Mission Statement

Lake Superior College provides high quality, affordable higher education that benefits diverse learners, employers, and the community. LSC’s academic, technical, continuing education, and workforce development offerings prepare learners for a rapidly changing global community. Our services support learning, and our partnerships connect the college and its learners to a broader spectrum of community life.

www.lsc.edu
November 2013
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INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

Lake Superior College (LSC) is a combined community and technical college located in Duluth, Minnesota. It is one of 25 public two-year colleges that are part of the Minnesota State College and Universities System (MnSCU).

LSC is an open enrollment institution. Its mission is to provide high quality, affordable education that benefits diverse learners, employers, and the community. The College achieves its mission through a wide variety of academic, technical, customized training, and workforce development offerings.

The primary area LSC serves is the metropolitan area that includes the cities of Duluth, Minnesota and Superior, Wisconsin. That area has a population of approximately 250,000. However, LSC also draws students from across Minnesota and nearby states.

The College’s main campus consists of five buildings located on a 97-acre site in an urban forest overlooking Lake Superior, the Duluth Harbor, and the St. Louis River Valley. The College currently has two additional sites. The Emergency Response Training Center (ERTC) is located ten miles west of the main campus. The Center for Advanced Aviation (CAA) is located five miles north at the Duluth International Airport.

LSC awards Certificates, Diplomas, and AA, AS, AAS, and AFA Degrees. Academic offerings include over 90 programs leading to academic awards. Most programs are two years or less; all can be completed in less than three years.

During the most recent academic year, LSC awarded 679 degrees, 135 diplomas, and 424 certificates. The five largest programs by number of awards granted were: Liberal Arts and Sciences, Nursing Assistant, Nursing, Truck Driving, and Phlebotomy.

LSC serves over 9,000 students each year. Approximately one third are classified as full-time; the remaining two thirds are part-time. Full time equivalent enrollment is approximately 3,300 students.

Demographically, the average age of LSC’s students is 25. Approximately 55% are female and 45% are male. A total of 11% of LSC’s students are students of color, and 48% are first generation college students (federal definition).

As of October, 2013, LSC’s students were taught by over 250 instructors, 108 of whom are full-time and tenured or tenure track. The College is staffed by 11 administrators, 15 supervisors, 41 professional staff, and 73 support staff.

LSC has long been a leader in delivery of online education. The Higher Learning Commission authorized the College to offer degree programs online in 2002, and six programs are now available entirely online. In the most recent year, LSC offered 462 course sections online. Enrollment in those courses represented 28% of LSC’s total full year equivalent enrollment. Of those students enrolled during spring semester, 2013, 29% took at least one course online.

LSC’s participation in AQIP began in 2001. Since then, the College has submitted Systems Portfolios in 2006 and 2010, participated in three AQIP Strategy Forums, and completed 14 Action Projects.
For the first ten years of LSC’s AQIP participation, planning and oversight was provided by a 40-50 member Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Committee. All administrators were members, and the large size enabled the inclusion of representatives from all constituencies across the institution.

The IE Committee produced numerous successes. Continuous quality improvement concepts became part of the College’s vernacular and employees had “permission” to look for and suggest opportunities for improvement. Action Projects led to both large and small improvements in the College’s operations. Notable successes included Action Projects that planned and implemented a First Year Experience course (now Student Success Seminar) and a Student Engagement Day (now Student Success Day). Notable failures included Action Projects that developed a Process Improvement Manual and a Computer Literacy Assessment, neither of which were successfully institutionalized.

Over time, it became apparent that the IE Committee structure was no longer working well. Administrators and employees alike were unable to maintain the high level of energy and commitment AQIP requires. IE Committee members were not regularly rotated off and replaced; many felt “trapped” on the Committee or grew tired of the work. Members were assigned constituencies, but in practice there was little reporting to and consulting of those constituencies. Moreover, it proved difficult to achieve consensus among so many members, so various types of voting processes were often used to make decisions. That proved problematic because members of some units, such as Information Technology and Academics Affairs, felt they were under-represented and could not effectively compete for projects and funding.

In 2011, spurred by senior leadership changes, the Institutional Effectiveness Committee was disbanded and replaced by a smaller, ten member AQIP Steering Committee. The Steering Committee has taken over the work of chartering and monitoring Action Projects, but has been mostly isolated from the College’s ongoing planning processes.

The four years since submission of the College’s 2010 Systems Portfolio have been characterized by changes in the College’s senior leadership, a new organizational structure, declining state appropriations, and a smaller MnSCU System Office led by a new Chancellor who is providing aggressive leadership. Consequently, this Systems Portfolio is entirely rewritten from the one submitted in 2010.

An ongoing challenge has been that the College’s planning processes have never been fully integrated with AQIP. To a considerable extent, this has been due to constantly changing planning processes associated with the MnSCU System. Another challenge going forward is that the original AQIP champions have left LSC and the College has had significant staff turnover. The College’s current leaders and many of its employees have little experience with AQIP.

Despite the challenges, LSC has continued to make quality improvements. Recent improvements include new or revised processes for program reviews, student complaints, schedule development, IT support, policy reviews, College in the Schools, and data management.
INTRODUCTION

The maturity of LSC’s processes for Helping Students Learn varies from systematic to integrated.

The College has an integrated process for developing and maintaining its curriculum. The Academic Affairs and Standards Council (AASC) provides direction for the college president in academic curriculum-related matters, including course outlines, award requirements, academic standards, course and program components, and the inventory of course and program offerings.

Standardized curriculum proposal forms ensure that all necessary information is included. Copies are routed to all affected parties. Before curriculum proposals are considered by AASC, they are reviewed and approved by Division curriculum committees and the faculty association. AASC meets at least monthly during the academic year; it is co-chaired by two faculty members. Two-thirds of the voting members are faculty, and the remaining one-third are administrators.

The College’s academic planning processes are best described as aligned. Academic goals are included in the FY12-FY15 Strategic Plan. The goals in the College’s FY12-FY15 Master Academic Plan (MAP) are aligned with the Strategic Plan. The MAP in turn offers guidance to the nine units (Facilities, Human Resources, Admissions, Information Technology, Marketing, Student Services, Continuing Education and Customized Training, Administrative Services, and Finance and Budgeting) that play key roles in helping achieve the MAP goals.

In addition, the College has been intentionally and proactively addressing processes that are ill-defined or in need of improvement. An example would be the recent thorough re-design of the College in the Schools (CITS) program. However, the College tracks progress toward achieving its goals or improving processes on an ad hoc basis, if at all. As LSC continues to develop a culture of data based decision making, one expected benefit is an improvement in processes for tracking progress and maintaining accountability.

The College has struggled to move its processes for assessing student learning from systematic to aligned. While there is a well-established faculty-driven Student Academic Achievement Committee (SAA) and while there is generally a high level of knowledge and awareness of academic assessment among members of the faculty, the College has struggled to implement regular, comprehensive, documented, and sustained student learning outcomes assessment at the program and course level. Recent retirement driven turnover is posing a new challenge as newly-hired instructors are generally less experienced with assessment of student learning than the instructors they are replacing.

Most programs in the Allied Health & Nursing Division collect and report assessment results to their specialized accreditors. Some programs in the Business & Industry Division also have well-developed assessment processes, but others do not. The Liberal Arts & Sciences Division, which has the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum as the program outcomes for the AA Degree, has generally not done a lot at the department or course level. Moreover, with the exception of the Allied Health & Nursing Division, much of the assessment activity taking place at the department, program, and course levels is not well-documented and improvements made based on assessment data are not formally captured. Recent revisions to the College’s program review process to explicitly include assessment of student learning in department and program reviews should help better document the results of academic assessment.
PROCESSES

1P1. Determining Common Learning Objectives

COLLEGE-WIDE LEARNING OUTCOMES

The College-Wide Learning Outcomes for students of Lake Superior College are overseen by the Student Academic Achievement Committee (SAA). Periodic review of the College-Wide Learning Outcomes is included in the SAA Committee’s planning processes. Proposed changes originate with the Committee. They are then submitted to the Academic Affairs and Standards Council (AASC) for review and approval following established curriculum processes.

LSC’s initial set of College-Wide Outcomes was originally developed by a faculty committee in 1995. Modest revisions, proposed by the SAA Committee, were adopted in 2000, 2006, and 2008.

In 2009 a faculty and staff task force established by the SAA Committee undertook a comprehensive review of the existing college-wide outcomes and determined they no longer served the College’s needs. The task force ultimately proposed an entirely new set of learning outcomes adapted for LSC’s context from the Essential Learning Outcomes developed and championed by the American Association of Colleges and Universities as part of its LEAP initiative. The new outcomes were formally proposed by the SAA Committee and subsequently approved by the Lake Superior College Faculty Association, the Academic Affairs and Standards Council (AASC), and the College President. They were effective August 23, 2010.

Lake Superior College’s current College-Wide Outcomes are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COLLEGE WIDE OUTCOMES</th>
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<tr>
<td>The following learning outcomes describe the knowledge, skills, and responsibilities our students should acquire as a result of their studies at Lake Superior College.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Foundational Knowledge of the Intellectual, Social, and Natural World, through study in:
   - Career-focused programs
   - Liberal arts
   - Sciences
   Focused by engagement with discipline-specific questions, both contemporary and enduring

2. Intellectual and Practical Skills, including:
   - Critical and creative thinking
   - Information literacy
   - Inquiry and analysis
   - Quantitative literacy
   - Synthesis and application
   - Teamwork and problem solving
   - Written and oral communication
   Practiced extensively, across the curriculum, in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects, and standards for performance

3. Personal and Social Responsibilities, including:
   - Awareness and practice of sustainability
   - Civic involvement
   - Ethical reasoning and action
   - Intercultural competence
   - Self-development and lifelong learning
   Anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges
Since the new College-Wide Learning Outcomes became effective in August, 2010, small groups of faculty facilitated by the Director of Accreditation, Research, and Assessment, have worked to develop definitions interpreting the key terms. Through fall, 2013, formal definitions have been developed, proposed by SAA, and formally approved by AASC for the following terms:

- Quantitative Literacy
- Information Literacy
- Creative Thinking
- Synthesis and Application
- Awareness and Practice of Sustainability
- Intercultural Competence
- Self-Development
- Lifelong Learning

Definitions of the remaining terms remain in development.

The philosophy behind the shared learning objectives reflected in the College-Wide Learning Outcomes is that all students in all programs should meet the outcomes. However, the breadth and depth to which they are met is understood to be dependent on each program’s context.

For example, the nature of students’ written and oral communication skills will vary depending on their programs of study. Students earning transfer degrees are expected to become skilled at effectively developing and expressing ideas in formal writing, whereas Nursing students are expected to become skilled at writing nurse’s notes that effectively communicate with the doctors and other health care professionals who will rely on them. Nursing students are expected to develop the interpersonal skills necessary to effectively communicate with patients, their families, and other health care professionals under trying circumstances. Automotive technology students are also expected to develop interpersonal skills, but in the very different context of communicating with customers about their motor vehicles. Thus, the instructors in each program have the primary responsibility for determining what knowledge and level of skill is necessary for the students in their programs to meet the college-wide outcomes.

Laminated posters of the College-Wide Outcomes are posted in every classroom and in many other public places on campus. They are also posted on the college web site and instructors are encouraged to discuss the outcomes with their classes at the beginning of each semester.

To ensure alignment of the curriculum with the College-Wide Learning Outcomes, the AASC’s curriculum forms for new or revised courses require identification of the College-Wide Learning Outcomes addressed within each course.

**GENERAL EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY**

The College’s general education philosophy statement guides and informs the general education curriculum. It reads:

> LSC subscribes to the philosophy that general education provides a foundation of educational experiences, designed to provide breadth in general areas of study. General education includes a broad body of knowledge that all students must have regardless of academic area of study.

> Anchored in a variety of disciplines, LSC’s general education curriculum prepares all students with the knowledge, skills, and perspectives required to communicate effectively, think critically, and participate in society as informed, responsible citizens.
THE MINNESOTA TRANSFER CURRICULUM

Development of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum was a unified response from public higher education in Minnesota to students’ needs for high quality general education and seamless progress toward a baccalaureate degree regardless of where they begin their educations and where they finish. Designed by faculty representatives of the University of Minnesota, the Minnesota State Universities, and Minnesota’s Community and Technical colleges, the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum consists of 40 credits covering ten goal areas:

1. Communication
2. Critical Thinking
3. Natural Sciences
4. Mathematical / Logical Reasoning
5. History and the Social and Behavioral Sciences
6. The Humanities and Fine Arts
7. Human Diversity
8. Global Perspective
9. Ethical and Civic Responsibility
10. People and the Environment

All LSC courses that are part of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum will transfer to any State University in Minnesota.

INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

The Intercultural Center, described more fully in 1P10, offers programming and services designed to increase the intercultural competency of all students.

The College also has a long-standing commitment to offering its students the opportunity to develop intercultural competence through international study and travel. LSC sponsored programs led by LSC faculty include:

- Mexico Learning Community – A 9-day Spring Break trip to Oaxaca, Mexico that includes a three credit LSC Spanish course and service learning. [Program offered most years since the College’s inception; Average cohort of 20]
- China – New trip [Approved for 2015]
- Anishinaabe Immersion Experience in Canada – New trip [Planned for 2015]

In addition, LSC students have convenient access to the study and travel abroad programs offered by other MnSCU institutions.

SCHOLARSHIP

Consistent with LSC’s mission, LSC faculty and students are not expected to contribute to scholarship, creative work, or the discovery of knowledge. Any creative work by students (e.g. original writing, artwork, machine tool products) is produced in satisfaction of course requirements.

1P2. Identifying Program Learning Objectives

Every LSC degree, diploma, and certificate program has program learning outcomes that are publicly posted with other program information on the College’s web site. For example, the program learning outcomes for the A.S. Degree in Paralegal Studies call for students to:
• Demonstrate knowledge of legal terminology, the American legal system, and state and federal court rules and procedures.
• Describe the ethical obligations governing attorneys and paralegals.
• Demonstrate proper methods for conducting interviews and factual investigations with clients and witnesses.
• Demonstrate ability to determine relevant facts and conduct legal research in specific areas of law and the application of cases, statutes, regulations, and other sources of legal authority.
• Demonstrate ability to draft and properly format specific legal documents and correspondence.
• Demonstrate knowledge of the legal principles and procedures that determine the legal rights and duties of businesses.
• Demonstrate knowledge of legal principles and procedures in at least three of the following specialty areas: constitutional law, contracts, criminal law and procedure, family law, bankruptcy law, real property law, torts and personal injury law, wills and probate, victim advocacy, or alternative dispute resolution.
• Develop a portfolio documenting professional skills and knowledge in the paralegal field.

The curriculum forms for new programs and courses require identification of the proposed learning outcomes. The outcomes are developed by program faculty or faculty in a related discipline in consultation with the Division Dean and, if applicable, the program advisory committee. In some cases, national accreditation standards and potential articulation partners are consulted as well.

1P3. Designing New Programs and Courses

Proposals for new programs and courses are initiated by faculty and/or a Division Dean. All curriculum proposals for new or revised programs and courses are reviewed and approved by the appropriate division curriculum committee and the Faculty Association prior to review and approval by the College’s Academic Affairs and Standards Committee (AASC).

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System (MnSCU) must also approve new programs. This approval process requires documentation of need for the program, sufficient resources to deliver the program, sufficient student interest, development of enrollment projections, and submission of proposed curriculum. New program requests are distributed among all of the MnSCU institutions for review and comment. The System Office grants final approval.

1P4. Designing Responsive Academic Programming

LSC offers a variety of academic awards typical to a community and technical college. By Board of Trustees and LSC policy, academic awards must have certain attributes. The academic awards LSC offers and their required attributes are summarized in Table 1-1:
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<th>AWARD</th>
<th>CREDITS</th>
<th>DETAILS</th>
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<tr>
<td>A.A.</td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>Study in liberal arts and sciences without a named field. Includes completion of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (40 credit general education curriculum satisfying 10 goal areas). Designed for transfer to baccalaureate degree-granting institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.A.S.</td>
<td>60-72</td>
<td>Study in scientific, technological or other professional fields that prepare students for employment in an occupation or range of occupations. Awarded without a named field. May transfer to a baccalaureate program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.S.</td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>Study in scientific, technological or other professional fields. Designed for transfer in its entirety to a related baccalaureate degree program by way of an articulation agreement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.F.A.</td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>Study in fine arts. Awarded in a named field (Art, Music, or Theatre Arts). Designed for transfer in its entirety to a related baccalaureate degree program. Includes a minimum of 24 general education credits from at least six of the ten goal areas of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>31-72</td>
<td>Prepares students for employment. A minimum of 24 credits must be in occupational or technical courses. May exceed 72 credits when the program prepares students for employment and the length is required by an employer, licensing body, or regulatory agency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>9-30</td>
<td>An academic program that has an occupational outcome or addresses a focused area of study.</td>
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Every LSC degree, diploma, and certificate program has its own unique program learning outcomes. Program learning outcomes are established and maintained through the curriculum process.

Each occupational program at LSC has an advisory committee that meets formally at least once each semester. Advisory committee members include local experts in the field, employers who hire the program’s graduates, and current or former students in the program. The advisory committee process ensures that the College’s academic programming meets current industry standards and remains responsive to student, employer, and labor market needs.

To monitor labor market conditions affecting its academic programming, Lake Superior College uses a labor market tool developed by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) in collaboration with MnSCU. The tool provides highly detailed data on actual and projected job openings by occupation and region within the State of Minnesota. This allows the College to target programming to documented employment needs and conditions within its service area. In addition, the College’s Research Office provides program specific labor market data from the DEED Labor Market Tool to those programs undergoing program reviews. This allows programs to monitor and maintain the relevance of their curriculum.

Additional information regarding the current and anticipated needs of Minnesota employers was collected during the summer and fall of 2012 through MnSCU's Workforce Assessment Initiative. In partnership with the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce and DEED, more than fifty regional “listening sessions” were held around the state to hear from employers and business leaders from the engineering, IT, energy, health care, agriculture, and transportation sectors. The results are intended to inform future initiatives by all MnSCU institutions.

LSC’s standards for individual courses within the curriculum are established and maintained by the Academic Affairs and Standards (AASC) Committee. Using standardized curriculum proposal forms, the
Committee reviews and approves course descriptions, prerequisites, assigned credits, class size, and learning outcomes. AASC also reviews courses intended for transfer for compliance with the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum requirements.

1P5. Determining Student Placement

Lake Superior College is an open-enrollment institution. Applicants will be admitted if they: (a) have graduated from high school, (b) have earned a General Equivalency Diploma (GED) or High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED), or (c) meet the Ability to Benefit Standard.

The level of preparation for specific programs or courses is determined by program and discipline faculty, often with input from program advisory committees. Course pre-requisites (such as college-level reading and writing skills) are established to ensure that students have the requisite skills to be successful in the courses they take. Some programs, especially in health care, require successful completion of specified general education courses prior to admission to the program. For example, to be admitted to the Nursing program, students first must complete courses in Medical Terminology, Human Anatomy and Physiology, Math, and Composition with a minimum overall GPA of 3.0 and a grade of “C” or higher in each course.

All such requirements are reviewed and approved by the Academic Affairs and Standards Council through the College’s formal curriculum approval process.

1P6. Communicating Required Preparation and Learning Objectives to Students

LSC hosts tours for high school students each year and holds fall and spring open houses. Admissions representatives attend regional College Fairs and make presentations at high schools. At all of these events an effort is made to communicate the required preparation needed to be successful in college, generally, and at LSC in particular.

Program planners are the College’s primary tool for communicating the required preparation for specific programs and degrees or credentials to current and prospective students. All academic programs have program planners approved through the curriculum process.

Prior to beginning a program of study, new students meet with professional advisors to evaluate their placement results and transcripts from any college-level work they have previously completed. If students have chosen a program, they receive a program-specific planner that clearly outlines the required preparation for successful entry into the program. Once a student is fully enrolled in an occupational program of study, the student may also meet with a faculty program advisor for help selecting courses or otherwise meeting program requirements.

The program planners for all programs are also made available to current and prospective students online through the College’s web-based online academic database. Planners are also included in both the online and paper versions of the Lake Superior College Catalogue. Finally, paper copies of all program planners are available in Student Services as well as at recruiting events such as open houses.

Once enrolled, students have online access to their transcripts and the Degree Audit Record System (DARS), which is used to track their academic progress toward graduation.

Detailed tuition and fee schedules are posted on the business services home page. There is a prominent link to LSC’s Net Price Calculator on the Financial Aid home page.

A searchable directory of LSC’s faculty and staff is publicly available on the College’s web site. Faculty credentials are published in the LSC Catalogue.
LSC’s affiliation with MnSCU is disclosed on the College’s home page and on all promotional materials. The College’s HLC Mark of Affiliation also appears on LSC’s home page. Additional information regarding the College’s accreditation is publicly posted. Specialized program accreditations are listed and posted publicly online as well.

1P7. Helping Students Select Programs of Study

Open houses, health fairs, job fairs, and other campus-wide activities give current, new, and prospective students opportunities to ask questions, view program facilities, and talk to faculty and current program students to determine which program areas match their interests.

As part of the Student Orientation, Accuplacer, and Registration (SOAR) process, new students meet with a professional advisor who assists them in reviewing their educational goals. At that time, the advisor reviews program information and program planners for any programs students are interested in.

Students who are undecided may be advised into the Career and Life Planning course or referred to a counselor for help in determining a career direction. The counselor will employ a variety of counseling techniques to help a student clarify a career direction, such as interpretation of the Strong/MBTI assessment, facilitation of discussion with program faculty, and referral to external agency resources.

When students begin their coursework, most will take the Student Success Seminar, a one credit course that is mandatory for most students. The purpose of the course is to provide students with the foundation they need to make a successful transition to college. The Student Success Seminar is designed to create a connection to the college community and resources, introduce tools for academic success, and help students develop personal, academic, and career goals.

1P8. Helping Underprepared Students

In accordance with LSC and MnSCU policies, all new students must complete placement testing to determine their readiness for college-level reading, writing, and math. Exceptions or partial exceptions are made for students who have (a) minimum scores of 22 on the Math, 18 on the Writing, and 21 on the Reading portions of the ACT or (b) successfully completed college-level Writing or Algebra courses.

Those students required to complete placement testing take the Accuplacer exam. Cut scores on the Accuplacer have been established at the System level for placement into college-level coursework and LSC faculty have established cut scores for placement into developmental coursework.

As part of the Student Orientation, Accuplacer, and Registration (SOAR) process, new students meet with a professional advisor following their placement testing. The advisor reviews their Accuplacer results with them and makes appropriate recommendations. Students may be advised to take a reduced course load, enroll in study skills or career exploration courses, or take advantage of services offered through the Learning Center.

The LSC Learning Center offers a variety of programming for prospective students to improve their college readiness prior to their placement testing or re-testing. Table 1-2 summarizes those programs:
### Table 1-2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pathway to College Success</td>
<td>A free comprehensive program designed to assist students to successfully transition to college by refreshing and/or improving their reading, writing, or math skills. For students who have been out of school for several years, have a GED, or have placed into developmental courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passkey</td>
<td>Offers tutorials that allow prospective students to improve their reading, writing, and math skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuplacer Online Course and Practice Tests</td>
<td>Offers self-paced preparation for the Accuplacer placement test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A+dvancer Online College Readiness Courses</td>
<td>Help prospective students refresh their reading comprehension and elementary Algebra skills.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Learning Center is a vital resource for students once they begin their studies at Lake Superior College. The Learning Center is staffed with professional and peer tutors who provide individual assistance and lead study groups in reading, writing, mathematics, computer basics, sciences, and study skills. Some instructors hold regular office hours in the Center. Students also have 24 hour access to online tutoring through the Smarthinking online tutoring service.

LSC has struggled to identify and institutionalize a method of identifying and assisting those students who do not have the minimum level of technology skills to be successful in college. An AQIP Action Project begun in 2007 developed a screening test that was successfully piloted in 2009 but never implemented. The pilot testing on 245 students revealed that approximately 6% of the students who completed the assessment were unable to complete at least four of six tasks representing critical computer skills. Recently, a Computer Literacy Task Force has been re-examining the issue. Progress to date includes:

- Development of a standard syllabus statement to raise the awareness of students and instructors regarding the importance of computer skills to success at LSC.
- The addition of a digital literacy course outcome to the Student Success Seminar course.
- A review of existing curriculum teaching basic computer skills.
- Exploration of the possibility of offering free computer skills workshops for community members in partnership with local social service agencies.

1P9. Addressing Students’ Learning Style Differences

Many students are required to take LSC’s one-credit Student Success Seminar course. One of the course outcomes for that course is that upon completion the student will have a plan to attain personal, educational and career goals. To meet that outcome, LSC uses GPS Life Plan, a customized web site with resources to assist students in developing their own personal, educational, and career plans. The educational plan section of that resource includes an assessment of learning styles.

LSC actively seeks to ensure that students taking online courses can be successful. Advisors discuss the differences between online and classroom courses during orientation and advising activities. The College’s e-Campus portal directs prospective students to a Minnesota Online quiz to answer the question, “Is Online Learning Right for You?”

In addition, the College has developed a formal set of Online Student Expectations that are communicated to students through the e-Campus portal. Those Expectations include a detailed list of what online students should expect from LSC (e.g. feedback response time, time flexibility, academic support, etc.)
as well as a list of what LSC expects from them (e.g., engagement through regular attendance, familiarity with basic computer skills, academic honesty, etc.). Finally, to promote civility in online courses, LSC has developed formal Online Course Netiquette Guidelines that are posted in the e-Campus portal.

Past faculty professional development activities have regularly included speakers, workshops, and discussions dealing with learning styles. These have included discussions of how students from the Millennial Generation differ from earlier generations.

All classrooms are equipped to accommodate varied learning styles, with a complete range of audio-visual equipment. Some classrooms are furnished with tables rather than desks to encourage and facilitate group work. For instance, a dedicated Sociology classroom has tables in the center with computer work stations around the perimeter of the room to facilitate project based learning.

1P10. Addressing Special Needs of Student Subgroups

LSC addresses the special needs of its students through Disability Services, TRIO – Student Support Services, the Intercultural and Veterans Centers, and its Affirmative Action Plan.

DISABILITY SERVICES

LSC is committed to providing the services students with documented disabilities need to succeed in college. The Disability Coordinator and her staff in the Disability Services Office work with students on a case-by-case basis to design accommodation plans. Approved accommodations are communicated to students’ instructors at the beginning of each semester through a faculty notification form.

Available services for students with disabilities include adaptive software and equipment, assistive listening devices, ergonomic tools, sign language interpreters, textbooks in alternative formats, orientation to the building, auxiliary aids (note takers, audio tapes, Braille), enlargements, scribing services, advising for courses, early registration, testing accommodations, referrals to community resources, and advocacy training.

Students are alerted to the availability of disability services through a standard statement on all course syllabi, tag lines in activities announcements, and as part of the New Student Orientation, Acculacer, and Registration (SOAR) process. In addition to printed brochures and guides for students, parents, and instructors, Disability Services maintains a web site with a wealth of information and resources.

TRIO - STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES (SSS)

SSS is committed to helping first generation college students, low-income students, and students with disabilities achieve a college degree. SSS provides academic support and resources that enhance educational success.

