



Chapter
2

Chapter 2

Criterion 2

Preparing for the Future

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Preparing for Our Future

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

Public higher education today faces great challenges: declining state appropriations, increasing numbers of students who are not adequately prepared for college, and increasing expectations that we will be community-focused and contribute to economic development. To rise above these challenges, we know that we must adapt our teaching, our planning, and our budgeting.

At MSUM, we are prepared to meet these challenges, developing thoughtful and competent citizens for the state and region. Strategic planning and budgeting and a commitment to shift resources to areas of need will ensure that MSUM meets its future challenges.

Through careful planning and a dedicated community of faculty and staff, we have made efficient use of limited resources to live out our mission.

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

Planning has become a major focus on campus since our last accreditation visit. We have made great progress toward creating a planning cycle that merges planning and budgeting and responds to our environmental scanning, system expectations, and campus needs and priorities.

In 2002, we created the position of the university planning and budget officer to oversee the university's general fund and coordinate planning and budgeting work. At the same time, management of the capital fund was assigned to the vice president for administrative affairs. By dividing the oversight of these budgets, we have been able to more closely track our finances and use our resources in ways that support our mission of student learning. In all of our efforts, we strive to make efficient use of our resources in order to provide the best possible learning environments for our students and meet our future demands.

The following sets of evidence illustrate Core Component 2A:

- Evidence Statement 2A-1: Campus-wide discussions have transformed environmental knowledge into action plans.
- Evidence Statement 2A-2: Decentralized budgeting procedures, linked with new ways of planning, ensure that we can address future challenges.
- Evidence Statement 2A-3: A new marketing plan and targeted student recruiting will counter a shrinking pool of traditional college students in our region.
- Evidence Statement 2A-4: New curriculum, collaboration, and innovative programs will enhance our students' opportunities for success.
- Evidence Statement 2A-5: We have programs on many levels to provide our students with the skills they need to effectively and ethically live in a diverse world.
- Evidence Statement 2A-6: MSUM is responsive to the economic development needs of the state and region by developing programs designed to prepare workers for employment.
- Evidence Statement 2A-7: MSUM has responded to changing student expectation with several strategic action.
- Evidence Statement 2A-8: The current presidential administration has created a solid foundation for the next university president.

***Evidence Statement 2A-1:
Campus-wide discussions have transformed environmental knowledge into action plans.***

The MSUM community has met often to discuss our future and make plans that will allow us to remain effective. A series of summer retreats, faculty professional development days, and open forums have focused our attention on important environmental issues. Complete documentation for each of the meetings identified here is available in the Resource Room. Some of the topics for these meetings have included:

- Student recruitment in 1998;
- Racial and ethnic diversity in 2001;
- Student retention and success in 2002;
- Faculty use of technology in teaching in October 2003;
- Student health and wellness, specifically alcohol and drug abuse in 2004;
- Assessing our general education requirements in 2004 and 2005;
- Student Success Institute, focusing on improving our student success programs in 2006;
- Teaching to Generation Next students, featuring Dr. Mark Taylor in 2006; and
- Instructional technology conferences in multiple years.

Recommendations from these meetings have been forwarded to standing university committees or task forces for follow-up. Several recent examples include:

Cross-Cutting Theme: The Connected Organization

Academic Policy Governance

The Academic Policy Advisory Council is the university's curriculum committee. Its stated purpose is to "improve communication between faculty and administration in academic matters. Faculty representatives to APAC are charged to apply professional judgment to matters of academic policy." The committee is comprised of representatives from each of the colleges and is chaired by the vice president for academic affairs. The committee is one of the few on campus to which members are elected.

APAC meetings are the place where the multitude of curricular proposals are discussed and debated. From APAC, all curricular issues are subject to discussion at Meet and Confer, the monthly meeting of the Inter Faculty Organization and the administration. Ultimately, the president decides matters that have been discussed in these bodies.

Creating the Dragon Core tested our governance and deliberation processes. APAC met 19 times during the 2005-2006 academic year, discussing the Dragon Core at many of those meetings. Many items were returned to the task force which proposed the curriculum and many of APAC's recommendations were further discussed at Meet and Confer. On one issue—whether to allow course specific prerequisites—a special university-wide open forum was held to allow all interested to voice their opinions before the president decided the issue.

The process through which the Dragon Core was created and implemented engaged the campus in healthy internal communication. At the core of these discussions were competing ideas about the nature of general education and how MSUM can best meet the needs of today's students. Through discussion and debate the Dragon Core emerged a stronger program.

- Class Scheduling Task Force: Convened in the spring of 2006 and whose charge includes examining our daily class schedule and recommending changes to better serve our students and maximize our use of facilities;
- The Three- and Four-Credit Task Force: Charged with examining our current mix of three and four credit class offerings. Its recommendations influenced the design of the Dragon Core. Further recommendations are being considered by the Class Scheduling Task Force;¹
- The Web Design Task Force: Charged with identifying a common look and content for university Web sites;²
- Liberal Studies Task Force: Convened in the spring of 2005 and whose work led to the Dragon Core, implemented for fall 2006. The Dragon Core revisions will be discussed extensively in Criterion 4/Chapter 4;³

1 http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/3_4_credittaskforceitem.doc

2 <http://www.mnstate.edu/president/Web%20Task%20Force%202006.htm>

3 <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/lstf/>

- President's Task Force on Student Alcohol Misuse: Convened in the fall of 2004 and whose work led to a new course required of all freshmen, new policies, a \$320,000 grant, and other actions;⁴
- Technology Master Plan Task Force: Convened in 2003 and whose work led to a plan for technology, which has largely been implemented;⁵ and
- Racial and Ethnic Diversity Task Force: Convened in 2002 and whose work led to a plan for increasing campus diversity.⁶

The action plans from these task forces have been delegated to personnel or existing university committees or have led to the creation of new committees. Our planning and budgeting process has often supported the work of these committees. In sum, MSUM has a history of uniting the campus community to discuss societal, and economic trends and we have the processes in place to focus our planning and budgeting to address our future challenges.

***Evidence Statement 2A-2:
Decentralized budgeting procedures, linked with new ways of planning, ensure that we can address future challenges.***

MSUM has adopted decentralized budgeting procedures that allow for more responsive reallocation of division funds and greater use of carry forward funds to address areas of need within the division. At the same time, centrally funded Work Plan Initiatives focus university general revenue on areas of strategic importance to the university. Budgeting and planning will be discussed in greater depth in the next Core Component. Because we have used our planning processes to respond to these issues, MSUM is now in a position of strength to address our future challenges.

***Evidence Statement 2A-3:
A new marketing plan and targeted student recruiting will counter a shrinking pool of traditional college students in our region.***

The changing demographics of our traditional service area are one of the most important environmental issues facing the university. Decreasing numbers of traditional-aged college students means that we will have to expand our markets to remain at our current size. MSUM primarily serves students from Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Though Minnesota predicts slight increases in the numbers of high school graduates in coming years, North Dakota and South Dakota will see dramatic declines. In Minnesota, population gains are projected for the Twin Cities metropolitan region with the western part of the state seeing declines. According to the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, the number of public high school graduates in Minnesota will increase 1.2 percent from FY2003 to FY2018. North Dakota will see a decrease of 30.6 percent from FY2002 to FY2018. For South Dakota, the decrease will be 16.5 percent over that same period.

In Minnesota, the expected slight increase is comprised of many students who will be at-risk for a college education. As these students matriculate to MSUM and other schools, they may tax our student success programs.

