multicultural issues, a writing-intensive program that requires four writing intensive courses beyond the Dragon Core foundational writing course, and competencies that address needs of students who will live in a global and diverse world;
- Faculty are directly involved in student research and many students are involved in faculty research;
- The centrality of the general education curriculum is affirmed in mission documents, administrative commitment, and supporting services;
- MSUM provides strong administrative and financial support for assessment of the Dragon Core curriculum;
- Academic Affairs is committed to supporting and assessing opportunities for students to learn from and work with diverse populations in field experiences, internships, clinical placements, and academic service learning assignments;
- The university operates and assesses various international programs in order to develop students' skills to live and work in a diverse and global society; and
- Many departments and colleges have advisory councils/committees and utilize various assessment methods to help improve the curriculum. These include employer and student surveys and internship site evaluations.

### **Challenges:**

- In the face of declining state support for higher education, fundraising for scholarships has not kept pace with increasing tuition, shifting more of the cost to students and reducing access to the life of learning provided at MSUM;
- Graduate programs receive inadequate support; and
- Recently implemented administrative structures for assessment (DCAC, SLOAC) will need to further develop a “culture of assessment” within the university community.

The relationship between faculty and undergraduate students is the bedrock of the MSUM experience. MSUM faculty and staff invest heavily in the undergraduate experience and in faculty development that supports undergraduate learning. At the same time, our consideration of graduate students and employers of MSUM alumni suggests that MSUM should make a greater effort to engage in ongoing reflection about their place in the life of learning. Recent strategic decisions about the design and assessment of undergraduate education position us to continue the commitments of our mission. These changes include a renewed commitment to a life of learning guided by responsible action. We continue to adapt and monitor the curriculum in order to prepare students for the challenges of a global, diverse, and technological world.