VETERANS CENTER

The Veterans Resource Center, in collaboration with the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs’ Higher Education Veterans Program, assists student veterans, active duty personnel, dependents, reservists, and National Guard members with VA/G.I. Bill benefits and questions regarding state and federal educational benefits programs. The staff in this on-campus office is also available to address concerns or answer questions regarding employment, family assistance, and transition issues.

INTERCULTURAL CENTER

The mission of LSC’s Intercultural Center is to provide a safe and welcoming environment for students, staff and community members to enhance their intercultural competency. The Center seeks to broaden student
experiences through activities and events that promote global awareness. Services provided by the Center include:

- Academic Support
- Diversity Education
- Cultural Awareness & Immersion
- Student Advocacy
- Loan Programs
- Publicizing Cultural Events on Campus and in the Community

The Intercultural Center also sponsors a student organization called United Students that promotes diversity through effective and fun activities both on and off-campus.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN

At all times, LSC has a current Affirmative Action Plan that is required and approved by the State of Minnesota. The Plan commits the College to conducting all personnel and educational activities without regard to race, sex, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, marital status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or membership in a local commission as defined by law. Personnel activities include, but are not limited to: recruitment, selection, placement, employee development, promotion, retention, compensation, leaves of absence, disciplinary action, transfer, demotion, termination, and lay-offs affecting all employees and job applicants.

In accordance with its current Affirmative Action Plan (2012-14), LSC has a standing Diversity Committee that meets monthly during the academic year. The mission of the Committee is to foster a culture that is inclusive and welcoming, to promote awareness and appreciation of diversity, and to address equity issues through advocacy and education.

1P11. Defining and Communicating Expectations for Teaching and Learning

Lake Superior College’s statement of values, developed in association with its Vision and Mission statements, articulates the College’s commitment to offering its students an excellent education in an environment characterized by academic freedom and the pursuit of excellence. Among the values to which LSC is publicly committed are the following:

LSC values the pursuit of excellence, innovation and initiative. To support this value, the College:

- has established standards of performance
- adheres to assessment practices designed to improve student academic achievement and institutional effectiveness
- is committed to continuing dialogue with its external constituencies
- promotes and supports initiative and innovation
- promotes and supports a high quality of education

LSC values academic freedom and free inquiry. To support this value, the College:

- encourages the free interchange of ideas and beliefs
- promotes innovation and initiative in the classroom

These values are reinforced by LSC’s policies, including an express commitment to academic freedom:
Policy 3.1 - Student Rights and Responsibilities

Part 1. Freedom to Learn
In addition to the basic constitutional rights enjoyed by all citizens, Lake Superior College students have specific rights related to academic freedom and their status as students. Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. The freedom to learn depends upon appropriate opportunities and conditions in the classroom, on the campus, and in the larger community. Students are expected to exercise their freedom with responsibility.

Part 2. Freedom of Expression
Individual students and student organizations shall be free to examine and to discuss all questions of interest to them and to express opinions publicly and privately. They shall be free to support causes by orderly means that do not disrupt the regular and essential operation of the institution. In the classroom, students shall be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.

The collective bargaining agreement covering the College’s faculty contains provisions guaranteeing instructors academic freedom:

Section 3. Academic Freedom.
The Employer shall maintain and encourage full freedom, within the law, of inquiry, teaching and research. Each faculty member shall have the right to teach in an atmosphere of free intellectual inquiry and shall not be subjected to restraints or harassment that would impair teaching.

In the exercise of academic freedom, the faculty member may, without limitation, discuss his/her own subject in the classroom. The faculty member may not, however, claim as a right the privilege of persistently discussing in the classroom any matter that has no relation to the course subject. There is an obligation to respect the dignity of others, to acknowledge their right to express differing opinions to foster and defend intellectual honesty, freedom of inquiry and instruction.

A faculty member must follow course outlines as developed by and with colleagues in the department(s). The faculty member shall have the right to freely discuss the faculty member’s subject in teaching, to choose teaching methods consistent with available resources, to evaluate student performance, to select library and other educational materials consistent with available resources, and to research and publish.

The faculty member is entitled to freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to adequate performance of other academic duties.

Processes in place to ensure that the College’s expectations regarding the effectiveness of teaching and learning are realized include those shown in Table 1-3:
Table 1-3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROCESS</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Evaluations</td>
<td>Offers every student the opportunity to evaluate each of his or her courses each semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Evaluations</td>
<td>Instructors are regularly evaluated by their academic deans in both on-ground and on-line teaching environments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSC Online Course Peer Review</td>
<td>Faculty peer reviews of online courses using a locally adapted version of the Maryland Quality Matters rubric to ensure quality course construction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota Online Quality Initiative</td>
<td>Online Course Review and Certification conducted as a Quality Matters Affiliate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Faculty Training</td>
<td>Comprehensive Training Program for Online Faculty Focused on the Technology and the Pedagogy of Online Teaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Cooperative</td>
<td>Participating instructors observe each other’s classes to learn from each other.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1P12. Building an Effective and Efficient Course Delivery System

All LSC courses offered for credit require one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class work each week for fifteen weeks for each credit awarded. Late start courses and other courses taught over terms longer or shorter than the traditional fifteen week semester include an equivalent amount of instruction and student work and lead to the same learning outcomes. Likewise, distance learning courses require an equivalent amount of instruction and student work and lead to the same learning outcomes as the same courses would if they were taught entirely in the classroom. These standards are required by policy and maintained in practice through the Academic Affairs and Standards Council (AASC).

There is an AASC approved course outline for each course that is offered. The course outline governs the course regardless of where it is offered (e.g. high schools), by whom (e.g. adjunct instructors) it is taught, or how (e.g. online) it is delivered. Instructors develop their own syllabus for each course they teach, but the syllabus must be consistent with the official course outline and include the same learning outcomes. Deans provide new hires with the official course outlines for the courses they have been assigned to teach.

To meet student needs, course schedules are intentionally constructed to offer a variety of courses at a variety of times (morning, afternoon, evening), formats (block, classroom, flex-lab, hybrid, online), and start/end dates (late start, eight week). Care is also taken to make efficient use of classrooms, labs, and other instructional spaces.

1P13. Ensuring Up-to-Date Programs and Courses

LSC relies on a wide variety of methods and processes to ensure that its programs and courses are up-to-date, offering state-of-the-art educations of benefit to its students, their prospective employers, and the community. Among them are the following:

DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PROGRAMS

Consistent with LSC’s mission to serve students, employers, and the local community, the College strives to be responsive to local industry standards and labor market needs by opening new programs when there is a demand for them. Among the new academic programs added during 2013 are those shown in Table 1-4:
Table 1-4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM</th>
<th>AWARD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wildland Firefighter</td>
<td>Certificate (12 Credits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welding Technology</td>
<td>Certificate (30 Credits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapid Prototyping &amp; Design</td>
<td>Certificate (14 Credits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Manufacturing</td>
<td>Certificate (24 Credits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machine Technologist</td>
<td>Certificate (30 Credits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production Technologies</td>
<td>Certificate (30 Credits)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aircraft Maintenance Technician</td>
<td>Diploma (83 Credits) (pending MnSCU approval)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aircraft Maintenance Technician AAS</td>
<td>AAS (94 Credits) (pending MnSCU approval)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The new Aircraft Maintenance Technician awards illustrate LSC’s responsiveness to the local community and its employers. These programs, developed with the encouragement and support of Duluth’s burgeoning aviation sector, will provide badly needed maintenance technicians for AAR Maintenance, Cirrus Aircraft, Kestral Aircraft, and other local aviation related businesses.

All new academic programs must be justified by labor market projections and reviewed and approved by the System office.

PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEES

All occupational programs have program advisory committees that meet a minimum of once a semester. The advisory committees include local employers, experts in the field, and current students or program graduates. One vital role of advisory committees is to review their program’s curriculum to ensure it is up-to-date, producing qualified graduates, and meeting employers’ expectations.

TRANSFER OPPORTUNITIES

LSC has a full-time Transfer Coordinator who oversees transfer evaluations and coordinates the development and maintenance of articulation agreements.

Transfer evaluations are conducted for all students who have earned college credits elsewhere. The evaluations are governed by LSC’s Undergraduate Course Transfer Policy. As a general rule, credits from regionally accredited institutions for courses that are comparable or equivalent to courses offered by LSC are accepted. To be considered comparable or equivalent, 75% or more of the course content must be equivalent. Up to 16 credits for occupational or professional courses which are not equivalent to LSC courses will be accepted as electives.

Processes and standards are in place to conduct prior learning assessments and to evaluate requests for alternative forms of credit such as nationally recognized exams (e.g. Advanced Placement, CLEP), credit by exam, and credit for military or business training.

COLLEGE IN THE SCHOOLS

LSC operates a dual credit program for high school students called College in the Schools (CITS). Approximately 30 Minnesota high schools participate annually, offering a total of approximately 150 classes. A full-time CITS coordinator oversees the program.

State law largely dictates student eligibility for the program. Participating high school teachers are expected to meet the same minimum qualifications required of LSC instructors, which generally means an
earned master's degree and significant graduate-level course work in the subject area of instruction. Each high school teacher is mentored by a tenured LSC faculty member.

The faculty mentor meets with the high school teacher regularly face-to-face, by email, or by telephone and conducts at least one in-person site visit annually. The faculty mentor:

- Reviews the content of each course for academic rigor appropriate to college-level coursework.
- Reviews and approves the course syllabus.
- Reviews and approves the textbook for the course.
- Reviews examples of assignments and exams.
- Reviews final class grades.
- Monitors instructional effectiveness and ensures that the course meets the learning outcomes contained in the LSC course outline.
- Completes Course Review and Site Visit/Course Alignment Checklist forms.

LSC intends to apply for National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) accreditation and has begun the work required to apply for candidacy. LSC’s College in the Schools high school partners are surveyed each year as part of the College’s Partnership Satisfaction Survey.

PROGRAM ACCREDITATION

The LSC programs shown in Table 1-5 have demonstrated their commitment to and achievement of program quality by achieving specialized program accreditation.

**Table 1-5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM</th>
<th>ACCREDITATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Automotive Service Technology</td>
<td>National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental Hygiene</td>
<td>Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Assisting</td>
<td>Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP), on recommendation of the Medical Assisting Education Review Board (MAERB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Laboratory Technician</td>
<td>National Accreditation Agency of Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Therapist Assistant</td>
<td>Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical Nursing</td>
<td>Granted Initial Candidacy by National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Nursing</td>
<td>National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radiologic Technology</td>
<td>Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respiratory Therapy</td>
<td>Committee on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surgical Technology</td>
<td>Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP), on recommendation of the Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology (ARC-STSA)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PROGRAM REVIEWS

All academic programs undergo program reviews on a three year cycle. The review process includes consideration of enrollment and cost data, graduate placement data, and labor market projections.
Programs that no longer meet current needs or are no longer viable are closed or suspended, subject to approval by the System office.

GRADUATE PLACEMENT

LSC participates in the annual MnSCU Graduate Placement Survey following a strict protocol prescribed by MnSCU. Graduates are surveyed one year after graduation to determine their employment status. Contact attempts continue until responses are obtained for at least 85% of the graduates in the cohort. Responses are submitted to and processed by the System office, which produces a report that calculates the “related employment rate” for all of LSC’s programs and for LSC as a whole. The “related employment rate” represents the total number of graduates working in a position related to their program of study as a percentage of the total number of graduates available for related work.

FACULTY CREDENTIALING

Through its Academic Affairs College Faculty Credentialing Unit, MnSCU has developed a system-wide credentialing process to ensure that all persons performing faculty work at LSC and its other two-year colleges are qualified. The faculty credentialing process is described in more detail in 4P2.

1P14. Changing or Discontinuing Programs and Courses

Suspension and closure of programs is subject to the approval of the MnSCU System Office. LSC has not formally suspended or closed any entire programs in recent years, though the College routinely re-evaluates and re-designs its programs to keep them up to date and responsive to student and employer needs. Such re-designs often involve adjusting degree offerings or substantially revising program planners within program areas.

One exception is the Sonography program, which is currently closed to new students. Labor market and student demand for the Sonography program were both strong; however, the College was unable, despite multiple searches, to hire a second full time instructor, and the number of available clinical sites was insufficient to support the program in the long term. These difficulties made it impossible to obtain program accreditation.

1P15. Addressing Learning Support Needs

LSC’s main campus consists of five buildings with nearly 350,000 square feet of space. Instructional spaces include approximately 35 classrooms, 35 teaching labs, and 14 computer labs. Support spaces include a student services center, library, learning center, book store, wellness center, and cafeteria.

Additional classrooms and training facilities are located ten miles away at the College’s Emergency Response Training Center and at the Center for Advanced Aviation, which is in leased facilities at the Duluth International Airport. LSC plans to open an additional educational site in downtown Duluth in 2014.

The learning support needs of students are addressed through a variety of services, equipment, and facilities, including those shown in Table 1-6:
### Table 1-6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SERVICES/FACILITIES</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Center</td>
<td>Peer and Professional Tutoring, Study Groups and Spaces, Focused Workshops, and Related Services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harold P. Erickson Library</td>
<td>Reference Desk, Books, Periodicals, Digital Databases, Discipline Specific “Quickstart” Pages, Inter-Library Loans, Direct Classroom Support, Group Study Rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercultural Center</td>
<td>Academic and Social Support for International Students and other Students from Diverse Backgrounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability Services</td>
<td>Accommodation Plans and Support Services for Students with Disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eCampus</td>
<td>Online Student Mentors Embedded in Online Courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising and Counseling</td>
<td>Support and Guidance in Academics, Career Planning, and Personal Concerns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Sites</td>
<td>Clinical Education for Health and Nursing Programs at Area Hospitals and Clinics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-Campus Clinics</td>
<td>Dental Hygiene, Physical Therapy, Massage Therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simulators</td>
<td>Aviation (flight simulators)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fire Technology (fire training simulator with mockup of commercial airliner)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health (hospital nursing simulation center &amp; “sim man”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Laboratories &amp;</td>
<td>Health, Nursing, and Science Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smart Classrooms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Technology Support Center; Computer Labs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The learning support needs of faculty are also addressed in multiple ways. A full-time instructional technologist provides technology training and support for faculty. Technology in the classrooms includes instructor stations with computers, internet access, overhead projectors, document cameras, and video players supported by a full-time technician. Equipment is standardized so that instructors know what equipment will be available to them regardless of which classroom they are teaching in.

**1P16. Aligning Co-Curricular Goals with Curricular Learning Objectives**

LSC has an active, self-governed Student Senate that advocates for students through LSC’s shared governance processes. LSC’s Student Senate leaders have a long history of active involvement in the Minnesota State College Student Association and as student representatives on MnSCU committees and task forces.

Over 30 student clubs and organizations are available to students, including 19 related to academic programs (e.g. Nursing Club, Computer Technology Club) or disciplines (e.g. Art Club, Spanish Club). The LSC chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society was recently named a “Five Star Chapter” and achieved “top 100” chapter status out of over 1,300 chapters internationally.

Student Life sponsors a broad variety of activities during the academic year. Students have the opportunity to play on a variety of recreational sports teams, including curling, volleyball, basketball, and hockey. Welcome week activities the first week of each semester, campus-wide clean-ups, Festival of Nations, blood drives, open microphone events, student art shows, bouldering wall climbs, free movie
nights, campus-wide book reads, health fairs, field trips, cultural excursions and immersions, and other similar activities give students opportunities to become actively involved in campus life and learn outside the classroom.

The Wellness Center features an exercise/fitness suite equipped with aerobic exercise equipment and weight training machines, and a separate free weight room. Membership in the Wellness Center is free to current students.

LSC recognizes it could do more to align co-curricular goals with curricular learning objectives. The College’s current organizational structure inhibits collaboration between academics and student life, as these areas report to separate Vice Presidents. Within that constraint, LSC has worked, with limited success so far, to align field trips, service learning, and student activities with curricular learning objectives.

1P17. Determining Graduates Meet Learning and Development Expectations
Assessment of student learning at LSC is intentionally faculty driven. Therefore, the faculty is the ultimate judge of whether students have met the learning outcomes associated with the awards they have earned.

COLLEGE-WIDE ASSESSMENT
At the college-wide level, the Student Academic Achievement (SAA) Committee began undertaking regular college-wide assessment projects in 2002. Generally, each project assesses student achievement of a specific college-wide outcome. Some college-wide assessment projects have been far more successful than others, but in every case there have been lessons learned.

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT
At the program level, individual programs determine the direct and indirect assessments of student learning that will best ensure that students awarded a degree or certificate have met the program outcomes. Assessment measures and techniques that are used include capstone courses or projects, clinical evaluations, internships, course pass rates, skills assessments, employer feedback, placement data, aggregate grade distribution data, certification, licensing, and state board exams, competency demonstrations, technical certification, production work, patient/client evaluations, and student portfolios containing demonstrated achievement of outcomes.

As part of their regular program reviews, both occupational programs and academic departments are expected to report assessment of student learning data and how they make use of it to improve teaching and learning. In addition, many programs, primarily in the Health Division, regularly submit assessment data to their specialized accreditors.

COURSE ASSESSMENT
At the course level, instructors are encouraged to distinguish between classroom assessment for grading purposes and assessment to ensure that students are meeting course and program learning outcomes. In some cases, instructors align their classroom assessment techniques with the course learning outcomes so that both are measured at the same time. This helps ensure that students who pass a course have met the learning outcomes for that course. Many instructors also collect information about the teaching and learning environment through classroom assessment techniques and end-of-course evaluations. This provides immediate feedback that can be used to improve teaching while the course is ongoing.
1P18. Designing Processes for Assessing Student Learning

The Student Academic Achievement (SAA) Committee oversees all aspects of assessment of student learning. The SAA Committee is comprised of 10-12 faculty members, a student representative, and each of the Academic Administrators in an ex-officio capacity. The Committee is chaired by the Director of Accreditation, Research, and Assessment.

The SAA Committee’s role is reflected in its Mission and Vision statements:

**SAA MISSION STATEMENT**

The Mission of SAA is to improve student learning by advocating, supporting, and documenting college-wide assessment.

**SAA VISION STATEMENT**

Lake Superior College’s SAA Committee will promote a campus-wide culture of assessment as a means of improving student learning. We will systematically strengthen the alignment between learning outcomes and student achievement.

Over the past three years, the SAA Committee has overseen the following college-wide assessment projects:

- Quantitative Literacy Assessment Project (2013, 2010)
- Written Communication Assessment Project (2012)
- Citizenship Assessment Project (2012)
- Student Self-Report of Learning Assessment Project (Pilot 2011)
- Scientific Method Assessment (2010)

The Committee also undertook the following planning and activities in support of assessment of student learning at LSC:

- Reviewed and approved additional college-wide outcomes interpretations
- Presented “Excellence in Assessment” awards
- Sponsored a finals week hospitality room for instructors
- Reviewed the Critical Thinking Assessment Test (CAT) for possible adoption
- Reviewed and updated its strategic plan
- Reviewed its mission and structure
- Started developing an assessment toolkit
- Conducted an unsuccessful one-year experiment to leverage the committee’s expertise by working through four sub-committees
- Planned a Program Assessment Inventory for Spring, 2014

LSC’s processes for assessing student learning include the College’s program review process. Accountability for assessment of student learning is built in; the controlling policy [3.10] calls for review of all academic programs and departments, on a three year cycle, with respect to a number of criteria, one of which is “performance measures including aggregated student achievement.” The associated procedure [3.10.1] requires programs and departments to report regarding “assessment strengths and opportunities for improvement, student learning, quality instruction, and effective planning.” This helps ensure that Programs and Departments are intentional about their assessment processes and will be held accountable for assessment of student learning at the program level.

The SAA Committee is currently implementing a periodic assessment inventory to better document
assessment at the program and department levels. The first Inventory will take place in the spring of 2014. The assessment inventory process is expected to supplement the program review process by capturing and sharing assessment-driven improvements and identifying gaps in program and department level assessment.

The College has also taken a number of steps to ensure that instructors understand the importance and value of assessment of student learning. When search committees interview candidates for permanent faculty positions, the candidates are asked at least one question about assessment of student learning. A typical set of interview questions would ask candidates to “Describe your experience working with student learning outcomes,” followed by, “How do you evaluate student learning outcomes in your classes?” In addition, all new faculty hires are routinely informed by the Chief Academic Officer and Academic Deans during the hiring process that LSC expects its instructors to be actively involved in assessment of student learning and other assessment processes. After hire, instructors are required to develop professional development plans and undergo regular performance reviews.

**RESULTS**

**1R1. Collecting and Analyzing Measures of Student Learning and Development**

Faculty members collect evidence of student learning at the course level in the ordinary course of their teaching. Depending on the course, such evidence could include written papers, lab results, online discussions, tests, clinical evaluations, etc.

Graduating students in four of LSC’s occupational programs take National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI) Knowledge Assessments each spring. The four programs are Commercial and Residential Wiring, Industrial Electronics, Automotive Technology, and Auto Body. Results are analyzed by the Research Office and the program instructors receive a written report.

Additional information is collected at the program and institutional levels through regular administration of student surveys such as the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). Results are analyzed and discussed administratively, and shared with the faculty through presentations, workshops and program consultations.

For example, Item 12 on the CCSSE asks students “How much has your experience at this college contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?” The areas listed include many directly related to learning outcomes, including: (a) acquiring a broad general education; (b) acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills; (c) writing clearly and effectively; (d) speaking clearly and effectively; (e) thinking critically and analytically; (f) solving numerical problems, (g) using computing and information technology; and (h) working effectively with others. On all of these areas except (d), LSC students taking the CCSSE in 2009 and 2011 reported that LSC contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development in these areas at rates generally comparable to the mean rates for other medium colleges nationally and LSC’s MnSCU cohort.

Every student in every course is given the opportunity to complete course evaluations at the end of the semester. Results are provided to instructors as well as their academic deans. In addition, many instructors collect feedback from their students on the course and their teaching methods at intervals, most often mid-term and again at the end of the term.

**1R2. Performance Results for Common Student Learning Objectives**

LSC’s performance results for its common student learning and development objectives are summarized in Table 1-7:
Table 1-7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Random sample of student papers from four liberal arts courses and one developmental writing course. Rubric scored papers.</td>
<td>Inconclusive, but post-project evaluation produced process improvements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Comparative assessment of a random sample of exit exams from online and on-ground sections of College Composition I. Blind scoring against a common rubric.</td>
<td>Results showed no statistical difference in student performance between students in the two groups. Average performance fell below expectations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Expanded replication of 2003 Project. Random sample of common exit exam essays in College Composition I scored against a common rubric. Included one concurrent enrollment section.</td>
<td>Median score of 2.99 on a four point scale, with 74% of students meeting the outcome. There was no statistically significant difference between online and on-ground student performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Replication of the 2005 Written Communication Project except individual English instructors applied the common rubric to papers from their own courses.</td>
<td>90.1% of the students were judged to meet the outcome. The English instructors scored their students' final exams higher on the rubric than the interdisciplinary scoring teams in the prior project. The English Department discussed the discrepancy and decided to undertake its own assessment project in 2007.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>The English department followed students who successfully completed ENGL0460 (Writing II) to determine their persistence and success rates in regular college courses as an indirect measure of their college level writing skills following their developmental coursework.</td>
<td>80% of students who completed ENGL0460 persisted to the following semester. Program students successfully completed 86.6% of their courses the following semester; Liberal Arts students successfully completed 60% of their courses the following semester.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Students in a variety of courses were given the same in-class writing prompt and asked to write a well-developed paragraph explaining their answer. A total of 85 responses were scored using the same methodology used in the 2005 and 2007 written communication assessment projects.</td>
<td>Only 37% of the students were determined to meet the college-wide written communication outcome. The results were referred to the English department for further discussion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## ORAL COMMUNICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Comparison of random sample of student presentations from online and on-ground courses across disciplines. Presentations were produced in three optional formats and scored with a common rubric.</td>
<td>Results were inconclusive. Post-project evaluation produced process improvements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Two person scoring teams observed in-class presentations using a common rubric.</td>
<td>Mean score was 2.24 on a four point scale, with 70% of students in sample not meeting expected performance. Action Plan was developed to improve teaching and learning of oral communication skills. Plan included faculty training for teaching oral communication across the curriculum, oral communication tutoring, sharing best practices among faculty, and curriculum mapping.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Recent CCSSE results were compared to baseline data showing a statistically significant difference between the rates at which LSC students and students at cohort institutions report making class presentations to determine whether the College’s 2005 Oral Communication Action Plan was effective.</td>
<td>2009 CCSSE results showed that the difference in rates had narrowed and was no longer statistically significant. Updates: The 2011 CCSSE results continued to show a small gap. On 2013 CCSSE LSC students reported making a class presentation at a rate identical to the national CCSSE cohort.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CRITICAL THINKING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002 2004</td>
<td>Comparison of student performance on a standardized Critical Thinking instrument to determine growth between first and fourth semester.</td>
<td>First semester student performance at slightly below available benchmarks on nationally-normed scale. Fourth semester comparison data determined unreliable due to low participation rates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Assessment of Critical Thinking skills of one section of nursing students using an existing common rubric.</td>
<td>100% of students assessed achieved a level of three or above on a four point scale.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>The ability of 562 students to reason by analogy was assessed as part of LSC’s Constitution Day observance.</td>
<td>81% of student responses to three multiple choice questions requiring reasoning by analogy were correct.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### CITIZENSHIP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2008 | Constitution Day Project: 886 students were shown a short video designed to increase their knowledge of how elections are governed by the U.S. Constitution and administered questionnaires before and after Election Day. | (1) In excess of 75% of LSC students voted in the 2008 Presidential election, compared to 53.8% of young people nationwide between the ages of 18 and 24 who have completed some college or an Associate degree.  
(2) LSC’s Constitution Day Video succeeded in increasing students’ knowledge about the Constitutional provisions governing Presidential elections. |
| 2012 | Constitution Day Project: 620 students were administered before and after questionnaires regarding voting in the 2012 Presidential election. | In excess of 71% of LSC students reported voting in the 2012 Presidential election. Comparison statistics were not available. |

### MATHEMATICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>A faculty-developed 23-item computational skills assessment was administered to 183 students from course sections across all three academic divisions.</td>
<td>Analysis raised questions about the validity of multiple items in the assessment. A faculty committee revised the assessment instrument.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>The revised computational skills assessment was administered to 94 students in seven developmental and college-level Mathematics course sections.</td>
<td>Scoring and analysis produced no definitive conclusions except that developmental and college-level students have difficulty working with percentages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>The computational skills assessment was substantially revised into a 24-item quantitative literacy assessment by a faculty committee and administered to 296 students.</td>
<td>Analysis is pending.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### MISCELLANEOUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Pilot Project collected student self-reports of learning from 207 students in 12 course sections in Accounting, Chemistry, Communication, Paralegal Studies, and Sociology</td>
<td>Aggregate results showed 19.8% of the students reported knowing a lot or quite a bit about the subject matter of the course before taking the course. 97% reported knowing a lot or quite a bit about the subject matter of the course after taking the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Methodology</td>
<td>Results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>The CAAP Science Test was administered to 230 students. A locally developed scientific method assessment was administered to 131 of the same students who took the CAAP Science Test.</td>
<td>As a group, LSC’s students scored higher on the CAAP Test than the national mean for two-year institutions. Analysis showed that the difference was statistically significant at a confidence level of .0004. Statistical analysis showed essentially no correlation between students’ scores on the scientific method assessment and the CAAP Science Test.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1R3. Performance Results for Program Learning Objectives

All programs have program learning outcomes. Assessment of student achievement of those outcomes is the responsibility of the program instructors. Programs with specialized accreditation generally report their assessment results to their accreditors. Program assessment data is otherwise collected through the program review process, which requires programs and departments to discuss their assessment results within their reviews.