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

5 <http://www.mnstate.edu/plans/technology/index.htm>

6 <http://www.mnstate.edu/president/StrategicPlanning/FINALRacial&EthnicDiversityPlan.3.2.04.pdf>

Cross-Cutting Theme: The Future-Oriented Organization

Creating Connections with Two-Year Colleges

With fewer traditional-aged college students expected in our service region, we know that MSUM must develop relationships with two-year colleges in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan region. Though faculty and administrators have been working to develop articulation agreements with two-year colleges for the past six years, these efforts were significantly enhanced last year.

Funded by a Work Plan Initiative, MSUM faculty from select programs and administrators made visits to Minnesota State Community and Technical College in Fergus Falls, Anoka Ramsey Community College in Coon Rapids, North Hennepin Community College in Brooklyn Park, Minneapolis Community and Technical College, Inver Hills Community College, Normandale Community College in Bloomington, Century College in White Bear Lake, and St. Paul College. North Hennepin faculty and administrators made a visit to Moorhead to follow up on articulation agreement planning.

Last year's efforts have yielded significant results. A Twin Cities-based liaison position was funded through a Work Plan Initiative. We have articulation agreements with Anoka Ramsey and Century College for special education. For special education, we are seeing a larger number of place-bound students who have few alternatives to further their education. Additional articulation agreements in a variety of programs are pending. Perhaps most significantly, we are developing a biotechnology certificate program that will include MSUM classes taught on the North Hennepin campus. We are in discussions with North Hennepin about creating a more permanent presence on the Brooklyn Park campus.

MSUM is responding to the social and economic factors that are reducing the number of students who would traditionally enroll in MSUM by creating programs that will provide a needed service to incumbent workers in the Twin Cities.

MSUM has recognized the demographic realities of our traditional service area and has developed strategies to stabilize our enrollment at a level consistent with our capacity. Some of our actions have been limited in their scope—such as charging in-state tuition for out of state students—but we have also pursued several far-reaching strategies.

As the population of the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area increases, we have made a concerted effort to recruit more from the metro area. We hired a recruiting coordinator for the Twin Cities to promote MSUM in metro high schools and two-year schools. A second recruiter will be hired based on a Work Plan Initiative for FY2007. We are also working on a series of articulation agreements with community and technical colleges in the Twin Cities and throughout the region. Work Plan Initiatives in FY2006 and FY2007 provided funding for administrators and faculty to visit with their counterparts and students at Twin Cities two-year campuses. The recent efforts are a follow up to similar visits that began in 2001. We have been effective in our Twin Cities recruiting efforts. In fact, we will be offering courses this spring on the campus of North Hennepin Community College in Brooklyn Park, MN in an effort to enhance our image in the Twin Cities and recruit more students to the MSUM campus.

We have increased our visibility through advertising and marketing. Work plan initiatives in both FY2006 and FY2007 have addressed this need. A new marketing plan for the university was unveiled in the fall of 2006 and is being implemented this year.

***Evidence Statement 2A-4:
New curriculum, collaboration, and innovative programs will enhance our students' opportunities for success.***

A key challenge we will continue to face is meeting the needs of students who are not prepared for college-level work. An increasing number of students come to MSUM short of our expectations for competence in areas such as mathematics, writing, and critical thinking. Taking a holistic view of student success that includes retention, persistence to graduation, and overall success at MSUM, we have designed several programs to ensure our effectiveness in this area.

The Dragon Core, MSUM's new general education curriculum, will focus on developing a student's basic skills in writing, speaking, math, and critical and multicultural thinking. All students will take a freshmen-level course in each of these areas and then will be required to take additional courses that intentionally extend those skills. Of particular interest is improving writing. After taking the initial course in writing, students will be required to take four additional courses that have writing-intensive designation. The University Writing Committee will monitor the consistency of writing-intensive courses. Assessment of the Dragon Core will help us determine if we are meeting student needs and make necessary changes if we are not. Work Plan Initiatives for FY2007 support the assessment of the Dragon Core by allowing us to hire an assistant vice president for assessment.

Participants in the Student Success Institute, held during June 2006 and funded by an FY2006 Work Plan Initiative, identified key areas related to student success and made specific recommendations for ways to enhance our programs. Among the recommendations being considered this year are relocating student services to a central location, streamlining our process of registering, orienting, and instructing first year students, and hiring new personnel to coordinate student success and/or enrollment management.

We also have well-established programs to address particular student academic needs. The Mathematics Learning Center (MLC) was created to develop the math skills of incoming freshmen. Entering MSUM students who score below a certain level on the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system Mathematics Placement Exam and/or the mathematics portion of the ACT are placed into Beginning Algebra and Intermediate Algebra classes. The curriculum uses both new materials first presented in a lecture setting, then, in the MLC. Students are encouraged to help each other with assigned problems with the guidance of the lab director, the lecture instructor and a student tutor. The Minnesota State system honored the Mathematics Learning Center for Excellence in Curricular Programming in 2005. We have also offered writing tutoring to students for many years through the Write Site. Additionally, MSUM hired a writing director in 2006 to lead the university's overall writing program and direct the tutoring program.

Several programs allow us to serve students who might not qualify for an education at a four-year school otherwise.

- Students who do not meet our admissions standards are given the option of enrolling in the Gateway Program. Through this program, students are admitted to Minnesota State Community and Technical College. However, they take courses on the MSUM campus and have the option to take part in most aspects of college life at MSUM. After 24 credits of coursework with a 2.0 grade point average, these

students transfer to MSUM. Approximately 200 students each year choose to pursue the Gateway Program.

- The Corrick Center for General Education is a program that provides a supportive learning community for a selected number of first and second-year students admitted to Minnesota State University Moorhead. This unique program prepares students for success in their chosen field of study by offering a curriculum emphasizing writing, critical reading, and mathematical skills. The faculty provide personal advising and are committed to helping students build a foundation of success to achieve their academic goals.

Evidence Statement 2A-5:

We have programs on many levels to provide our students with the skills they need to effectively and ethically live in a diverse world.

The MSUM Racial and Ethnic Diversity Plan was created in 2004, following a faculty development day that addressed diversity and multiculturalism. The plan focused on areas such as student and faculty recruitment and curriculum. The Cultural Diversity/Affirmative Action Committee oversees the implementation of this plan and the director of human resources serves as the diversity officer. We have expanded recruitment to diverse groups of students, including first generation college students and students of color. Some notable examples include the hiring of a recruiting coordinator in the Twin Cities, new Access scholarships⁷, and a bus trip sponsored by MSUM to bring students from Chicago to campus last spring. Several students from that trip enrolled at MSUM as a result.

For the past two years, Work Plan Initiatives have provided base funding to the TOCAR project. TOCAR conducts regular training sessions for faculty, staff, and students and has conducted summer workshops for faculty. The goal of these workshops is to provide faculty with the skills and resources they need to effectively teach multicultural components in their classes. Twenty-one faculty attended TOCAR workshops in the summer of 2006 and they each developed a course or components for a course that address diversity. Additional discussion of how MSUM is addressing diversity and globalization can be found in Core Component 4C.

The new Dragon Core curriculum addresses diversity on several levels. All entering students will be required to take a critical and multicultural thinking course. These courses will be offered by multiple departments, but will achieve the same student learning outcomes. Additionally, all students will take a course in the global perspective category as well as the ethics and civic responsibility category.

Evidence Statement 2A-6:

MSUM is responsive to the economic development needs of the state and region by developing programs designed to prepare workers for employment.