### 1R4. Performance Results for Students Acquiring Required Knowledge and Skills

#### LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATION EXAMS

Students in many programs must pass licensing or credentialing exams to qualify for employment in their fields or be competitive in the job market. Table 1-8 shows pass rates for those programs for the most recent year for which the data is available:

#### Table 1-8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM</th>
<th>EXAM</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th># TESTED</th>
<th>PASS RATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dental Hygiene</td>
<td>National Board Dental Hygiene Exam</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central Region Dental Testing Service</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>95.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minnesota Board of Dentistry Jurisprudence Examination</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Assisting</td>
<td>Medical Assisting Education Review Board</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>82.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Laboratory Technician</td>
<td>ASCP Medical Lab Technician Certification Exam</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing (PN)</td>
<td>National Council Licensure Exam for Practical Nurses</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing (RN)</td>
<td>National Council Licensure Exam for Registered Nurses</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing Assistant</td>
<td>National Nurse Aide Assessment Program</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Therapist Assistant</td>
<td>National Physical Therapy Exam</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radiologic Technology</td>
<td>Jt. Rev. Comm. on Education in Radiologic Technology</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surgical Technology</td>
<td>National Board of Surgical Technology Exam</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GRADUATE PLACEMENT SURVEY

Table 1-9 shows LSC's overall Graduate Placement Survey results for the past six years compared to the results for all MnSCU Colleges:

Table 1-9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INSTITUTION</th>
<th>CY06</th>
<th>CY07</th>
<th>CY08</th>
<th>CY09</th>
<th>CY10</th>
<th>CY11</th>
<th>AVG.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lake Superior College</td>
<td>98.7%</td>
<td>94.6%</td>
<td>91.3%</td>
<td>84.7%</td>
<td>86.5%</td>
<td>83.4%</td>
<td>89.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All MnSCU Colleges</td>
<td>88.3%</td>
<td>88.2%</td>
<td>86.8%</td>
<td>79.3%</td>
<td>80.4%</td>
<td>81.4%</td>
<td>84.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS

LSC has one or more articulation agreements with multiple four year institutions of higher education. For a detailed listing, see 9R2.

LSC students also benefit from a state-wide transfer agreement known as the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum. Students who complete a package of 40 general education credits at LSC will have those credits accepted at any public university in the State of Minnesota in satisfaction of the general education requirements for the first two years of college.

1R5. Performance Results for Learning Support Processes

ONLINE STUDENT MENTOR PROGRAM

Online student mentors are students who have shown a special aptitude for online learning. Selected by the instructor and compensated by LSC, each mentor is embedded in an online course he or she has already successfully completed. The mentor’s role is to assist students with course navigation, provide a peer point of view on the online learning experience, and provide limited tutoring in the subject matter. Online student mentors are paid a stipend.

Over the course of the 2012-13 academic year, online student mentors were embedded in a total of 100 sections of 83 different courses.

LIBRARY

LSC’s librarians support academic use of the library through classroom presentations. In the most recent year, they made 82 classroom presentations to 2050+ students. The library also supports course based research through over 40 course “Quick Start” pages accessed through the library web site. Instructors collaborate with library staff to develop the pages, which are designed to support the research assignments for specific courses.

ADVISING

Results with respect to Early Alerts and advising contacts are reported in Section 6R2 and student satisfaction data is summarized in Section 6R5. Otherwise, LSC does not have performance results for Advising.

LEARNING CENTER

The Learning Center was moved to a much larger and more central location on campus in May, 2012. The new location accommodates separate rooms for Math, Writing, Science, and Computer Labs.

Over the past two years, the Learning Center has averaged over 16,000 separate student visits each year. Students are asked to sign-in for each visit; however, the Center’s new location has multiple access points, exacerbating the tendency of students not to sign-in. As a result, student visits are undoubtedly undercounted.
The Learning Center’s staff of six professional tutors, augmented by peer tutors in many subjects, provides approximately 20,000 hours of tutoring each year. In addition, through Smartthinking, each LSC student is provided up to 15 hours each semester of free tutoring online. Smartthinking’s live tutoring is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Each year, LSC students access approximately 1,000 hours of online tutoring through the Smartthinking service.

The College’s 2013 Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) results in Table 1-10 show that students assign a high level of importance to tutoring services. The results also show a very small gap between students’ ratings of importance and satisfaction, indicating that LSC’s Learning Center is doing an excellent job of meeting students’ expectations.

Table 1-10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2013 SSI ITEMS ITEM</th>
<th>IMPORTANCE</th>
<th>SATISFACTION</th>
<th>GAP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50. Tutoring services are readily available.</td>
<td>6.27</td>
<td>6.10</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77. Campus item: The tutors in the Learning Center are helpful and approachable.</td>
<td>6.32</td>
<td>6.23</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1R6. Comparing Results for Helping Students Learn

LSC is one of 25 public two-year colleges that are part of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System (MnSCU). Sharing common data systems provides a broad range of directly comparable data. Due to their size and mix of programs, LSC considers eight other two-year MnSCU colleges to be peer institutions. Those peer institutions are Central Lakes College, Northland Community & Technical College, Ridgewater College, Riverland College, Rochester Community & Technical College, South Central College, St. Cloud Technical & Community College, and Century College. LSC has recently begun to compare its results on various metrics against those achieved by these peer institutions.

LSC has also identified seven out-of-state peer institutions: Eastern Arizona College, Illinois Valley Community College, Laramie County Community College, North Iowa Community College, Black Hawk College, San Juan College, and Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College. The College compares itself to these institutions on such metrics as graduation, transfer, and default rates.

To support its latest Strategic Framework, MnSCU now tracks 24 Performance Metrics, including three directly related to helping students learn: Licensure Exam Pass Rates, Student Persistence and Completion Rates, and Completion Rates. The historical data shown in Table 1-11 indicate that LSC has outperformed all MnSCU colleges on all three metrics over the most recent six year periods reported:

Table 1-11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lake Superior College</td>
<td>88.87%</td>
<td>70.7%</td>
<td>56.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All MnSCU Colleges</td>
<td>87.35%</td>
<td>69.3%</td>
<td>53.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>1.52%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In recent years, LSC has used nationally-normed standardized assessments on a limited basis to compare the academic performance of its students with those at other institutions.

In April, 2010, LSC administered the ACT CAAP test to 230 students taking laboratory science courses.
The results showed that LSC's students scored above the national mean at both the freshman and sophomore levels.

Since April, 2007, LSC has administered National Occupational Competency Testing Institute (NOCTI) knowledge tests to students graduating from the Electronics and Commercial and Residential Wiring (CRW) programs. Generally, Electronics students score significantly higher than the national mean. The CRW students generally score below the national mean, but the difference is not statistically significant. In 2012, LSC began administering NOCTI knowledge tests to graduating students in the Auto Body and Automotive Tech programs. Results show the students score at about the national mean, with any differences not statistically significant.

Recently, NOCTI has established criterion referenced cut scores for most of its assessments. The cut scores, set by expert practitioners, represent the minimum score that a student should have to be deemed prepared for an entry level position in the field. Table 1-12 shows the number of LSC students tested in 2013 who met the cut scores:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM</th>
<th># STUDENTS TESTED</th>
<th># (%) STUDENTS EXCEEDING CUT SCORE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comm. &amp; Residential Wiring</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11 (85%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Electronics</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8 (44%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto Body</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10 (83%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automotive Technology</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16 (80%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LSC has considered administering NOCTI assessments in several additional programs; however, the program faculty reported that there was poor alignment between the program outcomes and the blueprint for the assessments.

**IMPROVEMENT**

1.1. Improvements for Helping Students Learn

Major examples of recent improvements LSC has made in this category include the following:

**STRATEGIC PLAN**

In July, 2010, when Dr. Patrick Johns became the third President of LSC, he recognized the need for a strategic plan for the College. Led by an outside facilitator, a strategic planning task force comprised of faculty, staff, students and community members was organized. As the strategic plan took shape, public forums and validation sessions were held with business and civic leaders, general community members, students, staff, and faculty.

This comprehensive process ultimately produced the College’s FY12-FY15 Strategic Plan. Although all five of the Plan’s goals are related to helping students learn, two of the goals and their related objectives are of particular importance:

**Goal B:** LSC will assure that programs, courses and learning opportunities align with changing community, employer, and learner needs.

**Goal C:** LSC will assure comprehensive accessibility to increase student enrollment, retention, and success.

**MASTER ACADEMIC PLAN**

Until recently, planning for the Academic Division occurred within the context of the College’s Annual Work Plan. The Vice President of Academic Affairs, the Academic Deans, and other leaders within the
Division submitted annual work plans for their areas of responsibility. Those work plans were then collated and harmonized into the Academic Division’s Annual Work Plan, which in turn was incorporated into the College’s Annual Work Plan. The result was a succession of annual work plans that tended to be fragmented and seldom looked beyond the next academic year.

In January of 2012, under the leadership of Dr. Mark Magnuson, Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, the College undertook to develop a three-year Master Academic Plan (MAP) that would align with and support its Strategic Plan.

A 22 member task force was formed with representatives from across the College. The MAP Task Force held 8 two-hour meetings and conducted an open forum on a campus-wide duty day to gather input and feedback. This process resulted in six broad goals:

(I) Increase student retention and success by using methods that include earlier identification of barriers, earlier resolution of barriers including computer literacy, and improved management of academic alerts.

(II) Meet employer requirements and improve graduate job prospects by employing strategies for earlier channeling into viable career/academic tracks, improving student job readiness, earlier identification of employer training needs and delivery of programs that meet those needs.

(III) Cross-divisional and interdepartmental faculty/staff communication and collaboration that improves awareness of college-wide programs, policies and processes, enhances advising opportunities for students and integrates disciplines for stronger course offerings.

(IV) Faculty and staff professional development, including systemic orientation and mentoring, improving online instructional capabilities and effectively using feedback.

(V) Increase student enrollment, retention and success by cultivating ways for students to identify with the College, their courses and programs; help them transition to identifiable course or program completion targets – degrees with emphasis, more and better articulation agreements and certifications.

(VI) Increase course accessibility and student success by diversifying course delivery venues, improving schedules, expanding evening plus weekend offerings and enhancing evening/weekend services.

Specific goals were established reflecting commitments within each division (Allied Health, Business and Industry, Liberal Arts and Sciences, Student Services, and Workforce Development) to support achievement of the six broad goals of the Plan. The division specific goals were prioritized, “owners” responsible for achieving the goals were identified, costs were estimated, timelines were established, and metrics for determining when the goals have been achieved were articulated.

The final Plan was shared with the entire campus community in August, 2012. By setting priorities and establishing general program direction, the Master Academic Plan has guided budgeting, scheduling, and other planning processes and initiatives. In January, 2013, the task force reconvened to initiate the first annual review of the Plan, but that effort proved ineffective; therefore, the College still needs to identify an effective process for periodically reviewing and updating the Master Academic Plan.

**COLLEGE IN THE SCHOOLS**

In early 2012 it became clear that LSC’s College in the Schools program desperately needed attention. The former coordinator had left LSC, relationships with many partner high schools had become strained, and the program was not in compliance with MnSCU policy and evolving state law. The problems were
clearly reflected in the results of LSC’s spring, 2012 Partnership Survey. The open comments from counselors, teachers, and administrators from the high schools were especially instructive.

In response, the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs convened a working group to rebuild the program. A new coordinator was hired. New forms and procedures were created to ensure that program requirements, such as minimum credentialing for participating high school teachers and placement testing for participating high school students were clear and would be observed. In September, a comprehensive workshop to clearly communicate expectations for high school staff was held on campus. Finally, previously lax contracting processes were tightened up.

A year later, relationships have been repaired and the program is well on its way to full compliance with all applicable requirements. The spring, 2013 Partnership Survey indicated greatly improved relationships with high school staff. There remain some apprehensions by partner schools and their staff about the effect of the new program requirements, but the processes are now in place to ensure that the program requirements are clear and will be adhered to by all participants.

STUDENT SUCCESS SEMINAR
LSC created what was then called the First Year Experience course as part of an AQIP Action Project initiated in 2006 but not completed until 2009. Since its inception, the course (mandatory for most students) was valuable but problematic and a series of successive iterations failed to remedy the shortcomings.

This past year, the College undertook a comprehensive review and revision of the course. Led by the Associate Dean of Academic and Student Affairs and the Director of the Learning Center, the review started by asking whether the course served a useful purpose or should be abandoned.

Ultimately, the decision was made to retain the course and rename it the “Student Success Seminar.” With the change of name came major revisions to the course outcomes. Among other things, a digital literacy outcome was added to ensure that students who do not have the technology skills necessary to be successful at LSC are identified and helped early in their college careers.

TRAINING IN TECHNOLOGY AND ONLINE PEDAGOGY
A new training program for faculty focused on technology and the pedagogy of online teaching was piloted in the summer of 2012 and expanded in 2013. An AQIP Action Project is institutionalizing the training, which offers a free workshop for up to twenty instructors new to online teaching or with fewer than two years of online teaching experience. Total instructional time is 24 hours with an ongoing mentoring component thereafter. The program will be further expanded in the near future to include additional training for more experienced online instructors.

112. Improving Processes and Setting Targets for Helping Students Learn
LSC’s culture is expressly student oriented, as indicated by the results of the College’s 2013 administration of the Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) Survey. The Survey, completed by 176 employees, showed that the Student Focus Organizational Climate Factor was scored higher than any other Factor.

There is evidence that LSC students also perceive LSC as student oriented. On the 2013 administration of the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI), students rated their satisfaction on items in the Student Centeredness scale much higher than the national mean for community colleges and LSC’s performance gap (difference between importance and satisfaction) was less than half that for national
community colleges. Similar results were found for the Instructional Effectiveness, Academic Advising/Counseling, Academic Services, and Campus Support Services scales.

However, the College recognizes that its retention and completion rates leave substantial opportunity for improvement. Unfortunately, LSC’s ability to focus attention on specific learning processes and set targets for improvement has been increasingly impacted by resource constraints. The College’s staffing model is extremely lean and reduced state appropriations have prevented new initiatives that would otherwise be pursued.

LSC’s response has been to seek grant funding to pilot improvements to its learning support processes. In 2012 the College procured two modest grants focused on student retention:

- MnSCU Diversity Mini-Grant – focuses on using learner analytics to identify students of color who are most at risk academically and deliver focused interventions.
- Purdue Analytics Grant – focuses on improving student success in gateway courses using learner analytics.

In early 2013, the College submitted a major grant proposal to Great Lakes Higher Education Guaranty Corporation under its College Success Grant program. Unfortunately, the proposal was not funded. However, the College has since hired a full-time grant coordinator to increase its grant writing capacity and better manage current and future grant activities. Future grant writing efforts will focus on obtaining resources to improve student success at LSC.
CATEGORY 2 – ACCOMPLISHING OTHER DISTINCT OBJECTIVES

INTRODUCTION

Since submitting its last Systems Portfolio, LSC has focused its attention on and made substantial process improvements with respect to four specific non-instructional objectives: (1) Customized Training and Continuing Education, (2) the Lake Superior College Foundation, (3) Environmental Sustainability, and (4) Financial Stability.

All four of these objectives are well represented among the goals in the College’s current Strategic Plan and Master Academic Plan. In addition, Environmental Sustainability is the focus of a current Action Project (Sustainable Twin Ports) and was the focus of a recently retired Action Project (Green Efforts) as well.

Financial Stability has been of particular interest for many years now as steadily declining state appropriations for the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System and caps on tuition increases have produced chronic financial stress for LSC. This stress was compounded in fiscal year 2009 when, due to one-time overspending on facility improvements, the College was required to draw down its reserves and borrow funds from the System office to balance its budget. The funds the College owed the System office were repaid over the following two years and LSC’s reserves have now been fully restored.

Through conservative budgeting and careful attention to its financial processes since, the College has been able to live within its means without compromising its educational programs. At the same time, LSC’s enrollments have continued to grow year over year and the College expanded its facilities in 2012 with the opening of its Health Sciences building addition.

The College’s current processes for identifying other distinct objectives are maturing. They are largely intentional, reflective, and proactive, driven by the Strategic Planning and Master Academic Planning processes. Most units and people within the institution are largely able to view LSC’s other distinct objectives within the broader context; however, the College has not regularly evaluated those processes for improvement. Therefore, the maturity of LSC’s processes for identifying other distinct objectives can best be described as systematic and becoming more aligned.

The College has clear, objective measures to track progress in achieving its non-instructional objectives. As an institution, there is good awareness of those objectives and the College’s leaders refer to them regularly, but they are not yet fully integrated into regular operations. Therefore, LSC’s processes for monitoring its progress are systematic and in many respects aligned, but integration remains a challenge.
2P1. Design and Operation of Key Non-Instructional Processes

Recently, LSC has focused on four non-instructional processes: customized training and continuing education, the LSC Foundation, environmental sustainability, and financial stability.

CUSTOMIZED TRAINING AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

One of the primary ways that LSC serves its local community and supports economic development is through its Workforce and Community Development Division. The College develops and delivers customized training programs to meet individual, agency, or organizational needs, focusing on the areas of Business & Management, Fire Training, Healthcare, Industrial Safety, Manufacturing, and Transportation. LSC also offers a wide variety of continuing education opportunities ranging from Motorcycle Safety and Bridge Inspection Safety Training to Marathon Training and Guitar Building.

LSC has set a goal in its Strategic Plan to increase revenue generated by Customized Training and Continuing Education by 50% over the next four years (Goal A, Objective 2). This goal aligns well with the MnSCU Strategic Framework Performance Metrics (See 2P2).

LAKE SUPERIOR COLLEGE FOUNDATION

The College partners with the local community to leverage its resources and support its students through the Lake Superior College Foundation. The Foundation’s mission is to

- Empower students by removing financial barriers to their educational goals.
- Strengthen Lake Superior College by providing financial resources for its people, programs and campus.
- Build a vibrant community by fostering the development of a skilled workforce.
- Serve as ambassadors linking college and community.

To carry out its mission, the Foundation develops financial resources, administers student scholarships, oversees alumni relations, and fosters relationships with the local community. It sponsors an annual golf outing, donor appreciation events, and other similar activities to raise funds and build relationships with its constituencies.

The Foundation has a staff of three, comprised of an executive director, fundraising associate, and administrative assistant. It is guided by a thirteen member board of directors drawn from the community.

In collaboration with the Foundation, LSC has set goals in its Strategic Plan to increase Foundation assets and the number of donors to the Foundation by 10 percent per year for each of the next four years (Goal D, Objective 8). These goals align well with the MnSCU Strategic Framework Performance Metrics (See 2P2).

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Lake Superior College has a long history of commitment to and leadership with respect to environmental sustainability.

In 2007, Lake Superior College led the way in Minnesota higher education green building design by constructing the first LEED certified building in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) system.

In 2008, the College signed on to the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment (ACUPCC). Also in 2008, LSC began its participation in the Duluth Transit Authority’s UPASS Program to
encourage student use of mass transit. Under the program, students can ride the bus for free with their Student ID. Student ridership has increased each year since then, and now exceeds 150,000 rides annually.

In July 2009, LSC completed and submitted a comprehensive Greenhouse Gas Inventory Report to ACUPCC.

In 2011, LSC completed its Sustainability Plan of Action (SPA), setting a goal to reduce carbon emissions by 50% by 2030. The Plan commits LSC to bi-annual progress reports to the ACUPCC. Also in 2011, LSC completed its FY12-FY15 Strategic Plan, which includes a goal to decrease energy consumption by eight percent on a per sq. ft. basis over four years (Goal A, Objective 5).

In 2012, the College completed its second LEED-designed project, a 36,000-square-foot Health and Science building.

In early 2013 LSC chartered an AQIP Action Project under which the College is participating in the Sustainable Twin Ports Early Adopter Project. The 2013 Early Adopter Cohort, consisting of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Canal Park Brewing Company, the University of Wisconsin-Superior, and LSC, committed to a process of comprehensive and strategic training in sustainability.

LSC has “lived” its commitment to sustainability in many smaller ways as well. The campus is located along the north bank of Miller Creek, a designated trout stream. The College has installed three major rain gardens since 2006 to catch and filter storm water from campus parking lots before it enters Miller Creek. Another sustainability initiative is worm composting (vermiculture) using red wiggler worms to turn all of LSC’s pre-consumer kitchen scraps and coffee grounds into nutrient rich compost, which is then used to start seedlings for LSC’s annual plant sale. Proceeds from the sale support student scholarships through the LSC Foundation.

FINANCIAL STABILITY

LSC strives to be a good steward of the resources the State of Minnesota has invested in the institution. In addition to properly maintaining its facilities, the College endeavors to budget conservatively and maintain adequate reserves to deal with unexpected financial demands.

2P2. Determining Non-Instructional Objectives

MNSCU OBJECTIVES

To a considerable extent, LSC’s goals for both instructional and non-instructional objectives are set for it by the MnSCU System Office. In 2010, MnSCU’s new Chancellor and the MnSCU Board of Trustees adopted a new Strategic Framework with three broad objectives:

1. Ensure access to an extraordinary education for all Minnesotans.
2. Be the partner of choice to meet Minnesota’s workforce and community needs.
3. Deliver to students, employers, communities and taxpayers the highest value / most affordable option.

Culminating in mid-2013, a set of 24 Strategic Framework Performance Metrics was developed by the System Office in consultation with campus institutional researchers. The Performance Metrics are shown in Table 2-1:
Table 2-1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MNSCU STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK PERFORMANCE METRICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Licensure Exam Pass Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Student Persistence and Completion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Completion Rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Employees of Color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Student Success – Students of Color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Completion Rate – Students of Color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Campus Diversity Climate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Certificates and Degrees Awarded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The System Office has established System goals for improvement on each of the Performance Metrics as well as goals for the System’s individual institutions that, if met, will result in the System Goals being met. Reporting for 21 of the metrics (1-21 in Table 2-1) will be at the institutional level. Reporting for the remaining 3 metrics (22-24 in Table 2-1) will be at the System level.

The institutional goals, which are “non-negotiable” with respect to LSC and other individual Colleges, are incorporated into the performance evaluation process for each institution’s president.

**LSC OBJECTIVES**

In many instances, the goals set by MnSCU for individual performance metrics duplicate or complement the College’s own goals, set in its Strategic and Master Academic Plans (see 1I1). In other instances, the Strategic Framework Performance Metrics reflect additional, different goals than the College has set for itself.

The entire LSC community has the opportunity to participate in the setting of unique objectives by proposing AQIP Action Projects to the AQIP Steering Committee. The Steering Committee, which includes community representation, solicits proposals from any interested employees or units, and hears presentations on each proposal. The Committee selects new Action Projects according to the criteria listed in Table 2-2:
Table 2-2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA</th>
<th>Questions to Ask</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Importance</td>
<td>Is the project addressing an important problem? Will solving the problem make a significant difference to our institution?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urgency</td>
<td>Is the problem urgent? Is it important to solve it now rather than delaying?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feasibility</td>
<td>Is the problem challenging but not overwhelming? Are the financial and human resources needed to solve it reasonably available?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Are there champions for the project? Who is highly motivated to carry it out?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alignment with Goals</td>
<td>Is the project aligned with our Strategic Plan and Master Academic Plan? Will a successful project help us achieve one or more of our institutional goals?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return on Investment</td>
<td>Will the results be worth the resources that are required? [This may be a strictly quantitative determination, but may and often should involve qualitative considerations as well.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>Is there reason to believe that the staff and resources necessary to sustain the effort will be available?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on these criteria, the AQIP Steering Committee has chartered four new Action Projects in the past two years: (1) Data Integrity, (2) Process Improvement, (3) Sustainable Twin Ports, and (4) Online Teacher Training.

2P3. Communicating Expectations Regarding Non-Instructional Objectives

Expectations regarding non-instructional objectives are communicated through public posting of the LSC Strategic Plan, to administrators through regular Administrative Council Meetings, to faculty through faculty duty days and division meetings, and to staff through all staff meetings. These objectives are also communicated, as appropriate, through the College’s budgeting and equipment purchasing processes.

2P4. Assessing Appropriateness and Value of Non-Instructional Objectives

The appropriateness and value of major non-instructional objectives is addressed through the College’s strategic planning and master academic planning processes. The College plans to conduct periodic reviews of its progress against the objectives set through those processes. In addition, as the LSC Strategic Plan and Master Academic Plan are operationalized, priorities are set and adjusted.

Likewise, the College is deliberate about reviewing the LSC goals for the MnSCU Strategic Framework Performance Metrics in light of the College’s resources and alignment with the College’s institutional goals. This ensures the College’s focus will be on those areas of greatest importance and most potential for improvement. This review takes place at the President’s Cabinet and through Administrative Council. Ultimately, the College’s progress is reviewed by the Chancellor through LSC’s President’s annual work plan and performance evaluation.

Finally, non-instructional objectives addressed through AQIP Action Projects are assessed and reviewed by the AQIP Steering Committee. Each action project team formally reports back to the AQIP Steering Committee each semester on its progress. LSC then submits periodic progress reports to HLC through its Action Project Directory.
2P5. Determining Faculty and Staff Needs

Faculty and staff are included in the College’s strategic and master academic planning processes, both through representation on the task forces creating the plans and through open forums soliciting input and reporting progress. Moreover, there are a number of standing committees (Developmental Education Committee, CTL Advisory Committee, Global Education Committee, and Online Programs Advisory Committee) led by faculty that intentionally align their work with the Master Academic Plan and Strategic Plan.

In addition, faculty and staff have input through shared governance processes, all staff meetings, duty day workshops, and similar activities.

2P6. Meeting Faculty and Staff Needs

Faculty and staff are included in the planning and evaluation processes supporting non-instructional objectives. In this way, faculty and staff needs with respect to those objectives are anticipated and adjusted as actual experience dictates. In addition, to the extent that faculty or staff involvement is necessary to meet non-instructional objectives, the College builds the necessary resources into program and department budgets and provides appropriate professional development activities.