MSUM has developed programs that are unique to our region and designed to train individuals for employment in specific fields. Working with our local biobusiness partners, MSUM is developing a new biotechnology industry certificate focused on quality assurance. The program is a unique advanced training opportunity for individuals trained for bioscience, pharmaceutical, and chemistry careers. The certificate is designed to meet the needs of the bioscience industry in Minnesota, North Dakota, and the Upper Midwest. The focus of the certificate emerged in discussions with business leaders about their primary training needs. The program will prepare undergraduates to enter the workforce, provide

⁷ <http://www.mnstate.edu/finaid/access.cfm>

training to incumbent workers for career advancement, and retrain displaced workers for new careers.

This effort to create bioscience partnerships has advanced beyond the Moorhead-Fargo area. We are also partnering with North Hennepin Community College in Brooklyn Park, MN. Through this partnership we will offer BIO 341: Genetics, and BIO 350: General Microbiology on the NHCC campus during the spring semester of 2007. During the 2007-2008 academic year we will continue to offer Genetics and Microbiology adding BIO/CHEM 400/405: Biochemistry I and BIO/CHEM 410/415: Biochemistry II for the first time. In the fall of 2007 we also plan to teach the first certificate course in the series, Working in Regulated Industries, for the first time on the NHCC campus.

The biotechnology industry certificate is not our only unique program. Programs in operations management and construction management have high placement rates and are drawing large numbers of transfer students. A Work Plan Initiative for FY2007 will allow a third faculty member to be hired in construction management. The film studies program is unique to the region, offering students the ability to emphasize production or history and criticism. A shift in college resources has allowed a third faculty member to be hired for the program, which is now in its third year of existence. The graphic design program has alumni in prominent positions in Twin Cities design firms and continues to draw students to campus. The music industry program offers students a unique way to study the business of music. Graduates of our film studies, graphic design, and music industry programs contribute to the cultural and artistic vitality of the state and region.

The Dragon Core has been developed, in part, as a response to concerns by regional employers regarding the need for stronger basic skills for our graduates. Described in the previous section, the general education curriculum is designed to develop skills in communication, critical and multicultural thinking, mathematics, and diversity.

The Distance Education Committee is taking a more strategic look at the kinds of programs we can offer via the Internet or by other delivery methods. MSUM is now able to charge a differential tuition fee of \$50 per credit for online courses to support those courses and develop new ones. We have several distance education programs in place—notably in nursing and educational leadership—that serve place-bound students. We expect to increase this number, drawing on our instructional technology infrastructure that has been greatly enhanced in recent years.

We also have programs to serve the needs of incumbent workers in our area. The customized education and training (CET) program focuses on offering credit and non-credit offerings for professionals and incumbent workers. Programs are planned with representatives of business and professional organizations in response to their specific needs and may be open enrollment or contracted training classes. Examples of some classes/courses offered in the past year include: Children and Grief Workshop (credit and non-credit) for nurses, counselors, social workers; Grant Writing Bootcamp (credit and non-credit) for PK-12 teachers and administrators, human service and nonprofit professionals; and "Seven Habits of Highly Effective People" (Covey) training for five groups of 12 employees (total of 60 people) for Swanson Health Products, Fargo.

***Evidence Statement 2A-7:
MSUM has responded to changing student expectations with several strategic actions.***

Students today come to college campuses with high expectations of the campus facilities and amenities. We believe that positive recreational and fitness experiences add greatly to success

in the classroom. Additionally, attractive and convenient campus facilities improve the recruitment of new students and the retention of continuing students.

Our newest residence hall, John Neumaier Hall, features apartment-style living with two-bedroom and two-bathroom suites. All residence halls include wireless Internet access offered through the City of Moorhead. We will begin construction on the Dragon Wellness Center in 2007. The center will provide 40,000 square feet of space for individual and group fitness activities along with state-of-the-art fitness equipment. An interim center has been available to students since January 2005. Our campus also features several convenience stores, restaurant-type dining, a hair salon, and other amenities desired by college students.

We will be expanding our offering of online courses to meet student demands in specific programs. The Class Scheduling Task Force is currently evaluating our daily class schedule to ensure that we offer courses at times and on days suited to student needs and expectations.

Students also expect safety and convenience. The campus uses a Honeywell EBI card access system to lock and unlock exterior doors to most campus buildings and to some classroom and laboratories in our science areas. The Honeywell system is integrated with student records so we can program door access based on a student's enrollment.

Students and faculty are increasingly interested in accessing the full-text of resources online from their dorms, homes and apartments, and other remote locations and they want the access to be provided 24/7. Since 2000, the library has provided off-campus access to library resources through a proxy server that authenticates users and allows them to use electronic library resources from any location. These online resources support the research needs and interests of students and faculty both on and off-campus.

Evidence Statement 2A-8:

The current presidential administration has created a solid foundation for the next university president.

We anticipate the retirement of the president in the next few years. The current administration will leave a long list of accomplishments from which a new president will build. As discussed throughout this report, we have a significantly improved infrastructure, a stable budget, a workable planning process, a revised general education program, excellent assessment support, and programs in place to support student success. Based on this strong foundation, we anticipate the opportunity to select our new president from an excellent pool of qualified presidential candidates.

Core Component 2B:

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

We have been able to plan for the future despite decreased state appropriation. Unquestionably, we know how to plan—we have addressed past fiscal challenges without significant layoffs or programmatic cuts. While we have been forced to raise tuition, MSUM still has the lowest tuition rates of any residential campus in the Minnesota State system. By decentralizing the budgeting procedure, we have been able to mobilize our resources to address future challenges. We continue to seek alumni contributions and external sources of funding to relieve some resource pressure.

The following sets of evidence illustrate Core Component 2B:

- Evidence Statement 2B-1: The university budget is structured to maximize division-level budgeting and responsiveness.
- Evidence Statement 2B-2: Work Plan Initiatives connect planning and budgeting and allow us to prioritize our response to environmental scanning.
- Evidence Statement 2B-3: The ability of division heads to use carry-forward funds has reduced long-standing deficiencies in our academic programs.
- Evidence Statement 2B-4: Our budgeting procedures allow resources to be shifted more easily within divisions.
- Evidence Statement 2B-5: Our planning reflects a sound understanding of the institution's current capacity.
- Evidence Statement 2B-6: We are enhancing our human resources to focus expertise on key challenges.
- Evidence Statement 2B-7: We have developed a strong technology infrastructure to support new programs and new ways of teaching.
- Evidence Statement 2B-8: We must be more strategic and aggressive in pursuing external funding.
- Evidence Statement 2B-9: We have significantly upgraded our teaching and learning facilities and have plans for future improvements.

***Evidence Statement 2B-1:
The university budget is structured to maximize division-level budgeting and responsiveness.***

The first step of the budgeting process is to project anticipated revenue. There are two major sources of revenue for MSUM's annual operating budget: state appropriation and tuition. Currently, there is an equal balance of revenue that comes from the state and from tuition. In the recent past, the amount from the state exceeded the amount from tuition, but we are being forced to rely increasingly on tuition revenue.

The state appropriates revenue on a biennial cycle. Ideally, the legislature's work is done in May, but this is not always the case. We do not always know the amount of our state appropriation when the fiscal year starts. However, in the second year of the biennium, we know well in advance what our appropriation will be.

The state legislature allocates revenue to the Minnesota State system, which uses a cost model to allocate revenue to its institutions. There are academic, administrative, and library elements in the allocation model. For academics, the cost of instruction in each academic program at each school is compared to the statewide average. Programs that fall within 92 percent and 110 percent of the average receive the full amount of the statewide average. Programs that cost less than the average receive extra funding while programs that cost more than the average receive less funding. For FY2005, half of our programs lost revenue, and half made revenue or broke even. We continue to examine how our programs are classified by the model and how we can maximize our position in the model.