RESULTS

2R1. Measures for Accomplishing Non-Instructional Objectives

LSC’s measures for non-instructional objectives are summarized in Table 2-3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serve the Community through Customized Training and Continuing Education</td>
<td>• Enrollment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Revenues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance Financial Resources and Support Students through the Lake Superior</td>
<td>• Private Giving – Dollars Raised to Dollars Invested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Foundation</td>
<td>• Number and Value of Scholarships Awarded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Contributions and In-Kind Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support and Model Environmental Sustainability</td>
<td>• Carbon Emissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Energy Consumption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain Financial Stability</td>
<td>• Composite Financial Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Instructional Cost</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2R2. Performance Results for Other Distinctive Objectives

LSC’s performance results for other distinct objectives are summarized in Table 2-4:
Table 2-4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CT/CE Enrollment</td>
<td>Number enrolled increased 1.8% (from 4,735 to 4,820) from FY 2010 to FY 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT/CE Revenues</td>
<td>Revenues of $1,430,000 in FY 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation Contributions and In-Kind Support</td>
<td>$546,400 in FY 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation Scholarships Awarded</td>
<td>Awarded 76 scholarships totaling $56,250 during FY 2012 compared to 63 scholarships totaling $36,250 in FY 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbon Emissions</td>
<td>Baseline established; progress report pending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy Consumption</td>
<td>Baseline established; progress report pending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composite Financial Index</td>
<td>Increased from 1.99 in FY 2010 to 2.67 in FY 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Expenditures</td>
<td>$6,957 per FYE in FY 2012 compared to $8,621 per FYE in FY 2008 with annual declines in-between</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2R3. Comparison of Results for Accomplishing Other Distinct Objectives

LSC is one of 673 (as of 7/29/13) institutions in the United States that are signatories to the ACU’s Presidents’ Climate Commitment. The College remains one of twelve MnSCU institutions to sign on. The average instructional expenditure per FYE for all colleges within MnSCU was $7,527 in FY 2012. LSC’s average instructional expenditure per FYE of $6,957 was approximately 7.6% lower. The mean Composite Financial Index for all MnSCU colleges was 2.72 in FY 2012 compared to LSC’s Composite Financial Index of 2.67 in FY 2012.

2R4. Strengthening the Institution and Enhancing Relationships

The other distinct objectives that LSC pursues have in common that they advance the College’s mission of providing high quality affordable education, continuing education, and workforce development for the benefit of learners, employers, and the community. Moreover, as a community and technical college, LSC actively seeks out partnerships that connect the institution with the broader community.

Those partnerships produce a desirable synergy; LSC draws strength from local community, governmental, and business resources while meeting their needs for education, training, and expertise. The College offers facilities for meetings, training, and public events and in-turn benefits from having those activities take place on its campus. Environmental sustainability, continuing education and customized training, and the work of the LSC Foundation all involve partnerships that serve these purposes.

Finally, in maintaining financial stability, the College maintains its rightful participation in the broader community of the MnSCU system of Minnesota colleges and universities. LSC draws strength from system-level resources in institutional research, information technology, group purchasing and the like, which in turn strengthens the College’s ability to serve the unique needs of its community.
2I1. Recent Improvements Accomplishing Other Distinct Objectives

As part of a larger re-design of the College’s entire web site, LSC recently implemented an improved Continuing Education and Customized Training web site. The new site incorporates state-of-the-art web design principles, providing users the information they need, at the point they need it.

LSC continues to make regular improvements related to sustainability. In 2012, the College rebuilt its largest parking lot, taking advantage of the opportunity to add state of the art underground storm water management structures. Those structures slow the flow of water and settle out almost 50% of the sediment that would otherwise reach nearby Miller Creek, a designated trout stream, from that lot. The rebuilt lot also features energy efficient LED lighting controlled by photo-electric technology.

Other recent improvements supporting the College’s sustainability objective include the development of a re-use room to recycle and re-purpose equipment and supplies that other offices or units on campus no longer need, and the installation of drinking fountain stations to facilitate and promote the use of personal drinking water bottles.

Recent improvements that promote financial stability include changes to the course scheduling processes. Course schedules are now released earlier, class size limits have been “right-sized” to increase fill rates, processes and criteria for class cancellations have been developed and followed, and a protocol for contacting students affected by course cancellations has been implemented. These improvements have steadily improved course efficiencies, as shown by the College’s steadily decreasing instructional costs. A byproduct is that the impact of course cancellations on students has been mitigated and instructors are better able to plan for upcoming terms.

2I2. Selecting Processes for Improvement and Setting Targets

LSC’s strong community orientation is reflected in its structure and culture. As an open enrollment institution, LSC serves many students who are already being served by or require the services of community institutions. Working with those institutions is logical and natural.

The College’s program advisory committees ensure that its occupational programs have the benefit of input from recent graduates, employers, and trade groups. LSC’s customized training representatives work with local businesses, assessing their needs and working on strategies to meet them. Finally, the College’s practice of including community representatives on all important committees and task forces helps LSC keep in touch with community needs and sentiment.
CATEGORY 3 – UNDERSTANDING STUDENTS’ AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS’ NEEDS

CATEGORY INTRODUCTION

LSC’s processes for understanding students’ and other stakeholders’ needs are systematic and, in some respects, well on the way to becoming aligned.

The College has a well-developed culture of collecting relevant data on students’ and other stakeholders’ needs through valid and reliable means. The College pays attention to the data, seeks more data when that is appropriate, and routinely considers relevant data on students’ and stakeholders’ needs when making decisions.

However, the College does not currently do a very good job of analyzing the data to proactively identify opportunities for improvement. To a considerable extent, this is probably due to ongoing adjustment to new personnel in key administrative positions and the complete reorganization of LSC’s administration three years ago.

For example, when the College receives survey results, there are no clear processes to determine who the results should be distributed to and on what schedule. As a consequence, the College tends to deal with new data on an ad hoc basis. Another consequence is that the results are not used on a timely basis.

The College expects to see significant improvement in these areas as ongoing discussions about communication and decision making processes within the organizational structure produce results.
PROCESSES

3P1. Identifying the Changing Needs of Students

LSC’s processes for identifying the changing needs of students have recently focused on retention, persistence, and completion rates, and diversity.

RETENTION, PERSISTENCE, AND COMPLETION RATES

Lake Superior College has long recognized that its student retention, persistence, and completion rates could be greatly improved. Indeed, that recognition was the major driving force behind two major initiatives implemented within the past five years: (1) a required First Year Experience course (now called Student Success Seminar) and (2) a campus-wide Student Success Day held each fall and spring semester. While both of these initiatives have been evaluated, deemed worth continuing, and incrementally improved, LSC’s retention, persistence, and completion rates remain lower than desired and there is substantial room for improvement.

Other recent steps taken in an effort to improve student success include creating a Gateway Course Inventory, improving the Early Alert academic warning system, and monitoring of related performance metrics.

a. Gateway Course Inventory

As part of the College’s participation in Purdue University’s Creating and Expanding Analytics Capacity Project, the College created a Gateway Course Inventory and examined the DFWI rates for AY2011-12 in its highest enrollment gateway courses. As shown in Table 3-1, the results showed that four of the five courses with the highest rates are Math courses and three of the four math courses are developmental courses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>COURSE</th>
<th>COURSE TITLE</th>
<th>TOTAL DFWI COUNT</th>
<th>TOTAL DFWI RATE</th>
<th>FALL DFWI RATE</th>
<th>SPRING DFWI RATE</th>
<th>TOTAL COURSE ENROLLMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MATH</td>
<td>0450</td>
<td>Pre-Algebra</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>46.97%</td>
<td>42.81%</td>
<td>53.89%</td>
<td>445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH</td>
<td>1100</td>
<td>College Algebra</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>40.80%</td>
<td>37.16%</td>
<td>44.37%</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH</td>
<td>0460</td>
<td>Algebra I</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>40.15%</td>
<td>37.05%</td>
<td>45.08%</td>
<td>685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL</td>
<td>0460</td>
<td>Fund. of Writing II</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>38.90%</td>
<td>33.02%</td>
<td>50.30%</td>
<td>491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH</td>
<td>0470</td>
<td>Algebra II</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>36.51%</td>
<td>32.57%</td>
<td>40.57%</td>
<td>430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOL</td>
<td>1140</td>
<td>Human A &amp; P I</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>35.08%</td>
<td>31.20%</td>
<td>40.14%</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC</td>
<td>1060</td>
<td>Career &amp; Life Planning</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>34.69%</td>
<td>31.30%</td>
<td>39.51%</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>Digital Photography I</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>34.10%</td>
<td>30.23%</td>
<td>39.10%</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENSC</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>Environmental. Science.</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>33.63%</td>
<td>30.36%</td>
<td>36.94%</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL</td>
<td>1109</td>
<td>College Comp II</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>30.72%</td>
<td>30.42%</td>
<td>30.95%</td>
<td>599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGL</td>
<td>1106</td>
<td>Composition I</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>27.74%</td>
<td>25.05%</td>
<td>30.66%</td>
<td>912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>READ</td>
<td>0465</td>
<td>Reading II</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>27.37%</td>
<td>22.98%</td>
<td>34.48%</td>
<td>380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOL</td>
<td>1141</td>
<td>Human A &amp; P II</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>24.77%</td>
<td>27.59%</td>
<td>22.93%</td>
<td>440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM</td>
<td>1105</td>
<td>Interpersonal Comm.</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>24.44%</td>
<td>17.95%</td>
<td>30.48%</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HLTH</td>
<td>1210</td>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>23.84%</td>
<td>22.13%</td>
<td>25.52%</td>
<td>474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FYE</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>Intro to College</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>23.51%</td>
<td>20.62%</td>
<td>30.36%</td>
<td>1323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALTH</td>
<td>1410</td>
<td>Medical Terminology</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>23.42%</td>
<td>25.07%</td>
<td>21.48%</td>
<td>619</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3-1
To address the highest rates, LSC developed a proposal for a program of proactive advising, featuring intensive, personal, on-going contact between advisors and students focused on Developmental Math courses. The College’s initial grant proposal to fund the program was unsuccessful, so to date the program has not been implemented but efforts to secure funding continue.

However, the College has taken other steps to improve student success in Developmental Math courses. Students now have the option to take some Developmental Math courses in a modularized configuration utilizing software that allows them to proceed through the material at their own pace. This offers the potential for students to compress their Developmental Math education and get to college-level courses faster and at lower expense.

In addition, the College is now running Adult Basic Education tutoring/instruction alongside two sections of Pre-algebra. Plans are to begin offering a 4-week ABE course followed by a 12-week Pre-algebra course in the spring of 2014.

b. Early Alert Warning System

LSC’s Early Alert Warning System offers instructors an online form to identify students who are experiencing academic difficulties. Completed forms are automatically routed to Student Services, where a professional advisor follows up on each referral, contacting the student and referring the student to other resources, such as a Counselor, when appropriate.

c. Strategic Framework Performance Metrics

A formal commitment to substantially improve retention, persistence, and completion rates is reflected in Lake Superior College’s FY12-15 Strategic Plan, which includes an objective to increase overall retention by 10% over the next four years. More precise goals are contained in the Strategic Framework Performance Metrics, which set five year goals for four metrics: (1) Student Persistence and Completion, (2) Completion Rate, (3) Student Success – Students of Color, and (4) Completion Rate – Students of Color. The historic rates for the past six years and the goals for the next five years for each metric are shown in Tables 3-2, 3-3, 3-4, and 3-5 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>COURSE</th>
<th>COURSE TITLE</th>
<th>TOTAL DFWI COUNT</th>
<th>TOTAL DFWI RATE</th>
<th>FALL DFWI RATE</th>
<th>SPRING DFWI RATE</th>
<th>TOTAL COURSE ENROLLMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSYC</td>
<td>1120</td>
<td>Gen Psychology</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>20.70%</td>
<td>23.56%</td>
<td>17.75%</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART</td>
<td>1138</td>
<td>Ceramics I</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>20.00%</td>
<td>16.96%</td>
<td>24.78%</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOL</td>
<td>1005</td>
<td>Intro Cell Biology</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>18.47%</td>
<td>18.21%</td>
<td>18.93%</td>
<td>498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC</td>
<td>1111</td>
<td>Intro to Sociology</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>17.84%</td>
<td>17.00%</td>
<td>18.63%</td>
<td>510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOL</td>
<td>1170</td>
<td>Microbiology</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>17.74%</td>
<td>20.34%</td>
<td>15.65%</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC</td>
<td>1135</td>
<td>Lifespan Develop Psych</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>16.96%</td>
<td>20.54%</td>
<td>13.81%</td>
<td>395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHIL</td>
<td>1130</td>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>15.92%</td>
<td>12.10%</td>
<td>19.75%</td>
<td>314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH</td>
<td>1150</td>
<td>Pre-Calculus</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.56%</td>
<td>4.55%</td>
<td>26.09%</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMM</td>
<td>1100</td>
<td>Intro to Communication</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>15.53%</td>
<td>11.69%</td>
<td>19.35%</td>
<td>309</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3-2

<p>| Metric: Student Persistence and Completion |
|-----------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>F05</th>
<th>F06</th>
<th>F07</th>
<th>F08</th>
<th>F09</th>
<th>F10</th>
<th>F11</th>
<th>F12</th>
<th>F13</th>
<th>F14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>70.9%</td>
<td>73.5%</td>
<td>71.5%</td>
<td>69.8%</td>
<td>70.1%</td>
<td>68.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>69.4%</td>
<td>70.4%</td>
<td>71.8%</td>
<td>73.5%</td>
<td>75.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[This measure represents the percentage of a fall entering cohort of full-time students who have been retained, graduated, or transferred by the second fall term following original fall enrollment.]

Table 3-3

<p>| Metric: Completion Rate |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>F04</th>
<th>F05</th>
<th>F06</th>
<th>F07</th>
<th>F08</th>
<th>F09</th>
<th>F10</th>
<th>F11</th>
<th>F12</th>
<th>F13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>51.4%</td>
<td>57.2%</td>
<td>59.4%</td>
<td>57.4%</td>
<td>58.4%</td>
<td>55.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>55.9%</td>
<td>56.8%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>59.5%</td>
<td>61.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[This measure represents the percentage of an entering cohort that has completed by 150 percent of normal time. Completion is measured as graduation or transfer by the end of the third spring after entry.]

Table 3-4

<p>| Metric: Student Success – Students of Color |
|-------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>F05</th>
<th>F06</th>
<th>F07</th>
<th>F08</th>
<th>F09</th>
<th>F10</th>
<th>F11</th>
<th>F12</th>
<th>F13</th>
<th>F14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[This measure represents the ratio of the student persistence and completion rate for students of color to white students.]

Table 3-5

<p>| Metric: Completion Rate – Students of Color |
|--------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>F04</th>
<th>F05</th>
<th>F06</th>
<th>F07</th>
<th>F08</th>
<th>F09</th>
<th>F10</th>
<th>F11</th>
<th>F12</th>
<th>F13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[This measure represents the ratio of the student completion rate for students of color to white students.]

DIVERSITY

LSC is located in an area with relatively high poverty rates and relatively limited racial and ethnic diversity. However, in recent years the College’s student body has become increasingly diverse.

A recent increase in the number of students whose first language is not English has produced a need for support services the College has not traditionally provided. It has also become clear that ISRS, the MnSCU based student records system, does not provide reliable data on the numbers of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and English Language Learner (ELL) students.

To obtain better data and document the need for LEP and ELL courses, the College has developed queries to identify LEP and ELL students by mining placement testing data. Recent changes to the demographic questions on the placement test will better identify such students, improving the quality and usefulness of
the data, which will inform decisions about adding LEP and ELL classes to the College’s curriculum.

Another response to increasing diversity was the hiring, in 2008, of an Intercultural Services Coordinator who oversees the LSC Intercultural Center. The connections and relationships formed through the Intercultural Center continue to help the College better understand the needs of its diverse students. In addition, the Intercultural Services Coordinator is highly active in the local community, establishing and maintaining connections with social service agencies, advocacy groups, and others who work with the communities from which many LSC students come.

3P2. Building and Maintaining a Relationship with Students

Regular communication between the College and its students creates a shared sense of community and helps build and maintain meaningful relationships.

COMMUNICATION WITH INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS

Communication with individual students begins when they apply and are accepted to LSC and continues throughout their careers. The Student Orientation, Accuplacer, and Registration (SOAR) process is carefully designed to help students transition from applicants to LSC students. The SOAR process includes a one-on-one meeting with a professional advisor at which the steps necessary for the student to reach his or her educational goals are discussed in light of placement testing results and other unique considerations.

Throughout the course of their studies, students have ready access to LSC’s Professional Advisors by phone, email, appointment, or on a walk-in basis. Students in occupational programs also work closely with a program advisor (generally an instructor in the program). Students planning to transfer to another institution either to complete a two-year degree or to pursue a four year degree have access to a full-time transfer specialist.

COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS AS A GROUP

Regular meetings between the College’s administrators and Student Senate leaders promote and maintain a culture of trust and respect between the College and its students. Based on a shared governance model, these meetings allow both sides to ask questions, share information, discuss issues of mutual concern, and communicate decisions.

LSC communicates with many of its students interactively through social media and other technology. Active LSC Facebook and Twitter accounts allow students to connect with each other as well as the College by providing avenues for up-to-date information, asking and answering questions, soliciting and providing feedback, and student venting. Through its Communications Coordinator, the College carefully monitors these accounts and makes timely responses to student questions and concerns.

Campus closings due to weather or other emergencies are communicated through the “Star Alert” system, which delivers important messages by text message and/or email. Students opt-in to such communications.

The College continues to regularly communicate with its students in more traditional ways as well. Targeted mailings are designed to provide students with the information they need, when they need it. An example would be the student technology information postcard that goes out to all new and returning students at the beginning of each semester. The postcard provides students with information about how to log-in to the e-campus, e-services, e-mail, and other student accounts as well as reminders and instructions on how to obtain help with any of their online student accounts.
LSC publishes an online newsletter, “The Wave.” The Wave contains the latest news regarding events, activities, and people at LSC, and often includes links to videos. In addition, video monitors around campus are used to convey announcements, weather information, breaking news, etc.

Finally, the College does not hesitate to ask students for their opinions on matters that affect them. In addition to the nationally normed surveys it regularly administers, the College also surveys students on specific issues as the need arises. For example, in August, 2012, LSC implemented a program under which students are issued an “LSC Plus Card” through Higher One, a private financial services company. The Plus Card combined the LSC Student ID with a disbursement account used to process student refunds and student employee payroll payments. Students have the option of using the Plus Card as a debit card attached to a bank account with Higher One. Shortly after implementation, LSC’s Business Office responded to student complaints about the LSC Plus Card and Higher One’s service by conducting a comprehensive survey that was completed by nearly 350 students. Based on the results, modifications were made to the program, eliminating most of the problems and complaints.

**GIVING STUDENTS A VOICE**

To provide students a voice, the College includes student representatives on all major task forces, many standing committees, and some search committees. Finally, course evaluations of every course at the end of each term also give students the opportunity to be heard regarding classroom and course issues. This commitment to listening to students helps the College build and maintain a mutually beneficial relationship with its students.

**STUDENT SUCCESS DAY**

Since the fall of 2008, LSC’s academic calendar has had one day each semester designated as Student Success Day. The purpose of the day is to support academic success, promote career building and personal growth, and help students to make connections with other students, faculty, and staff.

There are no classes on Student Success Day. Students are invited to campus to participate in a full day of activities organized like a professional conference. There is a keynote speaker, five concurrent session periods with multiple sessions offered each period, information tables, and free pizza for lunch. Between 700 and 1,000 students typically attend.

**3P3. Meeting the Changing Needs of Key Stakeholders**

As a state institution of higher learning, education is LSC’s sole responsibility. The College has no other purposes and devotes 100% of its resources to fulfilling its educational mission.

LSC’s mission is to provide “affordable higher education that benefits diverse learners, employers, and the community.” Therefore, the College values and actively embraces opportunities to serve its local community and region. This commitment is reflected in the College’s Strategic Plan objective to “Cultivate active partnerships in community, civic, workforce and economic development initiatives.” (Goal D, Objective 1)

In addition to the customized training and continuing education activities that serve local and regional employers and their employees, LSC’s facilities are available for a wide-range of community-based activities such as public hearings and meetings. Businesses and non-profit organizations use the College’s facilities for training, workshops, and the like. Events such as the Western Lake Superior Sanitary District’s annual rain barrel and composting bin sale and electronics recycling events are held on-campus.
The College also serves the public through its on-campus Dental Hygiene and Physical Therapy clinics. Meeting unmet needs for such services in the local community, these clinics are also an important part of the educations of students in LSC’s Dental Hygiene and Physical Therapist Assistant programs. In similar fashion, the College’s Massage Therapy program offers massage therapy sessions that are open to students, faculty, staff, and members of the community.

3P4. Building and Maintaining Relationships with Key Stakeholders

PUBLIC OFFICIALS

In collaboration with the MnSCU Public Affairs Office, Lake Superior College provides regular updates to regional legislators, legislative committee chairs, and representatives of the Minnesota Governor’s office. In addition, the College regularly hosts its local legislators (one of whom is a faculty member) on campus to discuss current issues affecting the College. College staff, including administrators and workforce development staff, interacts regularly with federal, state and local officials regarding college initiatives. Lake Superior College’s Public Affairs Office maintains ongoing communication with the City of Duluth, including the Mayor’s office.

EMPLOYERS

During 2012, LSC participated in a MnSCU led Workforce Assessment initiative. In collaboration with the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce and the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, 44 regional listening sessions were held around the state of Minnesota with employers in six industry segments: (1) health care, (2) manufacturing, (3) transportation, (4) engineering, (5) information technology, and (6) energy. Representatives of Lake Superior College participated in the sessions held in its region.

By gaining a better understanding of the current and future workforce needs of Minnesota businesses, MnSCU and LSC hope to better align programs with employer needs. In addition to industry segment specific data, two common themes of importance to LSC emerged from the listening sessions. First, soft skills are important to Minnesota employers. Second, new graduates need hands-on experience. To address the latter theme, LSC is working to increase the number of internships available to LSC students.

In addition, the College regularly hosts job fairs on-campus that give prospective employers an opportunity to connect with LSC students about prospective jobs, internships, and short-term employment opportunities.

OTHER EDUCATORS

LSC administrators regularly meet and communicate with their counterparts at other institutions of higher education in the immediate area (College of St. Scholastica, University of Minnesota – Duluth, University of Wisconsin – Superior, and Fond-du-Lac Tribal and Community College) as well as area K-12 teachers and administrators. LSC’s President and Chief Academic Officer meet regularly with their counterparts in the area.

PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS AND THE COMMUNITY

Each semester, LSC hosts open houses for prospective students, their parents, and other members of the community to tour the College’s facilities and learn more about its programs. LSC Admissions representatives make over 100 high school visits each year to educate high school students about the many options available to them to continue their educations. The College also regularly hosts visits from groups of high school and middle school students. Each summer, College-run summer camps give young people a hands-on introduction to a variety of career areas.
3P5. Targeting New Student and Stakeholder Groups

The process of evaluating and targeting new opportunities to serve student and stakeholder groups was, until recently, under the purview of LSC’s Enrollment Management Committee. With broad-based representation, the Committee provided guidance and support to the Director of Admissions. The Committee was composed of persons who were interested in enrollment, but for the most part its members were not the persons who had authority to carry out new initiatives. As a result, consensus among the Committee members generally did not translate into action and there was a great deal of frustration with “great discussion” but “no real accomplishments.”

The College’s new Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) initiative, begun in October, 2013, has established a comprehensive new planning process. Chartered by LSC’s senior leadership and including both Vice Presidents, the SEM Committee will have the ability to implement the plan. A more detailed description of the SEM process is provided in 5I1.

The development of LSC’s SEM Plan over the next two years will not mean that LSC will not be pursuing new initiatives in the meantime. Two current initiatives are being undertaken in response to well-documented need and with the support of local business and industry:

1. LSC is finalizing arrangements to lease space in downtown Duluth to relocate and expand existing programs that are bound by space constraints at the main campus. One particular goal is to increase the College’s capacity to train welders. The demand for welders is so great that students are receiving job offers and leaving LSC’s welding program before they graduate. The new location will permit doubling of the size of the welding program while simultaneously making welding and other selected programs more accessible to people living and working in downtown Duluth.

2. LSC is in the process of expanding its aviation-related programs, currently focused on fixed wing and helicopter pilot training, to include aviation management and airframe and power plant mechanics. These planned new programs are being driven by Duluth’s rapidly expanding aviation sector, which includes two aircraft manufacturers (Cirrus and Kestrel) and a company servicing large commercial jet aircraft (AMR).

3P6. Using Complaints to Select and Communicate Courses of Action

Student complaints and grievances are governed by LSC Policy 3.8 (Student Complaints) and Procedure 3.8.1 (Student Complaints & Grievances). The policy and procedure are available on the College website, where they are posted with all other policies and procedures. The policy and procedure are both reproduced in the LSC Student Planner and the LSC Catalog.

All student complaints are logged in the office of the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs. Copies of the log are sent out to the Academic and Student Affairs team regularly to ensure timely and appropriate responses.

A summary of complaints sorted by type and nature is prepared and reviewed annually at the end of the academic year to identify recurring themes that point to specific issues that should be corrected or that offer opportunities for improvement to the College’s policies or processes.
RESULTS

3R1. Determining Satisfaction of Students and Other Stakeholders

STUDENT NEEDS AND SATISFACTION

The College administers the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) to several hundred students annually on the spring semester Student Success Day. The SSI results identify areas in which LSC is not doing a good job of meeting student expectations. Custom questions are included to focus on areas of particular concern. The College also obtains program specific reports to provide interested programs with student satisfaction data requested by their specialized accreditors.

Likewise, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) helps the College identify unmet student needs. LSC initially administered the CCSSE in 2002 and has administered it biennially, in odd-numbered years, since 2003. CCSSE results are communicated to faculty through duty day presentations, workshops, and other focused discussions.

ADVISORY BOARD SURVEYS

The College’s advisory board processes include annual surveys of board members.

ALUMNI SURVEYS

Many of LSC’s programs, especially in the Health Division, regularly conduct alumni surveys.

3R2. Performance Results for Student Satisfaction

CCSSE RESULTS

The benchmark results for LSC’s past four administrations of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) are shown below:

Table 3-6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active &amp; Collaborative Learning</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Effort</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>50.4</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>(0.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Challenge</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-Faculty Interaction</td>
<td>52.7</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>(1.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for Learners</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data shows some variability from administration to administration, but the overall trend has been steady or slightly up on three of the five CCSSE benchmarks. On a fourth benchmark, Student – Faculty Interaction, there was a drop on the most recent administration, but the result remains above the overall mean of 50.0 for the CCSSE cohort.

The fifth benchmark, Support for Learners, shows a substantial improvement over the past six years. This improvement corresponds with a complete re-design of LSC’s Student Services (advising, admissions, and financial aid) processes early in the time frame coupled with subsequent fine-tuning and continuous improvements to the Learning Center and other student academic support processes.
SSI RESULTS

No survey was necessary to know that students are unsatisfied with parking on campus. However, recent SSI results offered a baseline to measure improvement against. In-between the 2012 and 2013 administrations of the SSI, the College completely rebuilt its largest parking lot, reconfiguring the traffic flow and adding improved lighting. The data show a substantial increase in student satisfaction:

Table 3-7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT SATISFACTION INVENTORY</th>
<th>IMPORTANCE</th>
<th>SATISFACTION</th>
<th>GAP</th>
<th>CHG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item 24: Parking lots are well-lighted and secure</td>
<td>2012 6.35 4.88 1.47</td>
<td>2013 6.36 5.57 .79</td>
<td>+.68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 39: The amount of parking space is adequate</td>
<td>2012 6.43 4.03 2.40</td>
<td>2013 6.45 4.21 2.24</td>
<td>+.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the rebuilt lot resulted in some increase in the number of parking spaces, the data also make it clear that students still consider the amount of parking to be inadequate and that is something the College can do little about at this time other than directing students to more remote lots that seldom fill completely.

Students are also interested in the food service the College offers. The cafeteria was reconfigured in 2012 to improve traffic flow and the menu was adjusted to offer more healthy foods. The most recent SSI results on two custom questions related to the cafeteria, shown below, reflect modest improvement in student satisfaction.

Table 3-8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STUDENT SATISFACTION INVENTORY</th>
<th>IMPORTANCE</th>
<th>SATISFACTION</th>
<th>GAP</th>
<th>CHG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item 73: The operating hours of the cafeteria are convenient</td>
<td>2012 5.87 5.49 0.38</td>
<td>2013 5.75 5.72 0.03</td>
<td>+.35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 74: The food in the cafeteria is reasonably priced</td>
<td>2012 6.09 3.47 2.62</td>
<td>2013 6.05 3.45 2.60</td>
<td>+.02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3R3. Performance Results for Building Relationships with Students

LSC has only indirect measures of its success building relationships with students. However, on the 2013 administration of the Student Satisfaction Inventory, students were very positive about their experiences at LSC:

- 93% of LSC students indicated that their college experience is what they expected or better than expected, compared to 88% of students in National Community Colleges.
- 77% of LSC students indicated that they are Satisfied or Very Satisfied with their experience at LSC thus far, compared to 60% of students in National Community Colleges.
- 83% of LSC students indicated that they would probably or definitely enroll again, compared to 70% of students in National Community Colleges.

These LSC results were virtually identical to those obtained from the 2012 SSI administration.

3R4. Performance Results for Stakeholder Satisfaction

See 9R3 for performance results for stakeholder satisfaction.
3R5. Performance Results for Building Relationships with Key Stakeholders

The program advisory committees at LSC typically include many key stakeholders, such as community members with expertise in the field, employers who hire LSC graduates, and former students. The expertise of these stakeholders helps keep the College’s occupational programs current so that graduates are employable.

Examples of the direct results of LSC’s relationship building with these important stakeholders include the redesigns of the programs listed below. In several cases, without their help and expertise, programs may have been closed.

New or revised programming has been a direct result of industry partnerships in:

- Integrated Manufacturing Technology, involving Machine Technology, Computer Aided Design, Electronics Technology and Welding,
- Construction Management, involving Architectural Technology Building Construction, and Civil Engineering Technology,
- Aviation, involving the addition of an Aviation Management program to the Professional Pilot program and ongoing efforts in collaboration with local aviation industry partners to create an Airframe and Power Plant program.
- Business program redesigns to develop degrees in Business Administration, Marketing, and Management, and a certificate in Entrepreneurial Studies.

3R6. Comparison of Results for Understanding Needs

Comparisons of LSC’s results on the CCSSE to those for the MnSCU and CCSSE cohorts are shown in Tables 3-9 and 3-10:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCSSE BENCHMARKS</th>
<th>LSC 2013</th>
<th>MNSCU 2013</th>
<th>DIFFERENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active &amp; Collaborative Learning</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>(3.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Effort</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>(2.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Challenge</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>50.1</td>
<td>(0.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-Faculty Interaction</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>(0.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for Learners</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCSSE BENCHMARKS</th>
<th>LSC 2011</th>
<th>CCSSE 2011</th>
<th>DIFF.</th>
<th>LSC 2013</th>
<th>CCSSE 2013</th>
<th>DIFF.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active &amp; Collaborative Learning</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>(0.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Effort</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>(2.7)</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>(2.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Challenge</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>(0.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-Faculty Interaction</td>
<td>53.2</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for Learners</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3I1. Recent Improvements in Understanding Needs

LSC’s processes for handling student complaints were recently revised and updated. Previously, the College recognized multiple forms of student complaints: informal (typically unwritten), formal (submitted on the student complaint form), grievances (such as grade appeals), and petitions (requests to correct errors or waive policies).

The student complaint forms were revised to accommodate all complaints regardless of nature or formality. This should reduce student confusion about what process applies to their situation and will also reduce staff confusion about which complaints should be tracked. Improved data produced by better tracking of student complaints will improve the College’s ability to spot problems and opportunities for improvement.

Another recent improvement resulted from a student’s grade appeal. The student objected to his instructor’s assignment of a grade of FN (failure for non-attendance). In the course of the appeal, it became clear that LSC’s FN policy was ambiguous. The instructor and student read the policy inconsistently, but both readings were objectively reasonable. The grade appeal panel recommended a review of the policy, which was undertaken, resulting in revisions that not only removed the ambiguity but also strengthened compliance with federal financial aid policies and addressed long-standing faculty frustrations with the operation of the policy.

3I2. Selecting Processes to Improve Understanding Needs

At the current time LSC has a culture that values continuous improvement. However, day-to-day management of issues and problems makes it difficult to proactively select processes to improve in this area. As a result, the College’s ongoing improvements tend to be reactive and products of necessity rather than deliberate analysis.
CATEGORIZATION 4 – VALUING PEOPLE

INTRODUCTION

In the past two years, LSC has made great progress in Valuing People. Like many institutions of higher education, the College has struggled with communication issues. LSC was created by the merger of two separate and much smaller institutions in 1995. Subsequent rapid growth made it impossible to maintain the closely-knit collegial atmosphere that many long-time employees valued.

The College’s culture and communication processes were further strained by financial stresses beginning in 2008 and a major reorganization of the administration in 2010. Thereafter, some employees and units within the College were quite vocal about their unhappiness with the College’s organizational structure and the adequacy of communication to and with employees.

Those issues were openly acknowledged starting with the Quality Culture Survey that was part of the College’s preparation for its AQIP Strategy Forum in April, 2012. Upon return from the Strategy Forum, the College’s President established a Quality Culture Task Force charged with recommending a way forward. The Task Force, which intentionally did not include any administrators, made its recommendations after meeting six times over the ensuing summer. The College President accepted the Task Force’s recommendations, one of which was to create a new Campus Climate Committee.

With the creation of the Campus Climate Committee, an emerging sense of hope and optimism has been fostered. Employees’ concerns regarding the College’s culture and climate are being addressed in an intentional and public way through a formal structure and processes that will be widely “watched” and regularly evaluated. The processes themselves are new and therefore not yet mature, but the commitment to make them work and realize their promise is very strong.

In contrast, the College’s processes for hiring qualified and effective employees are long-standing and well-developed.

For these reasons, LSC judges the maturity of its processes for Valuing People to be aligned and ready for integration.
PROCESSES

4P1. Identifying Employee Qualifications

Search committees are used to fill all permanent positions. Searches are chaired by the supervisor or administrator to whom the position reports. To ensure uniform processes, the Human Resources (HR) office has created a Search Chair Information Packet and a Hire Process Checklist.

Search committees are filled through an open call. Search committees for faculty or staff positions typically have 5-7 members representing multiple constituencies. Search committees for administrators are typically larger and include all major constituencies on campus as well as community and/or student representation. Proposed search committee membership is reviewed by HR to ensure balanced representation before final approval by LSC’s President.

The College’s Affirmative Action Officer (AAO) reviews and certifies the pool of applicants for each position to ensure diversity. The search committee’s first meeting includes an orientation to the hiring process, including confidentiality, by a representative of HR. The AAO also attends the first meeting to give the search committee an affirmative action orientation.

Using pre-defined screening criteria, each member of the search committee reviews all applications meeting the minimum qualifications for the position. The search committee chooses the best 4-6 applicants to interview. Interviews are conducted using a standard set of interview questions the committee has developed for that search. When appropriate, applicants are also asked to demonstrate their skills by completing a test or other assigned task, conduct a teaching demonstration, or participate in an open forum.

Ultimately, the search committee forwards the names of 2-3 qualified applicants to the College President along with a list of strengths and weaknesses for each. The College President, in consultation with the search committee chair, determines the successful applicant. Reference checks are completed prior to making an offer of employment.

4P2. Verifying Employee Qualifications through Hiring Processes

Using HLC’s methodology, LSC’s 2012-13 Institutional Update reported 93 full-time instructors and 148 part-time instructors. The College’s student to faculty ratio was 24:1. Using the classification system in the faculty contract, in October, 2013, LSC had 256 total instructors, of whom 108 were full-time and tenured.

By contract, full-time instructors are expected to perform advising duties and maintain one office hour (or one hour of student availability in some other campus location) per week for each three credits taught. Part-time instructors are expected to meet the same expectations on a pro-rata basis and online instructors are expected to be available to students through online office hours.

To ensure that all staff members are appropriately qualified to perform their duties, LSC has a formal position description (PD) for every employment position. The PD itemizes the job duties and lists the minimum and preferred qualifications. All PD’s are reviewed and approved by MnSCU before LSC posts and fills the position.

The State of Minnesota and the MnSCU System Office develop and review the specific credentials, skills, and experience required of LSC’s non-instructional employees, regardless of level or classification. The System Office also conducts periodic job audits to ensure that position descriptions continue to accurately reflect actual job duties.
Faculty credentials are controlled by MnSCU Board of Trustees’ policies and procedures intended to ensure that qualified individuals perform faculty work at the System’s two-year colleges. Minimum qualifications for instructors have been established through the Joint Committee on Credential Fields, an ongoing committee established under the Minnesota State College Faculty (MSCF) collective bargaining agreement.

The minimum qualifications include educational requirements (generally an earned master’s degree and substantial graduate course credits in the field or discipline) and teaching and learning competency requirements. Depending on the field, the qualifications may also include related occupational experience, state and/or national industry licensure/certification, and other requirements as appropriate. A formal credentialing process verifies that instructors hired have the minimum qualifications for their positions.

The College’s Academic Deans have authority, under limited and very specific circumstances, to assign instructors to teach courses in credential fields for which they do not meet the minimum qualifications. High school teachers teaching College in the Schools courses must have the same credentials that would be required to teach the same courses at LSC.

4P3. Recruiting, Hiring, and Retaining Employees

LSC’s Human Resources (HR) department recruits applicants for open positions using multiple channels such as local and regional print media, the LSC web site, internal notices, the MnSCU web site, online employment web sites, social media, listservs, and professional organizations. All civil service positions are posted electronically through the Minnesota Department of Management and Budget (MMB), which maintains an online application process. Faculty, professional, and administrator positions are also posted on the MnSCU, Minnesota Diversity, and Higher Ed Jobs web sites.

The College does not have a formal retention program. As employees of the State of Minnesota, LSC employees have excellent benefits (medical, dental, disability, retirement, deferred compensation, and pre-tax accounts). Most employees also qualify for tuition waiver at LSC and other MnSCU institutions and all have access to free or reduced cost services on campus through the Wellness Center, Creation Station (day care), and Dental, Physical Therapy and Massage Therapy clinics. Moreover, MnSCU has a free, confidential Employee Assistance Plan (EAP), to which all employees have access. Free health coaching is available to all employees through the State of Minnesota’s health plans.

The College has a service-based recognition program that rewards employees in 5 year increments. Employees receive award gifts and are recognized at an annual employee recognition luncheon to which all employees are invited. The luncheon is typically held on-campus on a duty day. The service of retiring employees is acknowledged and celebrated at the luncheon.

4P4. Orienting New Employees

New employees must complete a new employee orientation checklist and return it to HR within 30 days of hire. The checklist walks new employees through a process that includes mandatory training, a departmental orientation, and HR processing. The mandatory training includes units on “right to know” training, the employee code of conduct, data privacy, and sexual harassment prevention. The departmental orientation includes introductions, work space and tools, information technology credentials, and other practical matters.

The information made available to all new employees includes a copy of LSC’s employee handbook. Section 1 of the handbook includes the College’s vision and mission statements, equal employment opportunity statement, non-discrimination/harassment statement, statement of ethics, and related materials. Other sections cover administrative services, human resources, academic information, and student services.
Orientation for new faculty members is conducted each semester by the Center for Teaching and Learning Coordinator. See 8R2 for more information.

4P5. Planning for Changes in Personnel

All new employee positions are considered and approved by the President’s Cabinet. All newly vacated positions are reviewed by the President’s Cabinet in consultation with the affected units to determine whether the position is still needed and the duties listed in the position description remain accurate and appropriate.

Because the College’s workforce, except for administrators, is unionized and collective bargaining agreements are negotiated at the System level, the terms and conditions of employment are largely outside the College’s control and can be difficult to plan for. For instance, the faculty contract specifies floors at the System and institution levels on the percentage of full time equivalent faculty members that must be full-time unlimited (tenured or tenure track). Also, instructors on lay-off from other MnSCU institutions may have claiming rights to open positions.

Information regarding plans for faculty and staff hires or lay-offs is communicated through the shared governance process.

4P6. Designing Work to Promote Productivity and Satisfaction

LSC employees have ample opportunities to influence work processes and activities. Open calls go out at least once a year soliciting new members for standing committees. Committee chairs submit a standard committee information worksheet to the President’s office each fall listing committee members by bargaining unit, to ensure broad representation. Important standing committees include:

- AQIP Steering Committee
- Academic Affairs and Standards Council
- Campus Climate Committee
- Safety Committee
- Developmental Education Committee
- Enrollment Management Committee
- Online Program Advisory Committee
- Student Academic Achievement Committee

Shared governance meetings promote dialogue, provide the rationale for decisions, and improve communication. Major task forces, such as the Strategic Planning Task Force and the Master Academic Planning Task Force, typically include representatives from all campus constituencies and seek input and feedback from the entire campus community as their work progresses.

Current employees have a strong voice in selecting new colleagues. Volunteers are solicited campus-wide for all search committees. An attempt is made to ensure that all bargaining units, including the faculty, are represented on all search committees, regardless of the position. All faculty searches include a public teaching demonstration and all searches for administrator positions include open forums. Those in attendance at teaching demonstrations or open forums have the opportunity to provide the committee with written feedback on the candidates.

The College President and other top administrators meet with all staff members at least twice annually and more frequently if circumstances warrant. The meetings include the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback on decisions, future plans, and current concerns.
4P7. Ensuring Ethical Practices

LSC has a well-developed set of formal policies and procedures governing such disparate topics as student conduct, academic standing, satisfactory academic progress, weather closings, complaints, appropriate use of technology, smoking on campus, grading, video surveillance, and human subjects research.

EMPLOYEE CODE OF CONDUCT

One such policy is the Employee Code of Conduct (Policy 1C.3), which includes sections addressing conflicts of interest, nepotism, use of state property, appropriate use of technology, nondiscrimination, sexual violence, fraud and dishonest acts, intellectual property, and alcohol and drug abuse.

All current employees were required to complete a mandatory training session on the Employee Code of Conduct in 2008-09. Since then, all new employees have been required to complete the same training as part of the new employee orientation process and portions of the policy are revisited from time to time as part of duty day or professional development activities.

In addition, as employees of the State of Minnesota, all LSC employees are subject to state statutes and regulations designed to ensure ethical conduct. All new Supervisors are required to complete on-line and in-person training addressing topics that include Code of Conduct and Ethics, Data Practices, Safety Practices, Creating a Harassment-Free Environment, and Statutory Rights of Employees.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The Student Conduct Code, which is contained in Policy 3.6 and Procedure 3.6.1, addresses academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty are defined and expressly proscribed. Instructors establish their own expectations for academic honesty within the context of their programs or disciplines. The LSC Library has collected and publicly posted resources for instructors and students under the following Course Quickstarts: “Plagiarism, Resources for Prevention and Detection” and “Copyright Rules and Tools.”

RESEARCH PRACTICES

LSC is primarily a teaching institution. Therefore, its faculty, staff and students do not undertake original research except for course projects, generally in the natural or social sciences. Instructors monitor such projects in accordance with generally accepted standards in their disciplines. A relatively small number of LSC students participating in the Bridges to Baccalaureate program conduct original research in collaboration with and under the supervision of investigators at the University of Minnesota-Duluth.

Occasionally, faculty members working on advanced degrees will undertake research involving LSC faculty, students, or staff as part of their graduate programs, or graduate students who are not affiliated with LSC will request permission to survey LSC faculty, students, or staff. LSC has a Human Subjects Research Review policy to handle these rare instances.

4P8. Determining and Aligning Training Needs

Collectively, faculty needs for training and professional development are determined through the faculty-led Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL). The CTL Coordinator surveys the faculty each semester to evaluate past programming and determine unmet professional development needs and desires. The CTL Advisory Board provides the Coordinator with input on the Center’s budget and programming.

Individually, instructors address their personal professional development needs through professional
development plans. All tenured and tenure track faculty members must submit a professional
development plan annually. All other faculty members submit professional development plans coinciding
with their evaluation cycles. Each instructor has access to up to $250 in faculty development funds
annually. Part-time and adjunct instructors have access to the funds on a pro-rated basis.

All tenured instructors have access to a paid sabbatical every six years. Sabbatical leaves offer faculty
the opportunity to secure additional education, training, or experience which will make them better
prepared for carrying out their teaching responsibilities, support their professional development, meet
the development needs of academic departments or areas, or help achieve instructional priorities of the
College. Formal sabbatical plans and reports are required.

Non-faculty employee training needs are determined as part of each employee’s annual performance
evaluation. The evaluation process includes development of work and professional development goals
for the following year. Discretionary funds are budgeted for non-faculty employees to support training,
professional development activities, and tuition waivers. By contract, most employees are entitled to
tuition waivers, on a space available basis, at any MnSCU college.

4P9. Training Faculty, Staff, and Administrators

Efforts are made to provide employees with opportunities to attend professional conferences related to
their work and interests. Within the constraints of the collective bargaining environment, LSC also makes
a concerted effort to provide career paths for valued employees.

MnSCU sponsors the Luoma Leadership Academy, an intensive eighteen month system-wide leadership
development program designed to nurture leadership talent. LSC has sponsored two employees most
years since the program’s inception in 2004. The College also developed its own intensive two-year
leadership development program called LSC Leaders. Offered twice, most recently in 2009-10, the
program has been completed by 27 employees.

Technology training for the faculty and staff is provided by the College’s full-time Instructional Technologist. In
addition, periodic training on new or existing software is regularly offered through the System office. Regular
faculty and staff development days ensure that employees are well-informed and their skills kept updated.

Supervisors work with their staff to develop individualized training plans aligned with their job descriptions.
In addition, it is the College’s practice to support employees who wish to continue their educations or
seek professional development that falls outside their normal job duties.

4P10. Evaluating Personnel

LSC’s performance evaluation process calls for evaluations to be conducted on the following schedule:

• Administrators – every other year.
• Faculty – every three years for tenured faculty, annually for all others.
• Supervisors and Staff – annually

Staff performance evaluations include a self-evaluation, evaluation against the primary responsibilities
detailed in the employee’s position description, evaluation against a standard list of performance
competencies, the development of goals for the coming evaluation period, and a review of the outcomes
from the prior year’s plan.

Administrators receive annual performance evaluations by their supervisors. Expanded performance
evaluations that include feedback from the administrator's direct reports, as well as a random sample of other employees, are administered by the President's office on a three year cycle. The names of employees providing feedback are kept confidential by the President's office; only summary results, with identifying information removed, are provided to the administrator.

Faculty evaluations are conducted by the Academic Deans using a process developed in consultation with the faculty and spelled out in a faculty evaluation manual. There are three components of each faculty evaluation: a professional portfolio, student evaluations, and classroom observations. Because the regular process did not work well for evaluating instructors teaching online, a special process and evaluation criteria for evaluating online faculty was developed, with faculty input, in 2010 and has been in use since then.

4P11. Designing Employee Reward, Compensation and Benefit Systems

The compensation and benefits of all employees except administrators are determined through collective bargaining. The State of Minnesota negotiates staff contracts and the MnSCU System Office negotiates the faculty contract. Administrators are covered by the Personnel Plan for Administrators, under which the MnSCU Board of Trustees sets the terms and conditions of their employment.

Recently, the MnSCU Chancellor has tied the performance evaluation of LSC's President to the College's performance on the MnSCU Strategic Framework Performance Metrics. While the Performance Metrics align only partially with LSC's Strategic Plan goals, there is overlap on ten of the Metrics.

4P12. Motivating Faculty, Staff, and Administrators

The College administered its first formal employee satisfaction survey in the spring of 2009. Three key issues (training and advancement, communication, and student centeredness) were identified and the results shared with the College community.

In the fall of 2009, the College conducted a series of employee focus groups to more specifically identify and flesh out those issues. The administration reviewed the focus group summary and identified possible solutions for key issues, which were discussed at shared governance meetings. Plans were made to re-administer the same employee satisfaction survey in the spring of 2011, in the hope that comparisons with the 2009 results would inform future courses of action.

Those plans changed following the administrative reorganization of LSC in the fall of 2010 and LSC's subsequent preparation for its AQIP Strategy Forum in April, 2012. As requested by HLC, all employees were invited to take a Quality Culture Survey. At that time there was a strong perception on the part of many employees that LSC had problems with trust and communication. The Quality Culture Survey results confirmed that perception. The results, shared at the Strategy Forum, also confirmed that communication is an ongoing problem for many other institutions as well.

In response to the Quality Culture Survey results and work done at the AQIP Strategy Forum, President Johns established a Quality Culture Task Force charged with (a) reviewing the results of the Quality Culture Survey, and (b) recommending next steps (a way forward). The Task Force was composed of nine faculty and staff members who held seven open meetings over the summer of 2012. The Task Force reached consensus on a “Report and Recommendation” to President Johns. The recommendation section stated:

As the next step toward creating a campus culture of mutual trust and respect, we recommend that the Administration establish a permanent Campus Culture Committee, charged with:

- Fostering a culture of trust and respect characterized by consultation and communication. The Committee’s efforts should include, but not be limited to:
- Determining the most effective ways to solicit input and feedback.
- Fostering a climate in which employees feel safe providing candid input and feedback.
- Establishing general standards and rules of etiquette for email usage.
- Creating a communication guide, listing who needs to be notified of what information.
- Identifying ways to facilitate more opportunities for informal and inclusive interactions among employees.

- Monitoring the health of our campus culture through regular administration of the PACE Survey, reviewing the results, and recommending appropriate actions.

President Johns accepted the Task Force recommendation and plans were made to join a MnSCU cohort in administering the PACE Survey. The PACE Survey (Personal Assessment of the College Environment) is a survey developed and administered by the National Institute for Leadership and Institutional Effectiveness at North Carolina State University.

In March, 2013, LSC participated in the PACE Survey for the first time. All employees were invited to take the survey, and 176 (46.6%) did. The Campus Climate Committee has been meeting regularly to analyze the survey results and develop recommendations to foster a culture of trust and respect at LSC.

Current plans are to re-administer the PACE Survey at regular two-year intervals indefinitely.

**4P13. Evaluating Employee Satisfaction, Health, Safety, and Well-Being**

In response to LSC’s first formal employee satisfaction survey in 2009 in combination with employee feedback from LSC’s 2007 campus-wide Conversation Day, an AQIP Action Project to create a Wellness Program was chartered. The Wellness program began with a survey of students and employees to determine needs and interests. The survey results provided the data for the team to create the program elements: an in-house Weight Watchers program; a series of fitness and health-related classes; purchase of outdoor recreational equipment and tables; a year-long cholesterol and glucose monitoring program that involved the student Medical Laboratory Technology club; and procurement of a blood pressure monitoring machine on campus. Elements of these efforts have been institutionalized and are continuing.

The College has an active Safety Committee made up of a cross-constituent group of employees. The committee meets monthly to consider and make recommendations regarding campus safety issues. The Safety Committee’s minutes are posted on the College website.

As required by law, Material Safety Data Sheets are available at all work sites, and training on work-related safety issues is provided as appropriate. Safety training includes such topics as blood borne pathogens, employee right-to-know, fall protection, lock out tags, and confined space entry. Ergonomic analysis of employees’ work stations throughout the College is conducted by the HR department upon request and offered periodically by students as part of LSC’s Physical Therapist Assistant program.

The College participates in the State of Minnesota health plans, which include several pro-active tools and programs, such as health coaching, for employees interested in health monitoring and improvement plans. In addition, the State’s health plans offer discounts on health insurance co-pays as an incentive for employees to complete a comprehensive health assessment each fall and review it with a health expert. On-campus, the College has a wellness center that employees can use for free.
RESULTS

4R1. Measures of Valuing People

PACE SURVEY
LSC administered the Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) Survey for the first time in March, 2013. The PACE Survey is designed to measure employees’ perceptions of their college’s climate. Regular administration of the PACE Survey and analysis of its results was part of the College President’s charge to the new Campus Climate Committee and the Committee’s agenda has been driven by the results of the 2013 administration. The Survey will be administered again in 2015 and every other year thereafter.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT SURVEY
LSC participates in the Staff Development Survey that is conducted every other year through MnSCU’s System-wide Training Office. The survey addresses key staff development measures, including participation in staff development activities, performance evaluations, and individual development plans. The results are reported back to LSC through the HR Department and reviewed for actionable findings.

OTHER MEASURES
The College also tracks employee union grievances, discrimination complaints and outcomes, and affirmative action/EEO results.

4R2. Performance Results for Valuing People

The report of LSC’s March, 2013 administration of the Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) Survey, prepared by the National Initiative for Leadership & Institutional Effectiveness (NILIE) at North Carolina State University, states:

At LSC, the overall results from the PACE instrument indicate a healthy campus climate, yielding an overall 3.49 mean score or middle Consultative system. The Student Focus category received the highest mean score (3.87)...

Of the 46 standard PACE questions, the three items on which LSC had the highest mean scores were:
- The extent to which I feel my job is relevant to this institution’s mission.
- The extent to which this institution prepares students for a career.
- The extent to which my supervisor expresses confidence in my work.

The three items on which LSC had the lowest mean scores were:
- The extent to which information is shared within this institution.
- The extent to which I have the opportunity for advancement within this institution.
- The extent to which a spirit of cooperation exists at this institution.

4R3. Evidence of Productivity and Effectiveness

The productivity and effectiveness of LSC’s administration, faculty, and staff is reflected in the fact that LSC has the third lowest annual full-time tuition and fees among the 25 two-year colleges in MnSCU.

The annual MnSCU Instructional Cost Study examines institutions’ general fund operating expenditures and calculates the cost per student FYE for programs and courses at the institution. The cost study data allow LSC to compare its cost per FYE in programs and disciplines against the cost per FYE for like programs elsewhere in MnSCU.
The aggregated costs reported by the MnSCU Cost Study provide a measure of overall institutional efficiency. The data show that LSC has been steadily reducing both its direct instructional and fully allocated (includes all overhead) costs per FYE. As shown in Table 4-1, LSC’s fully allocated cost per FYE in FY 2011 (the most recent year for which data are available) was $508.93, which was 7% below the MnSCU average.

### Table 4-1

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<th>Year</th>
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<th>FULLY ALLOCATED COST/FYE</th>
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<td>4080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
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<td>3750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>3852</td>
<td>3805</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MnSCU Cost Study

LSC’s recent improvements in efficiency are all the more striking in that enrollment increased during the same time period while employee headcount and salary cost per student FYE both fell:

### Table 4-2

<table>
<thead>
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<th>FY09</th>
<th>FY10</th>
<th>FY11</th>
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<td>Employee Headcount</td>
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<td>Salary Cost/Student FYE</td>
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<td>$4845</td>
<td>(10.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MnSCU Cost Study

LSC has been doing more than ever before with fewer resources while remaining among the most affordable educational options in Minnesota.