Overall, our allocation was \$225,554 less in FY2007 than it was in FY2006.

Additional money from the state comes in the form of bonding and Higher Education Asset Preservation and Replacement (HEAPR) money, which are discussed in Evidence Statement 2B-9.

The balance of our revenue comes from tuition. As with other institutions, we do not know exactly how much tuition will be available before the academic term begins. We have developed flexible budgeting models in order to accommodate this uncertainty. In recent years, we've been forced to increase tuition to make up the difference from the state

Cross-Cutting Theme: The Future-Oriented Organization

The University Planning and Budget Committee

The University Planning and Budget Committee (UPBC) is the university committee that makes decisions about allocating resources for university-wide planning initiatives. Committee membership is a representative cross-section of the university community, comprised of individuals informed by environmental scanning and active in other planning efforts on campus. Administrators, faculty, staff and students are all represented on the committee. A community member provides an outsider's perspective for the committee. The president chairs the committee.

The committee coordinates two main types of university-wide planning processes on campus. The MSUM Strategic Plan outlines seven long-term institutional goals and four strategic priority issues. The current strategic plan is for 2003-2005, but a new plan is being developed, based on the new Minnesota State Colleges and Universities systemwide strategic plan. The MSUM Annual Work Plan takes the "strategic directions" from the system's annual work plan and describes how MSUM will achieve those goals. The Annual Work Plan integrates the work plans of the four divisions of the university, identifying specific initiatives on campus, projected outcomes, and projected completion dates.

The Annual Work Plan includes funded initiatives, called Work Plan Initiatives, which are approved by the UPBC. Work Plan Initiatives are one of the key ways that planning is connected to budgeting. Recent Work Plan Initiatives have funded recruitment, retention, and diversity initiatives. MSUM's planning processes have resulted in realistic and achievable plans that have positioned us to be effective in the future.

appropriation and to cover increasing costs. Last year, tuition was raised 9.5 percent. It's important to note that MSUM still has the lowest tuition of all residential four-year campuses in the system. We have also planned to have fewer students on campus each year, meaning that our budgeting attempts to be realistic, given the demographic trends in our area.

After revenue is projected, we project the general university expenses that are largely non-discretionary. These expenses include fuel, utilities, contract settlements, early retirement, severance payments, and debt redemption. Several discretionary items are also included in the general university expenditures, including equipment, repair and renovation funding, university scholarships, and funding for the Work Plan Initiatives discussed previously. To remain flexible, the president usually allocates half the equipment money and repair and replacement (R&R) funds in the fall, reserving half of the allocation for the spring when our overall financial picture is more clear. Equipment money is allocated based on a formula to the four divisions.

The remaining revenue is allocated to the divisions on a percentage share basis, using the division's share of the previous fiscal year's budget. The percentage is the division's share of the base budget. Divisions get a budget target number and the vice president for each division is responsible to meet that target. Decision-making is decentralized to the divisions at this point. Salary and fringe benefit budgets come off the top of the division budgets; approximately 80 percent of the budget is for salary and fringe.

The FY2006 audit shows that 59.7 percent of the university's operating budget was spent directly on student expenses, including instruction, academic support, and student services. This percentage is calculated on a full-time equivalent (FTE) basis. Per Minnesota State system reporting instructions, the operating expenses of the physical plant are not included in this percentage.

Evidence Statement 2B-2:

Work Plan Initiatives connect planning and budgeting and allow us to prioritize our response to environmental scanning.

Work Plan Initiatives are university-funded projects that address particular aspects of a division's annual work plan. To begin the planning process, each division (Academic Affairs, Administrative Affairs, and Student Affairs) and the President's Office (which includes the Office of the President, the Alumni Foundation, University Advancement, and Athletics) creates a master work plan that responds to the university's strategic plan, the system's strategic plan, and the system work plan. The master work plan from these divisions contains specific initiatives that are presented to the University Planning and Budgeting Committee (UPBC). The UPBC recommends to the president which initiatives should be funded and the President determines final funding. These initiatives serve as the basis for each division's work plan and the university's annual work plan.

The Work Plan Initiatives were implemented in FY2006. Progress reports were presented to the UBPC in January 2006, with final reports in September 2006. The second round of initiative proposals for FY2007 took place in January 2006 and the final awards announced in May 2006.

The Work Plan Initiatives allow us to fund those priorities that are part of our planning process. Despite budget cuts in other areas of the university, funding for Work Plan Initiatives has increased, demonstrating our commitment to funding those areas where student learning, retention, recruitment, student research, and marketing can be enhanced. Additionally, Work Plan Initiative funding may contribute to a program's base budget amount, meaning that the funding will be ongoing.

Evidence Statement 2B-3:

The ability of division heads to use funds carried over from a previous fiscal year has reduced long-standing deficiencies in our academic programs.

Division-level budgeting allows us to more quickly respond to areas of need. In particular, allowing vice presidents to use carry forward funds from one year to the next has meant that we can focus significant funds on specific projects. For instance, Academic Affairs has used carry forward money to purchase laptop computers for faculty and upgrading classrooms with projectors. The move to a decentralized budget has been a positive way for us to enhance our teaching infrastructure.

Evidence Statement 2B-4:

Our budgeting procedures allow resources to be shifted more easily within divisions.

Our budgeting procedures are becoming more decentralized, so that we can more readily react to the demand of students. Deans are shifting resources from department to department, as needs dictate. Recently, for instance, a retired faculty member in English was not replaced in that department, but the position was shifted to film studies, a new program that has had a great influx of new students. We are also evaluating programs to determine their long-range feasibility. Our American studies program, for instance, was in the process of hiring a new faculty member when the only remaining faculty member resigned. The

program will be terminated in order to shift those hires to other programs that have long needed additional resources. The continued ability and willingness to shift resources will be key to targeting in-demand programs and providing them the resources necessary to remain popular and viable.

***Evidence Statement 2B-5:
Our planning reflects a sound understanding of the institution's current capacity.***

Since our prior accreditation visit, our enrollment has stabilized. After a high of more than 9,000 students, we have leveled off to approximately 7,500. This is a number that we can support with our physical, technological, and human resource infrastructure. We continually study how we can make the most efficient use of our resources to serve our students:

- Based on information gathered by Administrative Affairs, we can serve anywhere from 4,500 to 9,000 students with the current number of Administrative Affairs employees.
- The Class Scheduling Task Force is currently studying how to balance the efficient use of rooms with student and faculty scheduling needs.
- We realize that students may not be distributed evenly in major programs and are beginning to shift resources to the larger programs. (See 2B-4 for more details).

We work to avoid—to some extent—duplication with programs offered at North Dakota State University, the University of North Dakota, Concordia College, and within our system. We complement each other's program offerings. In addition, we look to offer programs that are unique to our region in order to maintain our recruiting advantage.

***Evidence Statement 2B-6:
We are enhancing our human resources to focus expertise on key challenges.***

MSUM administrators, faculty, and staff quite often shoulder large workloads and they are asked to perform sometimes widely disparate tasks. Nevertheless, we have found ways to be efficient and members of the campus community work hard to provide and improve student learning. Several specific steps have been taken to focus expertise on the key challenges addressed in the first Core Component of this chapter.