**4R4. Comparison of Results**

**PACE SURVEY**

LSC’s results from its March, 2013 administration of the Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) Survey included normative data based on 60 Pace Survey climate studies conducted at two-year institutions since 2010. LSC’s mean scores on all four of the survey’s climate factors (Institutional Structure, Supervisory Relationships, Teamwork, and Student Focus) were lower than the norm base. Of the 46 standard items that comprise the climate factors, LSC’s mean score was lower than the norm base on 45, and the difference was statistically significant at a confidence level of .05 on 33 of the items, including all 15 items that comprise the Institutional Structure factor. These results have added urgency to the work of the new Campus Climate Committee.

**STAFF DEVELOPMENT SURVEY**

The 2012 Staff Development Survey showed that 72% of LSC’s survey respondents reported attending one or more professional development activities in the past year, compared to 75% of respondents from the other 24 two-year colleges in MnSCU. The survey showed that 73% of the College’s respondents reported receiving a performance evaluation in the prior 12 months, compared to 67% within MnSCU. Finally, 54% of LSC’s respondents reported they have an individual development plan that they have discussed with a supervisor, compared to 49% of the respondents within MnSCU.
4I1. Recent Improvements

LSC’s new Campus Climate Committee has created, for the first time, a dedicated venue for improving the College’s culture and climate to better value people. The Climate Committee began its work with a retreat in May, 2013 and has met at least once a month since.

To date the Committee has:

- Reviewed and discussed the results of the PACE Survey that was administered in March, 2013.
- Updated the campus on the Committee’s work at all-faculty and all-staff meetings that included presentations followed by small group discussion activities.
- Created a public web site where the PACE Survey results and all Committee meeting notes are posted.
- Developed a “What’s on the radar?” method of identifying issues and problems that are of current concern to LSC employees.
- Adopted a set of organizational values suggested by the PACE Survey results.

In the very near future, the Committee will be issuing its first set of recommendations to the College President.

4I2. Selecting Processes to Improve Valuing People

When the College President chartered the new Campus Climate Committee, he specified that the purpose of the Committee would be to (1) assist and guide the College’s community in ways that help foster a continuously improved culture of trust and respect, and (2) monitor the health of the College’s culture through the regular administration of the PACE Survey, review the results, and make recommendations to the administration for appropriate action.

With this new Committee, LSC now has the infrastructure in place to select specific processes to improve and to set performance targets for improved performance results in Valuing People.
LSC’s mission is well understood. As a combined two-year technical and community college with open enrollment, the College offers students from a variety of backgrounds a variety of pathways toward a career or transfer to a four-year institution.

LSC’s planning and day-to-day operations are both expressly and implicitly aligned with its mission. The College’s student focus is a point of substantial pride that is borne out by both student and employee surveys.

Therefore, with respect to its mission, the College judges the maturity of its processes for leading and communicating to be fully aligned. There is consensus on the College’s purpose, but supporting processes for achieving its mission still offer room for improvement. As other processes become more mature, LSC expects its processes for leading and communicating will become more integrated.

On the other hand, LSC recognizes that its communication processes leave substantial room for improvement. For a variety of reasons, there is currently a heightened sensitivity to communication problems, both perceived and real, among the College’s employees.

Everyone is trying, but LSC’s communication processes still tend to be reactive. There is an emerging consensus that the College must improve in this area. LSC needs to become more systematic in this area by developing standards and clear repeatable processes for communicating within the College. Thus, looking forward, LSC expects to devote substantial effort to improving leading and communicating over the next few years.
PROCESSES

5P1. Defining Mission and Values

LSC’s mission and values are embodied in formal statements of vision, mission, purpose, and values. Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System (MnSCU) board policy requires each system institution to review its mission statement at least once each accreditation cycle.

LSC’s most recent review was in 2010 when the Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Committee undertook a comprehensive review of LSC’s mission, vision, and values statements. That process involved the entire 40-member IE Committee and included a survey and opportunity for input from the entire LSC community. The result was a new, intentionally unconventional mission statement that was submitted to the MnSCU System Office for presentation to the MnSCU Board of Trustees. However, staff in the System Office raised questions and LSC withdrew the proposed new mission statement as the College transitioned to new leadership and a revised organizational structure.

During 2013, LSC’s Administrative Council revisited the current mission, vision, and values statements and re-affirmed them, deciding to defer any further consideration of changes for the time being. Future reviews will be conducted under the guidance of the AQIP Steering Committee, which has replaced the IE Committee as the organizational structure overseeing LSC’s accreditation and quality improvement processes.

LSC’s mission and values are also reflected in its academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile. LSC’s mission to provide “affordable higher education that benefits diverse learners, employers, and the community” is met through its:

- Open enrollment policy, supported by developmental education and comprehensive learner support services.
- Enrollment of substantial numbers of students who are first generation (48%), underrepresented (42.2%), non-traditional (average age = 25), or Pell eligible (32%).
- Academic programs that prepare students for transfer or for immediate employment in careers in business, health, trade and industry, computers, transportation, and public safety/ emergency response.
- Customized training in industrial safety, manufacturing, transportation, healthcare, office skills, and firefighting.
- Continuing education in occupational skills such as mine safety, motorcycle safety, and bridge safety, as well as classes for personal enrichment.

5P2. Aligning Directions with the Mission, Vision, Values, and High Performance

MnSCU

LSC is a member of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System (MnSCU). MnSCU is governed by a 15-member Board of Trustees appointed by the Governor of the State of Minnesota and confirmed by the State Senate. Under the authorizing statute, the Board of Trustees has authority to “govern the state colleges.” It has the power and duty to “prescribe conditions of admission, set tuition and fees, approve programs of study and requirements for completion of programs, approve the awarding of appropriate certificates, diplomas, and degrees, enter into contracts and other agreements and adopt suitable policies for the institutions it governs.” The authorizing statute also directs that “to the extent practicable in protecting statewide interests, the board shall provide autonomy to the campuses while holding them accountable for their decisions.” Minn. Stat. Ch.136F.06, subd. 1 (2009)
The Board of Trustees’ mission statement reads as follows:

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system of distinct and collaborative institutions offers higher education that meets the personal and career goals of a wide range of individual learners, enhances the quality of life for all Minnesotans and sustains vibrant economies throughout the state.

Each state college and university has a distinct mission that is consistent with and supportive of the overall mission of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities.

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities provides high quality programs comprising:

1. Technical education programs delivered principally by technical colleges, which prepare students for skilled occupations that do not require a baccalaureate degree.
2. Pre-baccalaureate programs, delivered principally by community colleges, which offer lower division instruction in academic programs, occupational programs in which all credits earned will be accepted for transfer to a baccalaureate degree in the same field of study, and remedial studies.
3. Baccalaureate programs delivered by state universities, which offer undergraduate instruction and degrees; and
4. Graduate programs, delivered by state universities, including instruction through the master's degree, specialist certificates and degrees, and applied doctoral degrees.

Each college and university in the System is headed by a president who serves as the chief executive officer. Each president reports to the System’s chancellor. Both the Minnesota Senate and the Minnesota House of Representatives have higher education committees that provide legislative oversight of MnSCU’s operations and finances.

In November, 2012, MnSCU embarked on a long-range planning initiative, chartering three workgroups of System students, faculty, staff, presidents, and trustees to advise on the long-term strategic directions needed to ensure access to an extraordinary education for all Minnesotans, meet Minnesota’s workforce and community needs; and deliver the most cost-effective, highest value education. That work resulted in a draft report, “Charting the Future,” that addresses emerging challenges facing the System’s institutions, such as changing demographics, the changing nature of work, resource shifts and pressures, and technology shifts. All stakeholders are being given opportunities to provide input and feedback, both formally and informally, prior to the planned finalization of the report in November, 2013.

LAKE SUPERIOR COLLEGE

The College’s two seminal planning documents, its Strategic Plan and Master Academic Plan, are both prefaced with the College’s mission. The Strategic Plan was developed with the College’s mission as its starting point. The Master Academic Plan was developed with the College’s mission, college-wide learning outcomes, and Strategic Plan as starting points. Therefore, both plans are intended to guide the institution in achieving its mission, and both plans reflect LSC’s core mission of teaching and learning.

LSC’s planning and budgeting processes are intentionally aligned with its Strategic Plan and Master Academic Plan. However, LSC’s institutional planning also takes place within the broad context of the Strategic Framework set by the MnSCU Board of Trustees and the College’s mission and values.

For the most part, LSC’s planning and priorities align with MnSCU’s planning and priorities. However, because the College’s planning processes are separate from MnSCU’s planning and because LSC’s current Strategic Plan and Master Academic Plan predate MnSCU’s recent planning initiatives, there is
potential misalignment and the potential for inconsistent priorities. Moreover, it appears increasingly likely that the number and variety of objectives advanced by MnSCU will outpace the institutional resources LSC has available to carry them out. Accordingly, LSC has recently embarked on a process, described more fully in Section 8P4, to align and reconcile the goals and objectives generated by LSC’s planning processes with those generated by MnSCU’s planning processes.

At the operational level, processes for allocating resources are expressly tied to the priorities set in the Strategic Plan and Master Academic Plan. Thus, for instance, requests for new equipment to meet technology, furniture, and facilities needs are submitted as part of annual budget requests and then prioritized through a process that relies on the following equipment committees:

- Academic & Student Affairs Equipment Committee
- Administration & Executive Unit Equipment Committee
- Technology Advisory Committee
- Furniture Committee
- Facilities Committee

In similar fashion, the academic deans allocate department and program funding based on the College’s priorities as reflected in the Master Academic Plan and taking into account each department or program’s most recent program review.

There are dedicated cost center budgets for research and assessment of student learning to fund surveys, research, and other activities related to assessment and evaluation.

LSC’s budgeting process is intentionally conservative. Despite modest and consistent growth over the past ten years, the College is well aware that demographic trends, including declining enrollment in area high schools, make it unlikely that enrollment of more traditional students will continue to grow. For the past several years, the College has had a practice of budgeting for flat enrollment.

5P3. Accounting for the Needs and Expectations of Students and Stakeholders

The needs and expectations of students and other key stakeholder groups are taken into account by involving them in planning and decision making processes.

The former Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Committee, which conducted the last comprehensive review of the College’s mission documents, included student and community representatives. The current AQIP Steering Committee includes a community representative.

The Strategic Planning task force that produced the current Strategic Plan included student and community members. As part of the strategic planning process, the task force conducted public forums and validation sessions with business and civic leaders, general community members, students, staff, and faculty.

Likewise, the membership of the Master Academic Plan Task Force was broadly representative, including the Executive Director of Workforce Development, a Customized Training Sales Representative, and a Student Senate representative. Task Force work in progress was shared with the broader campus community through division meetings, posting in the Employee Portal, and through two all-faculty/staff forums.

Finally, the Campus Climate Committee is also broadly representative of LSC’s employees. The Committee seeks to improve the working climate for the entire campus, using a variety of methods (e.g. surveys, employee forums) to obtain input from all employees. The Committee makes recommendations directly to the College president, who is an ex officio member.
5P4. Seeking Future Opportunities While Focusing on Students and Learning

LSC’s students are drawn, for the most part, from the local and regional communities and LSC prepares students for jobs with local and regional businesses. LSC’s leaders effectively guide the College in seeking future opportunities that will benefit those students through frequent and regular involvement with local business, community, and educational leaders.

The College is a member of the Duluth Chamber of Commerce and has representatives on various chamber subcommittees. Each year at least one representative of LSC participates in Leadership Duluth, learning about the local community and meeting other leaders from local businesses, social service agencies, local governments, and educational institutions. LSC administrators and other College representatives are active with the Arrowhead Manufacturing and Fabrication Association, the Northern Aero Alliance (a collaboration of aviation industry and agency stakeholders centered in Duluth) and other similar groups.

College leaders also interact regularly with other higher education leaders in the immediate area, and the College’s President and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs meet regularly with their counterparts at nine other MnSCU colleges in Northeast Minnesota through the Northeast Leadership Council (NELC).

Collaborations focused on students and learning include the Arches program with the University of Minnesota – Duluth (UMD) and pending development of a rural dentistry program in collaboration with the University of Minnesota and UMD that will include clinical experiences through LSC’s on-campus dental clinic. Similarly, LSC partners with the Physical Therapy program at the College of St. Scholastica (CSS) to offer Physical Therapy students at CSS and Physical Therapist Assistant students at LSC joint clinical experiences in the Physical Therapy Clinics on both campuses.

Active Program Advisory Boards for all occupational programs help LSC’s instructors and academic administrators stay connected to local businesses and expertise. Partnerships with SOAR Career Solutions, a non-profit serving low income persons with training and employment needs, and other non-profits under Minnesota Job Skills Partnership grants keep LSC connected to the local community and in tune with present and future student and community needs.

5P5. Making Decisions

STRATEGIC DECISIONS

At the policy and major decision making level, the President’s Cabinet (four members) and the Administrative Council (eleven members) are the main administrative decision-making bodies. Their members represent all units on campus.

OPERATIONAL DECISIONS

Generally, day-to-day operating decisions are made by deans, supervisors, directors, and their staff. Faculty members make operational decisions for their programs and departments under the supervision of their deans.

Regularly scheduled faculty shared governance meetings and similar regular meetings with other bargaining units on campus facilitate communication and provide campus stakeholders input into major decisions affecting them. The agenda for shared governance meetings contains all topics requested by the faculty association leadership and the College president.

The faculty shared governance process is intended to offer the faculty an opportunity to make recommendations to the College in the following topic areas: personnel, student affairs, fiscal matters, and general matters. By contract, proposals initiated by the administration to create or change existing policies or to make layoffs must be taken to Shared Governance for discussion prior to a final decision by the administration.
CURRICULUM DECISIONS

All curriculum-related decisions (e.g. new or revised program planners, new or revised courses) are made through a long-standing and well-defined curriculum process. Curriculum proposals originate at the division level. After review and approval by the curriculum committee, proposals are reviewed and approved by the faculty association. They are then reviewed and considered by the Academic Affairs and Standards Council (AASC) before final approval by the College President or designee. AASC is co-chaired by two faculty members. Two-thirds of the voting members are faculty, and the remaining one-third are administrators or other staff.

COLLEGE POLICIES

The College has formal policies and procedures governing academic standards and processes, student and employee conduct, student and employee rights, student financial aid, business practices, and other similar matters inherent in the operation of an institution of higher education.

Any person or unit can propose a new or revised policy. After supervisory review, proposals for new or revised policies are discussed with the faculty through shared governance and then posted in the employee portal for review and comment by any interested persons for a period of at least two weeks. After the end of the review and comment period, the College President approves the new policy as is, approves the new policy with changes, or disapproves it.

All policies and procedures are periodically reviewed by designated administrators for continuing validity and possible revisions. Any changes then follow the normal procedure for proposing new or revised policies.

5P6. Using Data, Information, and Results in Decision-Making

LSC intentionally relies on data, information, and its own performance results to inform and guide its decision making processes. Two examples are representative:

ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT

The College’s Director of Admissions, with assistance from the IR office, produces an annual Enrollment Report that tracks approximately 60 metrics, including the characteristics of LSC’s students, the high schools they come from, and the majors they intend to pursue. The data is used in multiple ways. For instance, the College knows how many applicants it receives from each high school, the number of applicants who actually enrolled, the percentage of that high school’s class (market share) that LSC captured, and the change from the prior year. This information is used in allocating recruiting resources.

Enrollment is carefully tracked. As each term approaches, administrators and other interested persons receive weekly reports with enrollment data, including headcount and full-time equivalent students compared to the same date the prior year.

In June, 2013, regular enrollment reports began consistently showing that full-time equivalent enrollment was running in excess of 10% below the prior year. The College responded by creating an Enrollment Task Force with representatives from Admissions, Advising, Financial Aid, Business Services, Institutional Research, and Academics. Interested persons from across the campus were invited to join, and many did. The Task Force met weekly throughout the summer, using data to devise and prioritize efforts to avoid a significant enrollment decline.

Registration data was broken down by division and program, which identified precisely where enrollment was down. The data was provided to the program instructors, who in many cases responded by both reaching out to students in their programs who had not yet registered and increasing their recruiting efforts. Student
Services staff made personal phone calls to targeted sub-groups of new or returning students (e.g. students with incomplete applications or who would benefit from the College’s recently revised “fresh start” policy).

These efforts were successful, and it now appears the College’s final enrollment for fall semester, 2013, will decline approximately 1% compared to fall semester, 2012. As a by-product of this effort, the Task Force has continued to meet to be pro-active about spring semester, 2014 and, just as importantly, to document and institutionalize the new strategies that proved to be effective.

**COURSE SCHEDULING**

The College builds its course schedules more than one academic year out. Each fall the Institutional Research office provides the Academic Deans with reports containing historic course enrollment data for their divisions. The reports show all courses offered over the past five years, including the delivery format and number of sections, seats available, number enrolled, and fill rate for each term that the course has been offered. This data informs both the building of the next schedule and course addition and cancellation decisions as the beginning of each term approaches.

**OTHER**

More detailed summaries of the sources, distribution, and use of data in LSC’s decision making processes are contained in sections 7P1 and 7P2.

**5P7. Communication Between and Among Levels and Units of the College**

Since late 2004, email has been the official means of communication for both students and employees at LSC. Each student has an LSC email address, and all students are reminded and strongly encouraged to check their email accounts regularly for important communications coming from the College.

All employees are also expected to monitor and use their College email accounts. Group email lists are used to ensure that employees receive emails that are relevant to them (e.g. all faculty, student services group). A weekly newsletter for employees called “Newsplash” is sent by email. Table 5-1 lists other means of communication that the College uses as well:
Table 5-1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEANS OF COMMUNICATION</th>
<th>USE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Mail</td>
<td>Send Technology Information to New Students, Satisfactory Academic Progress Notifications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blogs</td>
<td>The Wave (Public Newsletter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Council</td>
<td>Inform all Administrators of Important News, Changes, or Decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Governance Meetings</td>
<td>Exchange Information with Faculty and other Bargaining Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSC Web Site</td>
<td>Project Updates (e.g. IT Project List, HR Open Position Status List)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Staff Meetings</td>
<td>Administrators and Supervisors Communicate with Employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division Meetings</td>
<td>Deans Communicate with Faculty in their Divisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Meetings</td>
<td>Supervisors Communicate with their Direct Reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duty Days</td>
<td>Faculty/Staff Professional Development and Campus Announcements, Information, and Updates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>Campus Related News, Events, and Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>Campus Related News, Events, and Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>Videos of Campus Related News and Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus TV Monitors</td>
<td>News, Weather, Campus Announcements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text Messaging / Email</td>
<td>Star Alert System (opt-in) for Weather and Emergency Announcements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Media (TV/Radio)</td>
<td>Campus Closing Announcements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5P8. Communicating a Shared Mission to Reinforce High Performance

LSC’s vision, mission, purpose, and values are publicly posted on its web site and referenced in important documents, such as the Strategic Plan and Master Academic Plan. The Strategic Plan and Master Academic Plan are both intentionally aligned with the College’s mission, constantly reinforcing it. The full text of the College’s vision, mission, purpose and values statements is set out below:

LSC’S VISION STATEMENT:

Lake Superior College continues as an area leader of higher education learning opportunities by delivering excellent instruction, innovative programming, and dedicated service in an engaging, comfortable environment. Lake Superior College will excel in student development and community responsiveness.

LSC’S MISSION STATEMENT:

Lake Superior College provides high quality, affordable higher education that benefits diverse learners, employers, and the community. LSC’s academic, technical, continuing education, and workforce development offerings prepare learners for a rapidly changing global community. Our services support learning, and our partnerships connect the college and its learners to a broader spectrum of community life.

LSC’S STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

To accomplish our mission, LSC:

- Encourages the free exchange of ideas and beliefs and promotes innovation.
- Provides programs and courses that
• Enable transfer to other colleges and universities
• Lead to career opportunity or enhancement
• Enable continuing education and personal enrichment opportunities
• Prepare students for college-level work
• Enrich the social and cultural growth of learners
• Promote ethical and responsible citizenship
• Provide customized educational content and delivery systems.

• Embraces assessment and continuous quality improvement through a college-wide plan designed to measure and improve student academic achievement and institutional effectiveness.
• Provides comprehensive student services, student life opportunities, and access to learning resources and technologies.
• Is committed to excellence in teaching as reflected in hiring practices, access to fiscal resources and technology, and the provision of professional development opportunities.
• Is committed to the integration of general education as appropriate.
• Establishes collaborative partnerships.

LSC’S STATEMENT OF VALUES:
The Lake Superior College community affirms the worth and dignity of each individual and promotes equity of access and opportunity. These principles form the foundation of our values.

**LSC values accessible and lifelong learning opportunities.**
To support this value, the College:
• provides a comprehensive educational program
• emphasizes general education outcomes across the college
• provides personal and professional continuing education
• promotes professional development
• provides resources and delivery systems that improve learning, increase access and promote lifelong learning

**LSC values equity and diversity.**
To support this value, the College:
• provides support services to assist students in meeting their educational and career goals
• provides supplemental support services for students with identified needs
• provides equal opportunity in education and employment
• supports understanding of cultural diversity

**LSC values the pursuit of excellence, innovation and initiative.**
To support this value, the College:
• has established standards of performance
• adheres to assessment practices designed to improve student academic achievement and institutional effectiveness
• is committed to continuing dialogue with its external constituencies
• promotes and supports initiative and innovation
• promotes and supports a high quality of education

**LSC values a sense of community.**
To support this value, the College:
• offers student life opportunities that enrich the educational experience
is committed to assessing needs in the region and within the student body to ensure continued services that meet the needs of constituencies
has established a governance structure for shared decision-making
cooperates with other educational systems
sponsors activities that enrich the community
fosters an environment of trust, equity, compassion and respect

LSC values academic freedom and free inquiry.
To support this value, the College:
• encourages the free interchange of ideas and beliefs
• promotes innovation and initiative in the classroom

LSC values integrity.
To support this value, the College:
• adheres to standards of financial accountability and disclosure
• is committed to ongoing accreditation for the institution and its programs
• encourages ethical decision-making
• articulates its relationships with other educational institutions
• supports the responsible stewardship of its resources

LSC values all its stakeholders.
To support this value, the College:
• participates in partnerships with business, industry, labor, and government agencies
• participates in partnerships with other educational systems
• facilitates entry into and transfer from Lake Superior College
• offers flexible use of the college facilities, personnel, and services

5P9. Encouraging, Developing, and Strengthening Leadership Abilities

ADMINISTRATION

LSC’s Administrative Council has developed and adopted the following statement of Administrative Leadership Philosophy:

Respect and integrity are our guiding principles. Our actions are intended to benefit students and the college as a whole. Our approach to leadership is open, honest communication and mutual respect. We will provide consultative leadership by seeking advice from all constituent groups. Teamwork is essential to the overall success of the management and leadership of the college. We will lead by example.

As stewards of state resources, we are accountable to the public and many governing agencies. Our actions must pass the test of public scrutiny and meet legal requirements, and, as such, we will act in a manner that is perceived as honest and principled. We are committed to building an environment of trust, and we accept the responsibility for our decisions.

We are committed to identifying opportunities for the college while looking for alternative solutions to problems. We will cooperate with one another and promote an attitude and atmosphere that is supportive of our students, faculty, and staff.

Principles Guiding Leadership Outcomes:
• Accessible and Responsive to Students
• Accessible and Responsive to Faculty, Staff, and Community
• Alignment of Processes with Student Needs
• Focused on Long-Term Viability
• Clear Lines of Responsibility
• Utilize All Managerial Capacity

This statement has been shared with the faculty as an invitation to hold administrators accountable for doing their best to live up to the ideals it expresses.

Following their hire, all new administrators and supervisors are required to complete MnSCU’s Frontline Leadership Supervisory Training, which consists of three trainings. The first is “The Science of Supervision” e-learning course, followed by the second, a one day in-person “Science of Supervision” program. Finally, “The Art of Supervision” is a three-day, in-person interactive leadership development program designed to help attendees develop a network of leadership colleagues and increase their competence and confidence as leaders.

The Northeast Leadership Council (NELC) is comprised of the Presidents and Chief Academic Officers of nine MnSCU colleges located in Northeast Minnesota. NELC holds an annual development retreat for leaders (administrators and supervisors) of its member colleges. Topics typically focus on leadership. The most recent retreat, in June, 2013, focused on leading and managing people through change.

FACULTY

Faculty members develop leadership skills through a variety of ways. Participation in the local unit of the Minnesota State College Faculty Association through local and state-wide officer positions, and membership on the Academic Affairs and Standards Council or the Shared Governance Council offer leadership opportunities, as do committee appointments and some sabbatical projects. Instructors who are given release time for mission critical work (e.g. the Center for Teaching and Learning Coordinator), program directors, and department chairs and liaisons also develop leadership skills through those responsibilities.

Other leadership and professional development opportunities are described in section 4P9.

5P10. Planning for Leadership Succession

The College does not have a formal succession plan. However, in the event of the incapacity, death, or resignation of the College President, MnSCU Board policy authorizes the Chancellor to appoint an acting or interim president. At the campus level, the acting or interim president and the President’s Cabinet would determine division of duties until the President returns to his or her duties or the Chancellor appoints a replacement in accordance with board policy.

It has long been the practice of the Office of the Chancellor to conduct an institutional review when an institution within MnSCU experiences a change of presidents. That occurred after LSC’s former President, Kathleen Nelson, announced her retirement in October 2009, effective at the end of June, 2010. LSC’s review took place over several weeks during the spring of 2010.

Such institutional reviews are facilitated by an internal auditor who schedules meetings with the various campus units to discuss management issues. Such issues include, but are not limited to mission, strategic planning, campus culture, continuous improvement programming, community involvement and emergency planning. In addition to Office of the Chancellor staff, the review meetings include staff from other colleges in the system.

President Nelson’s successor, Dr. Pat Johns, was appointed as LSC’s next President following a search conducted in accordance with board policy. Among other things, the search committee was required to be “broadly representative of the interests of the administrators, faculty, staff, students, community and friends” of LSC. (Board Policy 4.2, Part 4, Subpart A)
When President Johns is off-campus and unavailable, decision making authority is delegated to the following top administrators, in order:

1. Vice President of Academic & Student Affairs
2. Vice President of Administration
3. Director of Public Affairs & Advancement
4. Dean of Liberal Arts & Sciences

The MnSCU Executive Leadership Development program is a year-long program designed to identify high performing, high potential leaders within the System and accelerate their development. Among other things, the program creates a pool of highly competent institutional leaders available to serve as interim or acting Presidents. LSC’s Vice President of Academic & Student Affairs is a member of the current cohort.

RESULTS

5R1. Performance Measures for Leading and Communicating

The College uses Google Analytics to regularly collect data on the usage of its web site. The data collected include visitor flow, location based reporting, content, bounce rates, and event tracking.

Usage data is collected for The Wave (LSC’s newsblog) and LSC’s Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube accounts.

The Public Information office maintains a clipbook of news stories and advertisements that have appeared in print publications, including but not limited to local and regional newspapers.