Faculty have the opportunity this year to apply for an Initiative to Promote Excellence in Student Learning (IPESL) grant to improve student learning in writing, critical and multicultural thinking, mathematics, or science at MSUM. The university has nearly \$180,000 to award for projects that specifically address course development within the Dragon Core.

Recent Work Plan Initiatives have been funded to hire and train faculty and staff so that the university has the human resources necessary for our future challenges. Some notable examples include:

- Funding faculty members to attend Anti-Racism Across the Curriculum training in a summer workshop;
- Hiring an assistant vice president for assessment to oversee the assessment of the Dragon Core;
- Hiring the university writing director to provide support and oversight of student writing as well as funding Writing Across the Curriculum training workshops;
- Hiring a probationary position in construction management so that the program remains an important workforce development degree;
- Hiring an Academic Affairs Twin Cities program coordinator for recruitment and articulation agreement coordination;

- Hiring a permanent position in Continuing Studies for new and expanded markets to enhance recruitment of students in workforce development programs; and
- Hiring a probationary position in the Mass Communications and Graphic Communications Departments.

Evidence Statement 2B-7:

We have developed a strong technology infrastructure to support new programs and new ways of teaching.

We know that technology will play an increasing role in how we teach and learn. We have made a tremendous commitment to technology. The university has 54 locations on campus where students, faculty and staff may access computers and connect to the Internet. Three labs are open 24 hours per day, 7 days a week for student use. Classes are not scheduled in these three labs. We support Windows, Macintosh, and Linux operating systems in our labs. Several of the labs are used for very department specific applications. The majority of the labs are used as both instruction labs and open labs for general student use when classes are not scheduled. The rotation of new computers in labs varies from three years to five years. There are about 1,000 computers located in our computer areas.

The Student Technology Fee Committee makes recommendations on the expenditure of fees collected from our students. The annual budget for the technology fee committee is approximately \$885,000. This budget supports new computers and printers in labs, network access, some software and student lab assistants. The university continues to explore new uses for the funds from the student technology fee. Recently, the committee has funded equipment for film studies, art and design, music, and the sciences. University wireless is also partially supported by technology fee funds. Major network infrastructure improvements are being made using university and fee funds.

The Master Plan for Technology Task Force⁸ completed its work in 2004 and focused on identifying areas of need and suggesting methods of strengthening these areas. In particular, several items were highlighted in the plan, and we have made considerable progress toward implementing the technology plan:

- The university is in the third year of providing laptop computers for faculty. We spent over \$130,000 in FY2005 and over \$80,000 in FY2006 to replace desktop computers with laptop computers. Approximately 150 faculty were provided with new laptops for the 2005-2006 year. An additional 75 laptops were provided in 2006-2007. With the increase in the number of classrooms with technology, this allows our faculty to take their laptop from their desk to the classroom. Replacement of laptops computers is scheduled to be done on a three or four year cycle, depending on the performance needs of the individual faculty.
- Over the past two years, the university has upgraded classrooms with new technology, installing projectors, sound, CD/VCR units and network connections. Today approximately 73 percent of our classrooms (110 of 150) have projection equipment permanently installed in the room. We expect to have 80 percent of our classrooms upgraded within the next two years. There are, of course, classrooms that do not need projection equipment because of how our faculty teach in those rooms.
- Using both university operating budgets and student technology fee budgets, we now have wireless access in nearly all of the buildings. All new construction and remodeling projects include wireless technology. In order to provide secure connections on campus, all users are required to use VPN software and to log on

8 <http://www.mnstate.edu/plans/technology/index.htm>

with their email ID and password. The university in partnership with the city of Moorhead has installed wireless access for all resident hall students. The cost of the wireless access is included in the students' dorm charges.

The Instructional Technology department also provides faculty support and training. The Instructional Technology Advisory Committee serves as an advisory committee for incorporating new technology into the classroom.

The university is a partner with the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system in online learning:

- We use Desire2Learn (D2L) as our Instructional Management Software product. D2L is integrated with our student records system, providing authentication for students and classes. Instructors and students use a login and password authenticated by student records. The system made the decision to use D2L and it was not a smooth transition from hosting WebCT locally on our campus.
- The university is a partner in MnOnline, a consortium providing the residents of Minnesota with access to online education.

The Livingston Lord Library continues to upgrade and expand its offering of electronic databases, online journals, and full-text academic resources. The new online catalog system, MnPALS, offers many new features not previously available, including the ability to search more of the data in the catalog records (such as publisher or web address), to export data in several formats, and to store searches that will run at selected intervals. The library also subscribes to over 20,000 online journals and resources and continues to increase the number of electronic resources in its collection. In response to the increasing need for full-text academic resources, the library has also purchased four substantial collections of scholarly electronic journals: JSTOR, the Sage Collection, the American Chemistry Society Journals, and Project Muse. These collections provide the full-text of over 700 scholarly journals. To support the growing nursing program and the other sciences, the library has subscribed to CINAHL, a nursing database designed specifically for nursing programs in academic institutions, Science Direct, a large electronic collection of scientific, medical and technical information, and the McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Science and Technology, an electronic science encyclopedia.

We continue to address other equipment needs. Though we have state of the art facilities for Biosciences, Chemistry, and Physics Departments, we are working to upgrade the scientific equipment used in those facilities. In the arts programs, we are working to increase the equipment available to growing film studies and music industry programs; the theatre spaces need new sound and lighting equipment; and the art and design department has continued need for equipment and facilities upgrades.

In sum, our technology infrastructure is improved, allowing faculty to use more innovative teaching techniques and allowing our students to learn in the best way possible.

Evidence Statement 2B-8:

We must be more strategic and aggressive in pursuing external funding.

Obtaining external funding has historically been a weakness for MSUM and we must become better at pursuing funding from alumni gifts, private donations, and public grants. We have recently taken several steps to address this issue, but have not had the success we anticipated. A new executive vice president of the alumni foundation was hired, bringing new ideas for working with academic deans and departments and changing methods of

fundraising. Several new positions in the alumni foundation office were created to support its renewed efforts.

We have 52,970 alumni of record and only five percent of our alumni are classified as “lost.” The percentage of alumni who donate increased from 2005 to 2006, from nine percent to 10 percent. This number is high relative to our peers in the system. The average gift increased from \$100.45 to \$105.85 per alum over the past year. However, the amount of total gifts and grants from private sources fell from \$1,460,725 to \$1,126,612.

We had planned a capital campaign to begin this year to raise money for a number of initiatives. A feasibility study conducted by the alumni foundation revealed that we did not have the donor base or existing relationships to launch such a campaign. Instead, we will pursue a special major gifts initiative. One of the major projects will be to fund the Dragon Wellness Center. Work Plan Initiatives have been identified to support this campaign.

The amount of public grants earned by MSUM faculty and staff increased over the past year, from \$568,296 to \$798,031. Despite this increase, we lack a coordinated plan to pursue public grants. We do not have a culture of grant writing on campus, though there are some faculty who have received several large public grants. A grant-writing initiative in the colleges to use M.F.A. students to write grants for faculty was largely unsuccessful.

A future challenge will be to continue to develop the strategies and expertise necessary to pursue external funding. In particular, there is a great deal of anticipation surrounding the special major gifts campaign.

Evidence Statement 2B-9:

We have significantly upgraded our teaching and learning facilities and have plans for future improvements.

In addition to our internal allocations, we pursue two main types of external funding for facilities renovations. Bonding money is appropriated every other year by the legislature. MSUM's requests are prioritized by the system office and then are prioritized against other state projects. The chair of the Senate bonding committee is from our district and we have taken a great deal of time developing a relationship with him and other local legislators and communicating with them our needs and priorities. MSUM has received a great deal of support in the legislature in recent years.

We also use Higher Education Asset Preservation and Replacement money (HEAPR) for facilities upgrades. Every bonding cycle, the legislature looks at HEAPR projects and prioritizes needs based on the life cycle of the facility. In the last biennium, MSUM received \$2.172 million for these projects. Currently, we are addressing two HEAPR projects. In the Center for the Arts, we are installing proper ventilation equipment in the art and design department ceramics lab. We are also working in King Hall to improve the airflow for the photography studio and to renovate the greenhouse for an archeology lab. These projects not only address safety issues for students and faculty, but they will greatly improve our academic programs that use those facilities.

By 2010, we will have made \$135 million in improvements to MSUM's campus facilities and infrastructure since 1998. These improvements have made MSUM a safer, more desirable campus that allows us to more effectively teach and learn. A summary of all improvements to campus facilities since 1998 and planned improvements through 2010 are included in Table 2-1.

Table 2-1: Facilities Improvements, 1998-2010		
Year	Improvement	Amount
1998	HEAPR Funds, Five Block Area	\$14,000,000
1999	Comstock Memorial Union	2,000,000
2000	Science Laboratory Building, Five Block Area	5,100,000
2002	Science Laboratory Building, John Neumaier Hall, HEAPR Funds, Joint Security Building	26,250,000
2003	Hendrix Health Center, Comstock Memorial Union	3,700,000
2005	Hagen Hall, HEAPR, MacLean Hall Design	14,200,000
2006	MacLean Hall, HEAPR, Kise Hall Phase 1, Lommen Hall Design, Kise/Wellness Design, Murray Commons	15,600,000
State Appropriations 1998-2006		80,850,000
MSUM Local Maintenance Funds		5,400,000
Total Facilities Improvements, 1998-2006		86,250,000
2007	Kise Phase 2, Wellness Center	16,500,000
2008	Lommen Hall, HEAPR Funds, Design and Renovation of the Minnesota Higher Education Center	16,400,000
2010	Minnesota Higher Education Center, HEAPR Funds, Design and Renovation of the Library	13,500,000
MSUM Local Maintenance Funds		2,800,000
Total Planned Improvements, 2007-2010		49,200,000
Total Planned Improvements, 1998-2010		\$135,450,000
<i>Note: Includes revenue funds.</i>		
<i>Source: MSUM Administrative Affairs, 2006</i>		

Two new academic buildings enhance our academic mission. First, the Science Laboratory Building is specifically designed to facilitate student-faculty research and problem-based learning. Second, we are also now leasing with Minnesota State Community and Technical College a former elementary school, located just two blocks from MSUM's campus. Called the Minnesota State Higher Education Center, the building will house the health services programs of the two campuses. We also have significant construction taking place in MacLean Hall, Murray Commons, and King Hall.

We have enhanced the safety of campus by collaborating with the Moorhead Police Department to construct our campus security office building. The Moorhead Police Department uses this facility as a police sub-station. A new water line to campus ensures the water supply is sufficient and the pressure adequate to support the fire suppression system. Other improvements are designed to enhance our recruitment of new students. We have

previously noted Neumaier Hall, our new residence hall, which features apartment suite-style living for students. We are currently renovating Kise Commons, the main student-dining hall. The facility will feature a state of the art kitchen and enhanced aesthetic and service improvements.

Improvements to campus have also addressed resident concerns about aesthetics. The “Five Block Area” improvement funded in 1998, for instance, allowed us to finish removing houses that had been vacant in an area that is now paved parking on the west side of campus.

The Campus Master Plan, approved in 2004, outlines the future building and renovation projects for campus. We will break ground on the Wellness Center in the spring of 2007. We have received \$200,000 from the state to begin planning for the renovation to Lommen Hall. Future projects include constructing a new building for programs related to communication and technology as well as renovations to the Center for the Arts.

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

Both external and internal accountability measures ensure that MSUM closes the feedback loops with our constituents. New accountability measures from the Office of the Chancellor, coupled with regular reporting and review cycles mean that we are constantly learning from our environment and each other and making appropriate changes.

The following sets of evidence illustrate Core Component 2C:

- Evidence Statement 2C-1: New accountability measures from the Office of the Chancellor will inform our response to future challenges.
- Evidence Statement 2C-2: Accountability and reporting are key components of our planning process.
- Evidence Statement 2C-3: Academic programs file reviews every two years and they use an outside evaluator every six years to ensure program quality.
- Evidence Statement 2C-4: Faculty and staff are reviewed regularly, according to contractual agreements.
- Evidence Statement 2C-5: We have developed increased capacity for gathering data about student learning and are using this data to inform curricular decisions and other planning.
- Evidence Statement 2C-6: Numerous external accrediting agencies have positively evaluated our programs and provide suggestions for their improvement.
- Evidence Statement 2C-7: A variety of surveys and evaluation measures have been used in recent years to improve student learning.
- Evidence Statement 2C-8: Advisory boards—composed of students, professionals, and community members—provide valuable feedback concerning our programs.

**Evidence Statement 2C-1:
New accountability measures from the Office of the Chancellor will inform our response to future challenges.**

In January 2006, the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system released its 2006-2010 Strategic Plan, *Designing the Future*.⁹ The plan outlines four strategic directions:

⁹ <http://www.mnscu.edu/about/strategicplan.html>

Cross-Cutting Theme: The Distinctive Organization

MSUM is Accountable

MSUM is accountable to its constituents in multiple ways. Financial audits, for instance, demonstrate that we are careful stewards of the state's resources. Additionally, our assessment of student learning plans and reports are accessible to all on the Internet. Most significantly, however, is that our planning and reporting documents are publicly available on the Internet to all our constituents as well.

Our division annual work plans provide a list of goals for the year and funding sources to achieve those goals. Two reports are made each year by each division—once in January and once at the end of the year in June. These reports document the extent to which divisional goals were achieved. The reports are presented to the University Planning and Budget Committee, but they are also available on the Internet. It is easy for our constituents to determine the degree to which we are being responsive to their needs.

New accountability measures by the system will ensure that we continue to be measured and held responsible for our performance. These measures, described in detail in Criterion 2, will help ensure that we are accountable to those we serve.

- Increase access and opportunity;
- Promote and measure high-quality learning programs and services;
- Provide programs and services integral to state and regional economic needs; and
- Innovate to meet current and future educational needs efficiently.

During the summer of 2006, the Office of the Chancellor identified a set of 10 accountability measures related to these strategic directions. In the past, MSUM, and other system institutions, were held accountable for the directions of the system plan. Now, each institution will be measured against these directions with a specific, quantitative target. MSUM was asked to set targets based on the last year of data gathered by the system. The targets are reported here:

- MSUM will improve the fall 2007 retention rate for fall 2006 entering students by 0.1 percent, compared to the 2005 retention rate for fall 2004 entering students.
- MSUM will decrease the disparity between the fall 2007 success rate for fall 2006 entering students of color and white students by .1%, compared to the fall 2005 disparity for fall 2004 entering students.
- MSUM will increase the percentage of students enrolled in one or more college level science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) courses by .1% between Fiscal Years 2005 and 2006.
- MSUM will increase the number of secondary teachers prepared for licensure in math and science from 15 in FY2005 to 21 in FY2009.
- MSUM will increase the number of students (unduplicated headcount) enrolled in online courses from 254 in FY2005 to 1000 in FY2009.
- MSUM will increase the number of students (unduplicated headcount) enrolled in customized training courses from 791 in FY2005 to 850 in FY2009.
- MSUM will increase the number of continuing education students (unduplicated headcount of students aged 25 to 44) from 1,724 in FY2005 to 1,900 in FY2009.
- MSUM will increase institution support from public sources from \$568,296 in FY2005 to \$970,011 by FY2010.