5R2. Results for Leading and Communicating

LSC WEB SITE

The College’s web site averages approximately 100,000 total visitors per month, of which 40,000 are unique. Visitor locations vary by time of year and with various promotions; the most common are Duluth, Minneapolis, Superior, Cloquet, St. Paul, Ely, and Chicago. The most frequently accessed content is the e-Campus, Program and Academic Information, Admissions, and Employment.

FACEBOOK

The number of posts generally ranges between 3 and 7 per day. The number of “Likes” increased from 2,199 on 9/27/11 to 4,064 on 9/27/13. The highest organic reach (number of people who have seen a given post) recorded to date for is 11,272 for a single photo, and 2,159 for a single post.

TWITTER

LSC’s number of followers totaled 1,139 on 9/27/13, with 324 @ mentions between 9/27/12 and 9/27/13 and 81 retweets during the same period.

INSTAGRAM

Since uploading its first photo in March, 2012, LSC has posted 236 photos and achieved 144 followers.

YOUTUBE

LSC posted 31 new videos between February, 2010 and September, 2013. The highest organic viewing total was 690 for a video regarding the LSC Foundation.

THE WAVE

A total of 1,094 posts have been made to LSC’s online newsblog, The Wave, between September, 2006 and September, 2013.
5R3. Comparing Results for Leading and Communicating

LSC regularly wins awards for its communication efforts, and mostly recently received five medallion awards from District 5 of the National Council for Marketing & Public Relations, a professional organization for community college communicators. In addition, an LSC employee was recently recognized as the District’s first “Rising Star” award winner.

Otherwise, the College does not have comparative data on leading and communicating.

IMPROVEMENT

5I1. Recent Improvements in Leading and Communicating

SEM PLAN

During the summer of 2013, LSC’s senior leadership decided to pursue a data-driven strategic enrollment management (SEM) approach championed by Dr. Landon Pirius, Vice President of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management at North Hennepin Community College. Using Dr. Pirius as a consultant, LSC is undertaking a two-year planning process. Year one will be devoted to data gathering and year two will be spent on data analysis and development of an LSC SEM Plan. Year three and beyond will be spent operationalizing the plan.

The SEM Plan will include comprehensive mission based goals for enrollment, student success, institutional success, strengthening communications and increasing collaboration across the institution. It will be developed by a team of 15-18 persons, selected by function to ensure that all parties needed to create and operationalize the SEM Plan will be involved from the start.

One of the primary objectives of the SEM Plan will be to better anticipate enrollment changes and their impact on the College’s budget. By developing reliable long term enrollment projections, the College will be in a position to plan further ahead and pursue new initiatives more aggressively without undue focus and concern on short term enrollments.

The use of data to inform decisions and evaluate strategies will be a cornerstone of the SEM Plan.

WEB SITE REBUILD

In May, 2012, under the leadership of its Director of Web & Information Services, the College undertook a comprehensive review of its web presence and strategies. Initially, the review focused on the use of web analytics. Analysis of data collected since 2006 showed significant opportunities for improving LSC’s web site and web strategies.

Web & Information Services staff worked closely with selected campus units to develop improvements for their areas. Selected portions of the LSC web site were rebuilt on a pilot basis and the lessons learned were then used to plan a total site rebuild.

The new LSC web site was rolled out in late October, 2013.

5I2. Improving Results for Leading and Communicating

LSC’s most recent Systems Appraisal Feedback Report identified the development of more systematic processes as an opportunity for improvement. The College’s current Process Improvement Action Project was chartered in response to that feedback. One hoped for outcome of that project will be a formal method for choosing and conducting process improvement reviews.
CATEGORY 6 – SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONAL OPERATIONS

INTRODUCTION

LSC has experienced steady growth since its inception in 1995. The number of full year equivalent students increased from 2,233 in FY2000 to 3,768 in FY2013. During that time, LSC has had to direct significant resources to improving and developing its support processes to keep up with technological progress and the increasing number of students.

One major challenge continues to be that support processes are the responsibility of multiple units on campus. As a result, they tend to be overlooked in planning and typically receive little attention except when they don’t work well. Nevertheless, as noted in this section, LSC has managed to do a reasonably good job of meeting student support needs and that is borne out by the College’s student satisfaction data.

Because support processes are scattered throughout the organizational structure, it is difficult to generalize about the maturity of the College’s processes in this area. Some processes may be aligned or even integrated, but many remain reactive. Overall, LSC judge’s the maturity of these processes to be mostly systematic at best.

Looking forward, the College is currently undertaking development of a Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) planning process that will result in a comprehensive and integrated long range plan for managing student enrollment and support processes to increase retention and improve student success. The SEM planning process can and should result in a careful and unified examination of the support processes that support student as well as institutional success.
6P1. Identifying Support Service Needs of Students and other Stakeholders

As an open enrollment institution, LSC is acutely aware of the support service needs of its students. A high percentage of its students are first generation college students (48%) or low income (32% Pell eligible). A high percentage of the College’s students are underprepared for college. Nearly half (49%) of new degree-seeking students during the fall semester, 2012, were enrolled in at least one Developmental course. Moreover, many students work full time while attending school, have identified disabilities, are single parents, or lack stable social networks.

Thus, most of the College’s students have one or more risk factors that jeopardize their ability to succeed in college. With relatively few exceptions, new students are required to undergo placement testing followed immediately by a personal advising session with a professional advisor. This allows early identification of and initial discussions with students at high risk.

Once they start school, most students are required to take the Student Success Seminar, a one credit course designed to help them transition into college successfully. The Student Success Seminar is intentionally structured to introduce students to the important support services available to them, such as the LSC Library and the Learning Center. The Student Success Seminar is built around GPS LifePlan, a robust suite of online life skill resources. The course was recently updated to better and more quickly identify students who lack the basic computer skills they need to be successful in school.

A formal early alert system is in place, through which instructors notify Advising Services when students are struggling in class or not attending. Follow-up involves referrals to the Learning Center, a counselor, Disability Services, or outside services when appropriate. Instructors often make such referrals directly as well.

One of the needs identified through the College’s master academic planning process was for better career and placement services. As a result, the Career Services office is being expanded and improved. The Director position is being upgraded to a full-time position, and more emphasis will be placed on serving students better, especially those who need help setting academic goals.

The Intercultural Center also plays a vital role both as a place of support for many students and as a place where their needs are identified and met. The Center’s services include a food shelf and access to the Student Essentials Fund, a source of short term financial help for students dealing with temporary unexpected financial problems.

Finally, student complaints and petitions for exceptions to academic policies often bring otherwise unidentified student support needs to the attention of administrators and staff. Petitions are tracked and analyzed to determine trends indicating problems that need to be addressed or policies and procedures that could be improved.

6P2. Identifying Support Needs of Faculty, Staff, and Administrators

Faculty members generally provide their own administrative support with assistance, when needed, from their Dean’s administrative assistant. The administrative support needs of staff and administrators are identified by supervisors, directors, and administrators in the affected areas.

Requests for new positions are considered by the President’s Cabinet. When an existing position becomes vacant, a review is made to determine whether the position is still needed or should be revised in any way. It is not unusual for such reviews to result in re-alignments or changes in assigned duties to better align the position with the College’s support needs.
The administrative support needs of standing committees, task forces, and other groups are met by allocating the work among the available support staff.

**6P3. Maintaining Physical Safety and Security**

LSC contracts with a private security company to provide day-to-day security services on campus. Security officers patrol campus buildings and the parking lots, provide escort service upon request, and respond to accidents, medical emergencies, and other similar events. The College has strategically placed three automated external defibrillators (AED’s) on campus for public use in responding to cardiac emergencies.

The College has a comprehensive Emergency Response and Crisis Management Plan that was completed in 2010 and recently updated. It designates emergency response and crisis management teams, evacuation procedures, and appropriate responses for all manner of possible emergencies from bomb threats to flooding to hostage events and suicide.

To communicate with students during emergencies, the College has VOIP (voice over internet protocol) phones that can be used as loudspeakers in all classrooms. Students can opt-in to the Star Alert System to receive text messages regarding campus closings and other emergencies.

To support staff members who may have to deal with threatening or agitated students, the College has recently implemented a network based “e-Panic Button” system. The system allows staff to quickly and easily send a “silent alarm” to co-workers or campus security to summon assistance.

In addition, the College maintains a working relationship with the Duluth Police and Fire Departments. Duluth police officers have met with faculty and staff as part of safety training activities, covering such topics as “active shooter” emergencies and dealing with disruptive students. LSC administrators regularly meet with the local police and fire departments to ensure emergency personnel have the information, such as up-to-date building floor plans, that they need to respond to campus emergencies.

Finally, the College has an active Safety Committee that meets at least quarterly to discuss issues affecting physical safety and security on campus and make recommendations to the administration. The Safety Committee membership includes representatives from each of the bargaining units representing faculty and staff as well as student representation. Meeting minutes are publicly posted on the College web site.

**6P4. Managing and Documenting Key Processes**

The College recently replaced its room scheduling software with an improved software system. The new software enables more efficient scheduling of classrooms, conference rooms, and other spaces while eliminating double booking. The system allows real time checking for room availability and immediate booking of available rooms. The new process has improved the College’s ability to book rooms and events for community organizations, customized training, and other one-time facility uses.

A cross-divisional “critical dates” calendar includes all important dates and events. This helps avoid inadvertent conflicts when planning events. Hours of operation of services such as the Library, the LSC Store, the Business Office, and Student Services are adjusted over the course of the year in accordance with the academic calendar and the need for such services. In most cases, past experience is a clear predictor of future needs.

The Technology Support Center and e-Campus Help Desks ensure that students have ready access to help accessing and using their email accounts, e-Services, the e-Campus, the LSC wireless network, and academically related software. Help is available in person, by phone, and by email. Prior to the beginning of each term, a postcard “Technology Guide” goes out by mail to all new students. It includes instructions for logging into student accounts as well as contact information for technical support.
Employee technology support needs are met through a help desk. An electronic ticket system that acknowledges help desk requests and tracks the response from assignment to a technician through closure of the ticket is accessed through a shortcut on all campus computer desktops. The help desk is also available by phone when internet access is not available or the problem must be addressed immediately (as with classroom technology issues).

Problems affecting support services that students rely on are identified through the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) that is administered each spring. Depending on the administrator or supervisor, team meetings often provide a venue for staff members to point out problems or potential improvements to support processes. However, the College does not currently have any formal process for soliciting employee suggestions.

The number of phone calls and the amount of walk-in traffic for the advisors are monitored. The data is used to monitor advisor workloads, adjust advising assignments as needed, request additional staffing (including student workers) and in scheduling staff and events to ensure appropriate coverage.

The Campus Climate committee offers employees the opportunity to identify problems and voice complaints, anonymously if desired, through a “what’s on the radar process.” It is too early to determine whether this will be an effective process, but early indications are that it will be an effective way to identify issues and that the Climate Committee will be an effective organizational structure to respond to the issues that are identified.

6P5. Encouraging Knowledge Sharing by Documenting Processes

Traditionally, the College has relied on handbooks and other printed documentation to document processes and share knowledge. An annual Student Planner provides students a wealth of useful information in a compact and useful format. An Employee Handbook, Faculty Guide to Disability Services, and similar publications address specific needs, and are increasingly posted and used online as well.

Many support processes remain undocumented, at least formally. A Process Review Manual was developed in 2005 as part of an AQIP Action Project; however, its use was never institutionalized and its champions have left or retired. A current “Process Improvement” Action Project is again tackling the challenge of documenting and improving processes. In the meantime, the College has been reviewing and mapping support processes in a reactive manner as problems arise.
RESULTS

6R1. Measures of Support Service Processes

Measures of student, administrative and institutional support service processes that LSC collects and analyzes are summarized below:

Table 6-1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEASURE</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)</td>
<td>Biennial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI)</td>
<td>Annual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Surveys (e.g. Course Schedule Survey, Higher One Survey)</td>
<td>Ad hoc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Center</td>
<td>By Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>By Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Alerts</td>
<td>By Term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Complaints</td>
<td>Annual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Petitions</td>
<td>Annual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone Calls to Professional Advisors</td>
<td>Annual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Advisor Walk-in Traffic</td>
<td>Annual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Help Desk Tickets</td>
<td>Annual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web Analytics</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT Project List</td>
<td>Ad hoc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6R2. Results for Student Support Service Processes

LEARNING CENTER AND LIBRARY

Results for the Learning Center and Library are summarized in 1R5.

EARLY ALERTS

The Director of Advising has made a concerted effort to promote the College’s early alert system through email reminders, announcements at division meetings, and professional development presentations. The early alert process itself has also been improved, with a more efficient and convenient online form.

The Professional Advisors document all Early Alert referrals from instructors. Advisors record, for each referral, the identity of the student, the course, the type of contact made with the student, the outcome of that contact, and notes regarding any additional relevant facts.

The number of Early Alerts has steadily increased for several years. For example, between Spring Semester, 2011 and Spring Semester, 2013, the number of early alerts submitted by instructors increased from 148 to 480.

PROFESSIONAL ADVISORS

The Professional Advisors handle approximately 11,500 phone calls and 10,000 walk-in visits annually. They also conduct, in conjunction with Admissions staff, approximately 1500 Student Orientation, Accuplacer, and Registration (SOAR) sessions each fall and 600 each spring.
SSI RESULTS
The items on the SSI are categorized into twelve scales, seven of which are directly related to student support services. LSC’s results on those seven scales are summarized below:

Table 6-2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SSI SCALES</th>
<th>IMPORTANCE</th>
<th>SATISFACTION</th>
<th>GAP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Centeredness</td>
<td>6.28</td>
<td>6.01</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Support Services</td>
<td>5.80</td>
<td>5.64</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety and Security</td>
<td>6.22</td>
<td>5.35</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admissions and Financial Aid</td>
<td>6.33</td>
<td>5.66</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Services</td>
<td>6.36</td>
<td>6.03</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration Effectiveness</td>
<td>6.38</td>
<td>5.95</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Excellence</td>
<td>6.24</td>
<td>5.90</td>
<td>0.34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CCSSE RESULTS
LSC’s CCSSE results are reported in Section 6R5.

6R3. Results for Administrative Support Service Processes
LSC has no formal performance results for administrative support service processes.

6R4. Using Information to Improve Services
SSI
The College administered the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) every other year between 2004 and 2012, switching to annual administration each spring beginning in 2013. Early on, major changes to the College’s student advising model were made in response to SSI results that showed student dissatisfaction with advising services. Subsequent results showed significant progress and recent SSI results for this area show that it is now an area of relative strength.

Beginning with the 2012 SSI administration, the College began obtaining single group reports for programs that want program level student satisfaction data. Through the single group reports, program directors and instructors learn about student satisfaction issues that are unique to their programs. They also obtain program level satisfaction data required by their specialized accreditors. The following programs obtained single group reports in 2013:

- Physical Therapist Assistant
- Dental Hygiene
- Registered Nursing
- Practical Nursing
- Radiologic Technology

The College’s SSI results are presented to and discussed by the Administrative Council shortly after they are received.

WEB ANALYTICS
Data on the usage and function of the LSC web site are used to improve the functionality of the web site as well as the user experience.
6R5. Comparing Results for Supporting Institutional Operations

With the exception of the frequency with which students report using career counseling, LSC’s performance results for student support services compare favorably both with other MnSCU institutions and other two-year institutions nationally, as shown by LSC’s CCSSE results in Table 6-3:

Table 6-3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CCSSE Benchmark</th>
<th>LSC</th>
<th>MNSCU</th>
<th>Diff.</th>
<th>2013 COHORT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CCSSE Benchmark Score</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Diff.</td>
<td>Score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for Learners</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for Learners Items Score</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9b. Providing the support you need to help you succeed at this college</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>3.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9c. Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9x. Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>1.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9e. Providing the support you need to thrive socially</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>2.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9f. Providing the financial support you need to afford your education</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>2.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.1a Academic advising/planning (frequency of use)</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.1b. Career counseling (frequency of use)</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Likewise, LSC’s performance results for student satisfaction with student support services compare quite favorably with those for two-year college students nationally, as shown by LSC’s SSI results in Table 6-4:

Table 6-4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SSI Scale</th>
<th>LSC Satisfaction</th>
<th>NATIONAL Satisfaction</th>
<th>Diff.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Centeredness</td>
<td>6.01</td>
<td>5.41</td>
<td>0.60*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Support Services</td>
<td>5.64</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>0.64*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety and Security</td>
<td>5.35</td>
<td>5.06</td>
<td>0.29*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admissions and Financial Aid</td>
<td>5.66</td>
<td>5.19</td>
<td>0.47*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Services</td>
<td>6.03</td>
<td>5.51</td>
<td>0.52*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration Effectiveness</td>
<td>5.95</td>
<td>5.46</td>
<td>0.49*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Excellence</td>
<td>5.90</td>
<td>5.31</td>
<td>0.59*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Difference is statistically significant
6I1. Improvements in Supporting Institutional Operations

One recent improvement in this category is the designation of an administrator as the campus safety officer, with responsibility for safety training, OSHA compliance, emergency planning, and all other matters related to physical safety and security. This change will, for the first time, place ownership and responsibility for these matters in one person.

Another improvement that supports instructional and non-instructional programs and services alike is the total rebuild of the College’s web site. The new web site’s improved functionality makes information and services more readily available to the general public, students, and the College’s employees. For instance, the search feature is dramatically improved. This improvement is more fully described in 5I1.

6I2. Selecting Processes to Improve

LSC currently has no formal process in place for selecting specific processes to improve performance results in Supporting Institutional Operations.

The College’s new Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) planning process, already underway, defines strategic enrollment management broadly to include planning to achieve student success and retention. Therefore, when it is complete, LSC’s SEM Plan will undoubtedly target specific student and institutional support processes for review and improvement. The plan will include goals, key performance indicators, and metrics for determining progress toward meeting the goals.
CATEGORY 7 – MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

INTRODUCTION

Over the past three years, LSC has worked hard to develop and manage its processes for measuring effectiveness. LSC’s senior leadership has expressly supported and modeled the use of data and information in support of both strategic and operational decisions.

This required an increase in the College’s capacity for research and data analysis. A new position, Director of Accreditation, Research, and Assessment, reporting directly to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs was created in 2011 and a new Research Analyst with a stronger set of database research and analysis skills was hired.

The new Director position has substantially increased the interaction between the Institutional Research office and the administrators who rely on it for data and analysis. A new commitment to better serve faculty data needs has reinforced the concept of data based decision making and increased the faculty’s faith in the data they receive in connection with their program reviews, for sharing with their advisory boards, etc.

A current AQIP Action Project addressing data integrity has, for the first time, focused attention on data entry processes and the limitations of the College’s data. In addition to the work it has already done, the Project is developing a data dictionary to help data users better understand and interpret the College’s data and a set of data integrity queries that will be run regularly to identify and clean-up dirty data.

The College is also producing more recurring reports. This process has been implemented for course scheduling data, program review data, weekly enrollment data, and other recurring needs. All recurring reports are being intentionally set up and formatted to be sure they provide the right data, in a useful format, at the time it is needed. At the same time, several time-intensive regular research projects that produced little meaningful data have been discontinued.

All of these processes are becoming stable, are consciously managed, and are regularly evaluated for improvement. Coordination among units and divisions is becoming routine and the College’s data management processes are generally aligned with key goals and strategies. Therefore, LSC judges the maturity of its processes in this category to be close to being aligned.
7P1. Managing Data to Support Programs and Services

The following table summarizes the College’s sources of data and how that data is distributed:

**Table 7-1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Distribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Research</td>
<td>Program Review Data Elements</td>
<td>Academic Deans and Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Labor Market Data</td>
<td>Academic Deans and Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weekly Enrollment Reports</td>
<td>Administrators, Deans, Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Historic Course Enrollment Data</td>
<td>Academic Deans and Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty Staffing Data</td>
<td>Administrators, Deans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LSC College Profile</td>
<td>Public Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>External Requests</td>
<td>Requesting Parties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DFWI Reports</td>
<td>Academic Deans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Survey Analysis</td>
<td>Requesting Parties, Administrators, Deans, Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admissions</td>
<td>College Enrollment Report</td>
<td>Enrollment Management Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>Satisfactory Academic Progress</td>
<td>Academic Administrators, Student Services, Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transcripts and Graduation</td>
<td>Administrators, Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Office</td>
<td>Purchasing and Payroll</td>
<td>LSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tuition Billing and Collections</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accounting/Web Accounting</td>
<td>Administrators, Cost Center Managers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid Office</td>
<td>Financial Aid Awards</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Withdrawals</td>
<td>U.S. Department of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSC Store</td>
<td>Textbook Adoptions</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Information Services</td>
<td>Server Traffic</td>
<td>LSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web &amp; E-Services</td>
<td>Web Analytics</td>
<td>LSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MnSCU</td>
<td>Performance Metrics Data</td>
<td>LSC, MnSCU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ISRS Reports</td>
<td>Individual Departments/Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cost Study</td>
<td>MnSCU Allocation Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduate Placement Study</td>
<td>LSC, MnSCU, Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Management Reports</td>
<td>Institutional Research/Administrators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Replicated Database</td>
<td>Institutional Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Institutional Profile</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IPEDS Reporting</td>
<td>IPEDS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### DATA SOURCES AND DISTRIBUTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Distribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal Surveys</td>
<td>CCSSE</td>
<td>Administrators, Deans, Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SSI</td>
<td>Administrators, Deans, Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PACE Survey</td>
<td>All Employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ad Hoc</td>
<td>Requesting Parties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Program Surveys</td>
<td>Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAA Committee</td>
<td>College-Wide Assessment Project Results</td>
<td>Academic Deans and Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departments/ Programs</td>
<td>Program Reviews</td>
<td>Academic Deans and CAO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 7P2. Managing Data to Support Planning and Improvement

The following table summarizes many of the ways in which the College routinely uses data and performance information to manage operations, inform decision making, and improve performance:

**Table 7-2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Targeted Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial Data and Updates</td>
<td>Budgeting and Ongoing Financial Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Review Data Elements</td>
<td>Preparation of Program Reviews and Analysis of Program Efficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor Market Data</td>
<td>Support New Program Proposals / Inform Program Reviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Enrollment Reports</td>
<td>Guide Enrollment Management and Retention Initiatives / Inform Financial Planning and Budget Projections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic Course Enrollment Data</td>
<td>Improve Course Schedules and Course Cancellation Decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Staffing Data</td>
<td>Inform Faculty Hiring and Layoff Decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSC College Profile</td>
<td>Governmental and Public Relations / Internal Use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Requests</td>
<td>Military Recruiting / Unknown Uses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Metrics Data</td>
<td>Tracking Achievement of LSC and System Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISRS Reports</td>
<td>Planning &amp; Tracking Department /Unit Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost Study</td>
<td>MnSCU Allocation Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management Reports</td>
<td>Inform Decision Making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replicated Database</td>
<td>Inform Decision Making / Required Reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Profile</td>
<td>Public Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCSSE &amp; SSI Surveys</td>
<td>Academic and Student Services Improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PACE Survey</td>
<td>Improvement of Campus Culture and Climate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad Hoc Data Reports</td>
<td>Support Data Based Decision Making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Surveys</td>
<td>Program Accreditation and/or Improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Enrollment Report</td>
<td>Improve Recruitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College-Wide Assessment Project Results</td>
<td>Academic Improvement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While data are increasingly integrated into the College’s decision making and many processes for managing and using data are clearly defined, LSC also has work to do in this area. For example, survey data (e.g. CCSSE and SSI) are not always analyzed as thoroughly as they might be or communicated to administrators, faculty, staff, and students as promptly or well as they might be. In addition, at this time there are no clearly defined processes that target the use of survey data to plan for improvement.

Data integrity is another example of an issue still requiring work. The College knows it has recurring data integrity issues due to data entry errors, inconsistent coding, and a lack of consistent definitions. The current Data Integrity Action Project is addressing these issues and has resulted in progress toward fixing them. That progress includes work on a data dictionary and development of data integrity queries. In addition, the College’s IT Department, in collaboration with the Institutional Research office, is developing plans to address data governance on an institution wide basis, with the goal of creating a comprehensive data governance framework.

7P3. Determining Needs for Data

At this time, the College does not have a clearly defined process to determine the data collection, storage, and data accessibility needs of its departments and units. In most cases, departments and units identify their own needs, sometimes proactively and sometimes only reactively. However, as such needs come to the attention of the Institutional Research office, those needs are addressed both immediately and by planning to address them on a long-term basis.

As the Institutional Research office matures, plans are to not only solicit input from departments and units regarding their data and performance information needs, but to more regularly “push” relevant data and information out to them without the necessity of a request.

7P4. Analyzing Performance Data

The following table summarizes sources of data and information analysis that are made available throughout the College:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATA/ANALYSIS SOURCE</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
<th>SHARING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MnSCU</td>
<td>Dashboard</td>
<td>Public – Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LSC Profile</td>
<td>Public – Internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduate Placement Survey</td>
<td>Faculty, Academic and Student Affairs Personnel; Publicly Posted on College Web Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Financial Officer</td>
<td>Budget Updates</td>
<td>Administrative Council, Shared Governance Meetings, All Employees</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The College’s weekly enrollment reports offer a useful example of how information is shared throughout LSC. Once registration is underway for the next academic term, weekly enrollment reports are generated and sent to all interested administrators. The reports compare current enrollment with enrollment on the same day the prior year on the following measures: New Degree-Seeking Students, Total Headcount, Full Time Equivalent Students, and Online Enrollment as a Percentage of Total FTE.

As the beginning of the term approaches, the weekly reports are also shared with the academic deans, along with additional reports containing a breakdown of enrollment by division and program or department. They can see not only whether enrollment in their division is up or down, but also which programs or departments are up or down. The academic deans forward the data to their faculty with comments as appropriate. This gives instructors whose program enrollment is down over the prior year an opportunity to contact their students who haven’t yet registered and to increase their recruiting efforts.

Weekly reports are also prepared using MnSCU data to compare LSC’s enrollments with those of its identified peer institutions (see 7P5) within MnSCU and the other MnSCU institutions located in Northeast Minnesota. These reports are useful to determine whether trends in the College’s enrollment are likely the result of institutional factors or broader factors that are affecting other institutions in like manner.

Because employees understand the impact that increased or decreased enrollments have on the College’s budget, selected weekly enrollment reports are also sent by email to all employees along with contextual information to ensure they know the status of the College’s enrollments.

### Data/Analysis Source

| Office of Accreditation, Research, and Assessment | Annual College Profile | Key Administrators and Managers; Publicly Posted on College Web Site |
| College-Wide Assessment Results | Academic Administrators, Faculty; Posted in Assessment eFolio |
| Weekly Enrollment Reports | Enrollment Management Committee, Key Administrators and Managers, Faculty, Employees |
| Gateway Course Inventory – DFWI and other Data for 25 Largest Courses | Academic Administrators and Developmental Education Committee |
| Nationally-Normed Surveys | Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) | Faculty, Academic Administrators |
| | Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) | Faculty and Academic Administrators |
| | Personal Assessment of the College Environment (PACE) | All Employees; Posted in Employee Portal. |

### 7P5. Determining Needs for Comparative Data

LSC’s priority for comparative data and information is to compare itself to the 24 other two-year colleges that are part of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System (MnSCU). Sharing common data systems provides a broad range of comparable data. Moreover, all MnSCU institutions operate under the same set of Board of Trustees policies, the same Chancellor, and the same allocation framework for state appropriations, all within the same business, legislative, and political environments. Finally, each of the
MnSCU colleges has its own performance goals for MnSCU’s Strategic Framework Performance Metrics, and comparative data is available for all.