- MSUM will increase institution/foundation support from private sources from \$1,819,372 in FY2005 to \$2,116,686 by FY2010.
- MSUM will increase alumni participation in giving from 10.4 percent in FY2005 to 12.1 percent in FY2010.

These measures will serve an accountability function for use and they will inform our planning for the future.

***Evidence Statement 2C-2:
Accountability and reporting are key components of our planning process.***

Division heads are required to report on their work plans twice each year. A progress report is presented to the UPBC in January and a final report is presented in September. These reports note which initiatives have been completed, which are in progress, and which were not completed. These reports ensure that the division work plans serve to guide our actions and hold us accountable for our planning efforts.

The campus also reports twice each year on its work plan and strategic plan to the Minnesota State system. The system also requires various reports based on policies that we must comply with, such as for technology, financial aid, and business transactions. The new accountability measures described in the previous section will largely replace the semi-annual work plan reports that have been required.

At the same time, we believe that limited risk-taking is an important part of the planning process. By taking on projects that require time, attention, and new ways of thinking, we are able to remain focused on continuous improvement.

***Evidence Statement 2C-3:
Academic programs file reviews every two years and they use an outside evaluator every six years to ensure program quality.***

Academic departments are required to file a report every two years with their dean and academic vice president. The report also includes a report on assessment of student learning. The reports ask departments to describe their accomplishments and encourage departments to look ahead to new trends in their discipline that should be pursued.

Every six years, a longer self-study report is written by the department and an external reviewer is brought to campus to evaluate the department and make recommendations. The department then creates a Quality Improvement Plan for the next six years.

A new process will be initiated for all departments next year that requires annual reporting. In October of each year, the program's assessment of student learning report will be due. In May, a report will be due that has the department identify goals related to the Academic Affairs Master Work Plan, make equipment, staffing and budgetary requests, and report on faculty accomplishments. The new process is designed to better coordinate division planning with department planning and to streamline the requests for information from the department.

***Evidence Statement 2C-4:
Faculty and staff are reviewed regularly, according to contractual agreements.***

The review processes for faculty and staff provide not only a measure of accountability, but they are designed to ensure that continuous improvement takes place with our personnel.

Faculty are regularly evaluated by their departments and deans according to the five criteria contained in the Minnesota State system/IFO Agreement:¹⁰

- Teaching;
- Scholarly or creative achievement;
- Professional development;
- Contributions to student growth and development; and
- Service to the university and community.

The goal of the process is continuous improvement. At the beginning of the year, faculty file a plan for their year's activities and goals. At the end of the year, a report is filed that documents achievement of the goals and areas for further improvement. Through written department review and dean consultation, and vice presidents recommendation, the faculty member is advised each year during the probationary period. After they are tenured, faculty move to four-year plans. They receive full evaluations at the end of a four-year period or when they apply for promotion. Once faculty are full professors, the contract provides for biennial reports and responses from the deans. The faculty review process will be discussed further in Chapter 3/Criterion 3.

A regular schedule of reviews has been established for MSUAASF and AFSCME staff members. The review process is annual for MSUAASF. The supervisor completes an evaluation form and meets with the staff member to discuss the review and set goals for the next year. AFSCME employees also have yearly evaluations¹¹ by their supervisor. The review process allows the staff member and supervisor to discuss ways to improve and further educational or training opportunities.

Evidence Statement 2C-5:

We have developed increased capacity for gathering data about student learning and are using this data to inform curricular decisions and other planning.

The university community is embracing assessment of student learning as an important and useful tool to improve our academic programs. A new committee structure and revised policies and procedures are guiding the programmatic assessment of student learning.¹² This form of assessment will be covered extensively in Chapter 3/Criterion 3.

The Dragon Core was designed so that it would be possible to assess student learning in the general education curriculum.¹³ A newly hired assistant vice president for assessment will ensure that assessment is completed on the program. The assessment procedures for the program will be discussed in Chapter 4/Criterion 4.

Evidence Statement 2C-6:

Numerous external accrediting agencies have positively evaluated our programs and provide suggestions for their improvement.

Several MSUM programs/degrees have earned national accreditations and/or certifications (See Appendix I for the complete list). These accreditations provide a measure of accountability and recognition for our programs, but they also enable accredited programs to continuously improve. For instance, accreditation promotes continuous improvement

10 <http://www.ifo.org/contract/ifomnscu0507.htm>

11 <http://www.mnstate.edu/humanres/forms/PDFForms/ClassifiedPerfReview.pdf>

12 <http://www.mnstate.edu/assess>

13 <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/dragoncore/assess.htm>

through assessment of teaching and learning. Many of our accredited programs have well-developed and useful assessment plans. Additionally, preparation of self-study and on-site visits ensure accredited programs are meeting or exceeding accreditation standards and criteria.

Evidence Statement 2C-7:

A variety of surveys and evaluation measures have been used in recent years.

A variety of campus surveys have been conducted in recent years to evaluate the general status of the campus regarding a specific issue. As we continue to increase our use of data for decision-making, reliance on data such as this will become more common on campus. Some recent examples include:

- A technology needs survey¹⁴ was conducted by the information technology department during fall semester 2004. The survey was made available to all MSUM campus faculty and staff on the web. A small number of faculty and staff responded to the survey. The purpose of the survey was to assess technology needs in the areas of printing, wireless connections, scanning, CD burning, video conferencing, and personal scheduling. In each area faculty and staff were asked if the technology was necessary for their job and if the technology would increase productivity.
- MSUM undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, administrators and staff completed a survey regarding diversity on campus during fall 2003 as part of the Training Our Campuses Against Racism (TOCAR) effort. Data from the survey is one of several tools each anti-racism team will use to guide development of campus anti-racism plans and to inform campus strategic planning processes.
- The National Survey of Student Engagement¹⁵ (Indiana University at Bloomington) is sent to fall term freshmen and seniors who will be graduating in the spring or summer. This survey was administered in both 2000 (N=208) and 2006 (N=875). Freshmen and graduating seniors were surveyed to determine how they spend their time, what they've gained from classes, and the quality of their interactions with faculty and students. The survey results will be used as a baseline against which to measure our future improvement with Dragon Core and the Student Success Initiatives.
- HERI Survey¹⁶, given by the Higher Education Research Institute, University of California at Los Angeles. Faculty, MSUAASF faculty, and administrators were surveyed to determine their teaching and research activities, professional activities, interactions with students and colleagues, attitudes and values, and job satisfaction. Survey results produced baseline data; we plan to continue use of this survey and to monitor changes and trends.

14 http://www.mnstate.edu/plans/technology/minutes_subgroup/administrative_survey_technology_results.doc

15 http://www.mnstate.edu/institut/survey%20results/NSSE%202006/nsse_2006_contents.htm

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

Cross-Cutting Theme: The Learning-Focused Organization

College Student Advisory Boards

Each college dean and the director of instructional resources has created a student advisory board. The boards are representative of the departments in each college and meet several times each semester. The deans communicate to the boards about important initiatives on campus and in the college and encourage feedback from the students. The student members are invited to have their comments, concerns, and questions placed on meeting agendas.

Student advisory boards provide a formal and direct way for the deans to learn from their student constituents. Students have provided critique of websites and promotional materials, shared feedback on student recruitment and success programs, and helped determine how scholarships and grant funds should be disseminated.

As we continue to seek ways of improving our services to students, their feedback—through a variety of channels—will continue to strengthen what we know about our institution.

Evidence Statement 2C-8:

Advisory boards—composed of students, professionals, and community members—provide valuable feedback concerning our programs.

We use advisory boards at each level of the university. Campus representatives regularly have discussions with individuals and groups that provide feedback to us or that help us evaluate our programs.

- The President's Regional Advisory Board, which meets twice each year, is composed of community leaders, alumni, and professionals.
- A number of academic programs also have advisory boards. One notable programmatic advisory board is that for construction management (CM). The primary benefit of the CM Advisory Board is the vision that the membership has shared with the faculty and students. Through their leadership, they have assisted the program in fundraising, classroom/industry interaction, accreditation, and have extended the industry and political contacts of MSUM's CM program.
- Student advisory boards have become invaluable to departments, colleges, deans, and other offices on campus. The students provide their insight into programs that work and how we might address the needs of our current and incoming students. Each college and the library have a student advisory board that meets regularly. Based on a recommendation from the Student Success Institute, we are developing an advisory board made up of high school students in order to inform our recruitment and student success initiatives.

Core Component 2D:

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

A great deal of planning occurs at MSUM, at various levels. These plans are coordinated and based on the Strategic Plan, which is linked closely to our mission.

The following sets of evidence illustrate Core Component 2D:

- Evidence Statement 2D-1: MSUM planning documents are coordinated and tied to the mission.
- Evidence Statement 2D-2: The planning processes at MSUM are collaborative.
- Evidence Statement 2D-3: Planning for repair and replacement of facilities and equipment is strategic and coordinated.
- Evidence Statement 2D-4: Several additional plans inform our preparation for the future.

***Evidence Statement 2D-1:
MSUM planning documents are coordinated and tied to the mission.***

The MSUM Strategic Plan is based on our mission and core values. Division-level planning documents are based on the Strategic Plan, meaning that we operate from a common set of mission-driven goals and documents. The University Planning and Budget Committee (UPBC) is the university-wide committee that oversees the creation of planning documents and their approval. By having one body focused on planning documents, we ensure that they are coordinated and driven by the mission of the university. Additionally, our budgeting for strategic initiatives is also driven by this process and administered by the UPBC.

***Evidence Statement 2D-2:
The planning processes at MSUM are collaborative.***

The UPBC makes decisions about allocating resources for university-wide planning initiatives. Committee membership is a representative cross-section of the university community, comprised of individuals informed by environmental scanning and active in other planning efforts on campus. Administrators, faculty, staff and students are all represented on the committee and they are joined by a community representative. The president chairs the committee.

There are three stages in the university's planning processes on campus.¹⁷

- The MSUM Strategic Plan outlines seven long-term institutional goals and four strategic priority issues. The current strategic plan is for 2003-2005, but a new plan is being developed, based on the new system strategic plan;
- Division work plans identify a series of goals related to the MSUM Strategic Plan and division Master Plan. In each division, deans and/or directors are involved to identify the divisions' major initiatives. The planning at the division level is driven by how each is linked to the mission; and
- The MSUM Annual Work Plan takes the "strategic directions" from the system's annual work plan and describes how MSUM will achieve those goals. The Annual Work Plan integrates the work plans of the four divisions of the university, identifying specific initiatives on campus, projected outcomes, and projected completion dates. Importantly, the Annual Work Plan includes funded initiatives, called Work Plan Initiatives, which are approved by the UPBC.

Work Plan Initiatives have been identified throughout this chapter as they relate to specific topics, demonstrating the strength of our planning processes and their coordination with our mission and future challenges.

¹⁷ <http://www.mnstate.edu/president/StrategicPlanning/StrategicPlanning.htm>

**Evidence Statement 2D-3:
Planning for repair and replacement of facilities and equipment is strategic and coordinated.**

State-of-the-art and well-maintained facilities are important to the educational mission of the university. As noted in Evidence Statement 2B-9, MSUM is projecting to have made more than \$135 million worth of improvements to our campus from 1998 to 2010. The Campus Master Plan identifies the long-range renovation and repair needs of our facilities. Through the Facilities Committee, open forums, and Cabinet-level discussions, a schedule is set for repair and renovation. MSUM's facilities are also included in a comprehensive list of the Minnesota State system facilities. The listing identifies the life cycle for building components and is used to prioritize the needs of system institutions. Through a collaborative process with member institutions, the Minnesota State system priorities are sent to the legislature for funding consideration.

In addition to constantly communicating our needs to the system and state government, we have become more proactive in internally prioritizing those repairs that are central to student learning. Our new procedure is to have the Academic Affairs Council work with the head of facilities and maintenance to review and prioritize needs and projects. Through this process, we have, for instance, upgraded classrooms. Importantly, this process has promoted a direct line of communication between Academic Affairs and Administrative Affairs to support student learning.

**Evidence Statement 2D-4:
Several additional plans inform our preparation for the future.**

As indicated previously, university-wide task forces have been formed to create strategic plans that address particular areas of concern. The recommendations from these plans have been largely integrated into the planning efforts of the university or its divisions. The three primary plans that have fed larger planning efforts include:

- The MSUM Racial and Ethnic Diversity Plan¹⁸ was approved March 24, 2004 by the Office of the Chancellor and Minnesota Attorney General's office. The plan outlines actions through December 2013 that focus on increasing the diversity of MSUM students, faculty, staff, and administrators. The plan also recommends ways of positioning MSUM as a regional resource for cultural issues.
- The MSUM Campus Master Plan¹⁹ outlines key facilities upgrades and campus improvements. The five-year plan was required by the system in order to fund new buildings or renovate existing ones. The Facilities Committee on campus updates the plan every year or every other year, with a planned update this fall and winter.
- The 2004 MSUM Technology Plan²⁰ identified ways of enhancing technology use in all aspects of the campus. Major recommendations including funding new laptops for faculty, equipping classrooms for projection, and enhancing the campus wireless network. These initiatives have, for the most part, been implemented and funded at the division level because the plan has been integrated with division planning.

Each of these plans is central to our mission. By focusing the work of individuals on specific mission goals, we are confident that the plans developed through this process will be useful as we consider how we can achieve our goals. Each of these plans has been largely

18 <http://www.mnstate.edu/president/StrategicPlanning/FINALRacial&EthnicDiversityPlan.3.2.04.pdf>

19 <http://www.mnstate.edu/plans/campusmaster/index.htm>

20 <http://www.mnstate.edu/plans/technology/index.htm>

incorporated into other planning on campus and the results will be evident throughout this document.

Chapter 2/Criterion 2 Chapter Evaluation and Summary

Our Strengths

- The university uses broad discussions to launch initiatives based on environmental scanning;
- Strategic directions are clearly identified through a representative and deliberative process. Resources are allocated to achieve results related to the strategic priorities;
- We have accomplished many of the goals identified by our planning processes;
- Evaluation for continuous improvement takes place for departments, offices, tenure-track faculty members, and staff members; and
- Despite cuts in state funding and enrollment declines, we remain one of the most affordable options for higher education for students in our state and region.

Our Challenges

- MSUM must become more effective at public and private fundraising; and
- We are not yet at the point where data is used as widely as it should be for decision-making.

MSUM knows its future challenges and has developed the capacity to overcome those challenges and remain true to our mission in the years ahead. Our planning and budgeting processes work together to ensure that our resources are used efficiently and strategically. We have developed an increased ability to use information to make decisions and plan for the future.