MNSCU PEER INSTITUTIONS

Based on size and program mix, LSC considers the following eight other two-year MnSCU colleges to be peer institutions: Central Lakes College, Northland Community & Technical College, Ridgewater College, Riverland College, Rochester Community & Technical College, South Central College, St. Cloud Technical & Community College, and Century College. Recently, LSC has begun comparing its results on various metrics against those achieved by these peer institutions.

OUT-OF-STATE PEER INSTITUTIONS

LSC has also identified the following seven out-of-state peer institutions: Eastern Arizona College, Illinois Valley Community College, Laramie County Community College, North Iowa Community College, Black Hawk College, San Juan College, and Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College. The College compares itself to these institutions on such metrics as graduation, transfer, and default rates.

Through the Higher Education Partnership Satisfaction Survey (HEPSS), described in more detail in 9R3, The College compares its partnership satisfaction results with those of the following eleven other AQIP institutions: Central Arizona College, Central Community College, Colorado Mountain College, Cuyahoga Community College, Eastern Arizona College, Fort Hays State University, Illinois Valley Community College, Missouri Western State University, Red Rocks Community College, San Juan College, and Western New Mexico University.

7P6. Aligning Data Analysis With Institutional Goals

The College has developed a culture that values data and encourages the use of data in making decisions. The College’s senior administrators have developed an informal policy that the College’s Institutional Research Office (IR) will be the source of all data for planning and decisions regarding institutional goals. Individual units may rely on their own data for operational decisions within their units, but must rely on IR data when other units of the College are involved.

The Director of IR reports directly to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs and is part of the Academic and Student Affairs team. Regular interactions ensure that the College’s research agenda aligns with its key goals and strategies.

As the primary data source, the Institutional Research Office encourages alignment of data analysis with the College’s goals. For example, IR supplies departments and programs undergoing program reviews with a standard set of data elements (e.g. cost per/FYE, course fill rates, etc.) that align with the College’s goals. MnSCU also encourages alignment through the Performance Metrics that are designed to achieve the System’s priorities.

7P7. Safeguarding Information Systems

All of LSC’s administrative information systems, such as registration, admissions, fiscal, and human resources, are part of the Integrated Statewide Record System (ISRS). ISRS is maintained by MnSCU.

There are numerous business rules and frequent data integrity queries to help maintain the integrity of ISRS data. MnSCU maintains firewalls and conducts code scans to protect ISRS from unauthorized access. ISRS has a security module that allows managers to grant access to the ISRS module in their area. Security can be granted for any amount of time but the manager must annually recertify users for access.
For system-wide and institutional research purposes, ISRS data is available in a password protected replicated database. Research in the database can be done using Microsoft Access or through pre-defined and customizable queries in Oracle EPM 11 (formerly Hyperion).

The College’s online learning management system is Desire to Learn (D2L). D2L is also maintained by MnSCU. LSC has a local D2L administrator.

LSC maintains a computer environment for email, web site, student and employee portals, and a variety of applications used to enhance academic or administrative processes. The College plans to outsource student email in this fiscal year and is updating its plans for maintaining and upgrading its infrastructure. The College has also started regular vulnerability management scans to identify threats to its computer environment.

To improve and maintain its public web site, the College has developed a Web Operations Management Manual. The purpose of the manual, which is still in draft form, is to formalize the web management process to align better with LSC’s Strategic Plan, Master Academic Plan, MnSCU directives, accreditation requirements, and other external requirements.

LSC offers password protected wireless access for employees and students. A number of classrooms and study spaces offer computers for student use. The College is developing a regular rotation schedule for replacing the computers. Software to identify and remove harmful files on networked computers is run daily.

Local data back-up is done to SAN devices and replicated in different parts of the campus. Back-up and data storage policies and processes are currently being reviewed and will be updated in the near future.

RESULTS

7R1. Measuring Performance for Information and Knowledge Management

The current MnSCU Accountability Dashboard monitors the performance of MnSCU and its member institutions on selected key measures. The Dashboard is web based and available to the general public. The key measures tracked by the Dashboard are:

- Percent Change in Enrollment
- Net Tuition and Fees as % of Median Income
- Percent Credits Accepted in Transfer
- Persistence and Completion Rate
- Licensure Exams Pass Rate
- Student Opinion of Learning
- Student Engagement
- Related Employment of Graduates
- Composite Financial Index
- Facilities Condition index

The Accountability Dashboard will soon be retired and replaced by a public web-based performance metric reporting tool currently under development. The tool will track progress of the System and its individual institutions on the 24 recently developed Strategic Framework Performance Metrics. See 2P2 and 8R3 for a list and more information regarding the new Performance Metrics. LSC’s trend data for the past 3-6 years (depending on the metric) is already available and in use along with comparative data for other MnSCU colleges.
7R2. Results for Measuring Effectiveness

Three measures that provide holistic evidence of LSC’s effectiveness in this Category are summarized below.

Table 7-4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEASURE</th>
<th>RESULT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Composite Financial Index</td>
<td>Increased from 1.99 in FY 2010 to 2.67 in FY 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Expenditures per FYE</td>
<td>Declined from $8,621 in FY 2008 to $6,957 per in FY 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space Utilization</td>
<td>Declined from 78% to 74.1% between FY12 and FY13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Composite Financial Index is a measure of an institution’s overall financial health based on several key financial measures (primary reserve ratio, net operating revenues ratio, return on net assets ratio, and viability ratio). Despite a substantial decline in state appropriations and other financial stresses between FY 2010 and FY 2012, LSC improved its relative financial stability, as indicated by its improved Composite Financial Index.

LSC’s Instructional Expenditures per FYE have been steadily declining. The decline has been achieved while maintaining class sizes virtually unchanged. Instead, the improved efficiency has largely been produced by improved course scheduling processes that have improved course fill rates.

The College’s space utilization rate (a measure of how efficiently classroom space is used) has historically been substantially above the MnSCU mean. A recent decline from the long-term average of about 78% was the result of good news. The decline to 74% coincided with the opening of LSC’s new Health Sciences building, a $12 million addition that added 13 new classrooms and instructional labs while leaving existing classroom space in service.

7R3. Comparing Results for Measuring Effectiveness

LSC’s results compared to all colleges in MnSCU for the three measures described in 7R2 are shown below:

Table 7-5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>RESULT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Composite Financial Index (FY12)</td>
<td>LSC 2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Expenditures per FYE (FY12)</td>
<td>$6,957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space Utilization (FY13)</td>
<td>74.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7I1. Recent Improvements in Measuring Effectiveness

LSC added a full-time data analyst in June, 2008. Prior to that time data needs were met through a combination of existing staff whose primary duties lay elsewhere and contracted research and data analysis services. The College’s capacity to collect and analyze data for the purpose of planning and improvement was quite limited.
The data analyst position greatly increased LSC’s research capacity. However, until recently the data analyst worked in isolation, interacted very little with the rest of the campus, and worked mostly on recurring major projects such as the College Profile. Research and data analysis services were not readily available to support decision making, and most units on campus pulled their own data out of the Integrated Statewide Record System (ISRS) or relied on canned reports from that system. Data that was sometimes inaccurate or was of unknown origin and without context was bandied about and occasionally found its way into publication.

In March, 2011, the College established an office of Accreditation, Research, and Assessment. The Director supervises the data analyst and acts as an advocate for data-based decision making. The new structure has allowed the College to centralize and standardize research and reports while being more responsive to ad hoc research needs. Individual units still pull data for their own intra-office use, but data to be published or used in College-wide decisions now comes exclusively from the Institutional Research office.

The Institutional Research office has established a research calendar to ensure recurring needs for data relied on for planning (e.g. course construction), evaluation (e.g. program reviews) and decision making (e.g. hiring decisions) are anticipated and the needed data is available in a timely manner.

Finally, the College’s current Data Integrity Action Project has focused attention on data integrity issues and brought together interested persons who share an interest in data integrity but never would have compared notes but for the project. By its completion, the project will produce a data dictionary and a robust set of data integrity queries to be run on a regular schedule.

These improvements have increased LSC’s research capacity, improved data quality, and helped to foster a culture of evidence on campus. With timely and reliable information available, decision makers are making greater use of data to inform their decisions.

7I2. Selecting Processes to Improve Results for Measuring Effectiveness

Despite a culture that increasingly values data based decision making and measuring effectiveness, until recently LSC has had no infrastructure for selecting specific processes to improve and to set targets for improved performance results in this category. However, the College has two current initiatives that should provide the infrastructure that has been lacking.

First, by design the College’s newly-established Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Planning Task Force will be spending its first year focused on identifying the data and measures needed to set enrollment and student success goals, evaluate strategies to meet those goals, and otherwise use data to inform key decisions that ultimately affect student and institutional success. Only after the foundational data-related work has been completed will the Task Force develop the College’s first SEM Plan.

Second, the College’s current Data Integrity Action Project has provided a venue for selecting data related processes that are important opportunities for improvement and setting targets for improvements. To institutionalize the work it has started, the Action Project team anticipates it will recommend creation of a standing Data Integrity committee after completion of the project.
CATEGORY 8 – PLANNING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

INTRODUCTION

LSC has a long history of creating detailed plans. Until recently, those plans were typically developed at the unit level and then aggregated into an institutional work plan. The College’s institutional work plans tended to focus on the short (1 year) or medium (1-3 years) term, and because they arose from the unit level, they weren’t always as coordinated as they could have been.

The College currently has multiple planning processes. Most of them are well-established and most serve the College reasonably well. Those that don’t work well get improved. Planning is undertaken with reference to LSC’s key goals and strategies. Institutional silos are less of a problem than in the past; however, there is not a single source of planning coordination, and planning processes are not regularly evaluated for effectiveness or potential improvements because no person or entity has been designated as responsible for doing so.

LSC’s institutional planning process has its four-year Strategic Plan and Academic Master Plan at the apex. Subsequent to the development of those plans, MnSCU has adopted a new Strategic Framework with more than a score of new Performance Metrics and goals for which MnSCU will hold LSC accountable. In addition, MnSCU has undertaken a long-range planning process, called “Charting the Future” that has the potential to impose disruptive change on LSC. Coordinating LSC’s local planning with the results of MnSCU’s planning has always presented a challenge; these developments have magnified that challenge.

In response, LSC has recently focused renewed effort on developing a more integrated institutional planning process, taking into account MnSCU’s planning, HLC’s accreditation standards and processes, and state and federal requirements. This work should help the College’s planning processes become more aligned. In the meantime, the College judges its planning processes to be systematic in most respects.
8P1. Key Processes

The following table summarizes LSC’s key planning processes:

Table 8-1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LSC KEY PLANNING PROCESSES</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Product - Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MnSCU Strategic Planning</td>
<td>Strategic Framework - Strategic Goals Proposed by the Chancellor and Approved by the MnSCU Board of Trustees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strategic Planning</td>
<td>LSC Strategic Plan – Task Force Generated 4-year Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Academic Planning</td>
<td>LSC Master Academic Plan – Task Force Generated 3-year Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enrollment Planning</td>
<td>Annual Division Work Plans – Developed by Deans and Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facilities Planning</td>
<td>Strategic Enrollment Management Plan – Committee Developed Long Range Plan for Enrollment and Student Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Academic Program / Department Planning</td>
<td>LSC Master Facilities Plan - Long Range Facilities Plan Developed with Consulting Architects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AQIP Action Projects</td>
<td>Quality Improvement Projects – Chartered by AQIP Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Campus Culture and Climate</td>
<td>Recommendations to Improve the Campus Climate – Originated by the Campus Culture Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Technology and Equipment Purchasing</td>
<td>Purchase Recommendations - Equipment Committees Review and Prioritize Proposed Purchases of Technology and Equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Budgeting</td>
<td>Annual Operating Budget – Developed and Approved by the President’s Cabinet and the Administrative Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Course Scheduling</td>
<td>Course Schedules – Developed by Academic Deans and Division Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learning Assessment</td>
<td>SAA Strategic Plan – Developed and Maintained by Student Academic Achievement (SAA) Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Developmental Education</td>
<td>College-Wide Assessment Projects - Planned and Carried Out by SAA Committee and Director of Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Online Education</td>
<td>Recommendations for Improving Online Education – Developed by the Online Program Advisory Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty Development</td>
<td>Faculty Development Activities – Planned and Carried Out through the Center for Teaching and Learning and its Coordinator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8P2. Selecting Short and Long-Term Strategies

Long term strategies are developed and selected through these planning processes: the MnSCU Strategic Framework, the LSC Strategic Plan, the LSC Master Academic Plan, and the LSC Strategic Enrollment Management Plan. Each of these key planning processes focuses three or more years ahead.
Within the Master Academic Plan, goals and objectives are prioritized according to the length of time and resources needed to achieve them. Most other planning processes are of shorter duration; however, the selection of short-term strategies within those planning processes is informed by the longer range plans and short term strategies are expected to generally align with and support the College’s long term plans.

8P3. Developing Key Action Plans

Action plans are generally developed at the individual and unit levels. They typically cover a one year period and are generally expected to be aligned with and support both short and long-range plans and strategies.

For example, the Center for Teaching and Learning, Online Program Advisory Committee, Developmental Education Committee, and the e-Campus all develop annual work plans. Likewise, the Director of the Office of Accreditation, Research, and Assessment develops an annual work plan to guide that office’s work.

The Academic Deans lead the development of action plans within their divisions. For instance, the Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS) requires each department within the division to submit an annual work plan that is aligned with the Liberal Arts and Sciences goals in the Master Academic Plan. Those work plans are included in the LAS Division Work Plan. The Dean of Business and Industry develops a Division Work Plan based on three year plans developed by programs and submitted with their program reviews (which are on a three year cycle).

8P4. Coordinating and Aligning Planning Processes Across the Institution

Coordinating and aligning the College’s planning processes, organizational strategies, and action plans is a well-recognized challenge and opportunity for improvement at LSC. The challenge is magnified by the need to reconcile the College’s planning processes with those of the MnSCU Chancellor and Board of Trustees as well as external mandates that require institutional responses.

To address this challenge, the College’s President recently tasked the College’s Vice President of Academic and Student Services with developing a plan to integrate all of LSC’s goals, strategies, ongoing initiatives, and special projects with those of MnSCU, with due consideration of HLC’s accreditation related requirements and compliance with U.S. Department of Education requirements. The plan will create a continuous planning process and structure to institutionalize such planning in the future.

8P5. Defining Objectives, Selecting Measures, and Setting Performance Targets

MnSCU

In 2012, MnSCU replaced its 2010-2014 Strategic Plan with a new Strategic Framework consisting of three major strategic goals:

- Ensure access to an extraordinary education for all Minnesotans
- Be the partner of choice to meet Minnesota’s workforce and community needs
- Deliver to students, employers, communities and taxpayers the highest value / most affordable option

In 2013, MnSCU adopted a set of 24 Performance Metrics aligned with the Strategic Framework. The Performance Metrics are intended to drive performance to achieve the Strategic Framework goals. Toward that end, MnSCU has set ambitious improvement goals for each of the Performance Metrics. In addition, the Performance Metrics are now a component of each college president’s annual performance evaluation.

Twenty-one of the Performance Metrics have associated five year goals for Lake Superior College. The remaining three metrics have System only goals.
LSC

At the institutional level, objectives, measures, and performance targets are set in the College’s Strategic Plan. The FY12-FY15 Strategic Plan set the following goals:

- **Goal A**: LSC will achieve financial sustainability.
- **Goal B**: LSC will assure that programs, courses and learning opportunities align with changing community, employer and learner needs.
- **Goal C**: LSC will assure comprehensive accessibility to increase student enrollment, retention and success.
- **Goal D**: LSC will create and sustain mutually beneficial partnerships that increase opportunities for learners and improve regional economic development.
- **Goal E**: LSC will create an environment that demonstrates inclusion, trust, respect, excellent communication, innovation and accountability.

Each goal has associated objectives. Goal A’s objectives also identify measures and set performance targets. The objectives for Goals B through E describe intended achievements without identified performance targets.

LSC’s FY2012-2015 Master Academic Plan established goals for each of the Academic Divisions: Allied Health, Business and Industry, Liberal Arts and Sciences, Student Services, and Workforce Development.

![LSC Integrated Planning Diagram](image)

**Figure 8-1**

The Master Academic Plan was developed as part of a vision, illustrated in Figure 8-1, to integrate all of LSC’s planning. The College’s vision and mission to serve learners are to inform the Strategic Plan, which in turn informs the Master Academic Plan. The Master Academic Plan is supported by aligned plans for Facilities, HR, Enrollment, IT, Marketing, Student Services, CE/CT, Administrative Services, and Budgeting. This vision of a fully integrated planning process has only been partially realized to date.

**8P6. Taking Into Account Current Resources and Future Needs**

LSC has balanced its budget over the past three years, without layoffs or program closures, and has a healthy reserve fund. During that time the College has been intentionally managing to increase its fund balance and reserves. By strengthening its financial position, the College will be in a better position to weather the financial stresses caused by anticipated variability in state appropriations and potentially declining enrollments.
The Composite Financial Index (CFI) is an overall measure of an institution’s financial health based on four core ratios: primary reserve ratio, net operating revenues ratio, return on net assets ratio, and viability ratio. LSC’s recent CFI score of 2.67 (FY2012) is well within the 1.1 to 10.0 range that is considered appropriate for public institutions. For context, the mean CFI for all MnSCU colleges is 2.72 (FY2012).

Due to the large number of MnSCU Performance Metrics, LSC is developing a process to prioritize and allocate resources toward those performance goals that align most closely with its Strategic Plan and offer the greatest opportunity for meaningful improvement while making efficient use of the College’s resources. The process includes consideration of the resources necessary to carry out the College’s Strategic Plan and Master Academic Plan.

Because the College does not have the resources to accomplish all that it would like, the budgeting process is a high priority. Budgeting begins with the President’s Cabinet. The parameters and constraints affecting the next fiscal year’s budget are established. For instance, estimated increases in health insurance premiums and other fringe benefits, contractually required pay increases, pending collective bargaining settlements, debt service, and other operating expenses must be considered. The amount of state appropriations the College can expect after application of the MnSCU Allocation Framework must be estimated along with projected enrollment. Whether tuition and fee increases should be requested and are likely to be approved by the MnSCU Board of Trustees must also be taken into consideration.

The various contingencies generally lead the College’s Vice President of Administration to develop several possible scenarios, each with its own impact on the budget. The possible scenarios are presented to the Administrative Council. Administrators are asked to prepare their budget requests in accordance with the most pessimistic scenario. If that guidance projects a decrease in the budget over the prior year, administrators are given guidelines for exceptions to across the board percentage cuts.

Administrators then work with their units, departments, and programs to prepare budget requests for each cost center within their responsibility. Budget proposals go back to the Vice Presidents for consideration, approval, and incorporation into the final budget that is approved by the President’s Cabinet. In recent years, the process has been especially dynamic as many of the uncertainties noted above have often not been resolved until very late in the process.

Once the fiscal year starts, the College’s Chief Financial Officer provides regular budget updates to the President’s Cabinet and the Administrative Council. Budget updates are also regularly shared with the faculty at shared governance meetings and with all other employees at staff meetings. Budget revisions are made, as necessary, during the course of the fiscal year.

8P7. Assessing and Addressing Risk in Planning Processes

Outside of the budgeting process, which recognizes the risk posed by uncertain enrollment, uncertain state appropriations, and other contingencies, Lake Superior College does not currently have an intentional process in place to assess risk in its planning processes.

8P8. Developing Faculty, Staff, and Administrator Capabilities

Over the course of each academic year, there are five administratively controlled “duty days” during which training and professional development activities take place. These days are used for such activities as required “Right to Know” training, diversity training, environmental sustainability, and emergency (e.g. “active shooter”) training,

Each academic year there are also six faculty controlled “duty days.” Faculty controlled duty days typically feature work on initiatives that require work outside of instructors’ normal duties and/or activities targeting faculty professional development. Professional development activities are planned by the faculty
through the Center for Faculty Innovation. For example, recent faculty controlled duty days have included an ongoing series of discussions on the topic of “Professional Demeanor: Classroom Management and the Teaching of Professionalism.”

The Center for Faculty Innovation sponsors a four day Excellence in Teaching Festival each October. The Festival features 15-20 one hour sessions. The Fall, 2013 Festival included sessions on Connecting Reading to Coursework, D2L Content Accessibility, Classroom Management Scenarios and Strategies, College in the Schools Best Practices, Finding and Securing Grants, Early Alerts, and Involving Students in Rubric-Making.

Other faculty development activities occur throughout the academic year. Typical of such activities are one campus book reads, teaching circles, and a world traveler’s lecture series.

Efforts are made to send faculty and staff to appropriate conferences and training. For instance, in 2013 the College sent two faculty members to the Annual Meeting of the Higher Learning Commission. The CTL Coordinator recently attended a national conference on faculty development. LSC instructors, staff, and leaders involved in online education regularly attend annual professional conferences such as D2L’s Fusion Conference and the Instructional Technology Council’s eLearning Conference.

Faculty and staff development is also supported by the MnSCU System Office through online training, webinars, and in-person training or workshops. For example, a MnSCU trainer was on campus for two days in early 2012 to provide six LSC employees with training in the use of EPM 11 (Hyperion) to access the System’s replicated database.

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**RESULTS**

**8R1. Measures for Planning Processes**

LSC currently has no direct measures that it regularly collects and analyzes to determine the effectiveness of its planning processes. Indirectly, the College’s progress in achieving the goals and objectives reflected in its Strategic Plan, Master Academic Plan, and other planning processes indicate the effectiveness of those processes. Going forward, for the next five years the effectiveness of the College’s planning processes will be reflected in its progress toward meeting the goals for the MnSCU Strategic Framework Performance Metrics. There are tentative plans to develop a public “scorecard” to track progress on all of the College’s goals and objectives.

**8R2. Performance Results for Accomplishing Strategies**

The College’s current strategies and action plans are contained in or designed to accomplish the goals and objectives set in the College’s Strategic Plan and Master Academic Plan. Both cover the period FY2012 through FY2015.

No formal evaluation of overall progress on the Strategic Plan and Master Academic Plan has been conducted; however, in the first two years of these plans, demonstrable progress has been made on many goals and objectives. Progress meeting the goals in LSC’s Strategic Plan is summarized in Table 8-2:
### Table 8-2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attract External Funding and Grants</td>
<td>New Grant Coordinator Position Created and Filled; One New Major Grant Application Submitted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make Program Decisions about New Development, Expansion, Revision, and Closure Using Reliable Data and Processes</td>
<td>New “Utilization” and “Faculty Utilization” Reports Created to Support Data-Based Program Decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invest in Professional Development of Instructors in all Delivery Modalities</td>
<td>Faculty Training in Online Pedagogy Developed and Implemented During Summer, 2013 as Part of AQIP Action Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve Transportation, Parking and Physical Campus Access</td>
<td>Negotiated Expanded Bus Service with Duluth Transit Authority, Rebuilt Main Parking Lot to Improve Traffic Flow and Increase Parking Capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve Pedestrian Access to LSC’s Campus</td>
<td>Pedestrian Walkway from Main Parking Lot to Main Campus Entrance Created</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streamline and Improve Communication of Policies and Procedures so Students can Access and Follow Them</td>
<td>New Student Handbook in Form of a Planner Developed and Distributed to Students; Consumer and Information Disclosures Posted on LSC Web Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthen Relationships with Employers to Match Workforce Needs with Educational Opportunities, Including Internships, and Career Prospects for Students</td>
<td>Developed New Aircraft Mechanic Programs and Received Minnesota Job Skills Partnership Grant to Meet Needs of Expanding Local Aviation Industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve Data Integrity and Data Based Decision-Making</td>
<td>Institutional Research Office Designated Official Source of Data; Data Integrity AQIP Action Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and Streamline a minimum of three processes per year and track savings, efficiencies, and quality</td>
<td>Campus Event Planning and Policy Review and Update Processes were Reviewed as Part of AQIP Action Project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Progress meeting the goals in LSC’s Master Academic Plan is summarized in Table 8-3:

**Table 8-3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MASTER ACADEMIC PLAN</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expand and Improve Academic and Career Planning Services</td>
<td>Director of Career Planning Position Upgraded to Full-Time; Services Are Being Updated and Expanded (e.g. Online Simulated Job Interview Program)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with Local Universities to Capture Students who Weren’t Accepted</td>
<td>ARCHES program with University of Minnesota-Duluth (UMD) implemented Fall, 2013 With Cohort of 16 Students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and Allocate Resources to Lease or Expand Facilities for Technical Programs to Increase Enrollment</td>
<td>Integrated Manufacturing, Computer Aided Drafting, and Welding Programs to be Relocated to New Leased Downtown Site in 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a More Extensive Faculty Orientation to Campus Wide Resources by Fall, 2014</td>
<td>Expanded Faculty Orientation Developed by CTL Coordinator was Implemented Fall, 2013. Eight New Instructors are Paired with Faculty Mentors Receiving Mentoring Stipends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve Faculty Mentoring and Development to Foster Quality Teaching Practices and Professional Comfort and Competence, Both On Ground and Online</td>
<td>Faculty Training in Online Pedagogy with Mentoring Component Developed and Implemented During Summer, 2013 as Part of AQIP Action Project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**8R3. Targets for Performance of Strategies and Action Plans**

**LSC STRATEGIC PLAN**

The College’s current Strategic Plan established objectives to be accomplished during the FY2012 – FY2015 time period. Those objectives for which measurable targets were set are shown below:

**Table 8-4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LSC STRATEGIC PLAN – MEASURABLE GOALS</th>
<th>Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Enrollment and Retention</td>
<td>10% increase over four years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Customized Training</td>
<td>50% increase in revenue over four years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Course Costs</td>
<td>Below the MnSCU mean as measured by the MnSCU cost study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Streamline Processes</td>
<td>Minimum of three processes per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Energy Consumption</td>
<td>8% decrease on a per sq. ft. basis over four years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MNSCU STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK PERFORMANCE METRICS**

The MnSCU Performance Metric goals for LSC were set at the System level. The goals are five year goals that were finalized in mid-2013. A summary of the Performance Metrics and LSC’s Target for each is shown in Table 8-5:
### MNSCU STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK PERFORMANCE METRICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Licensure Exam Pass Rate</td>
<td>Increase licensure exam pass rates for selected programs 7.65% over five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Affordability</td>
<td>Minimize increases in tuition and fees over five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Student Persistence and Completion</td>
<td>Improve persistence and completion rates 10% over five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Completion Rate</td>
<td>Improve % completing in 3 years by 10.8% over five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Employees of Color</td>
<td>Increase employees of color as a percent of all employees 35% over five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Students of Color</td>
<td>Increase students of color as a percent of total credit students by 3% over five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Student Success – Students of Color</td>
<td>Improve the ratio of persistence and completion rates for students of color to those of white students by 15% over 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Completion Rate – Students of Color</td>
<td>Maintain current ratio of completion rate for students of color to that of white students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Campus Diversity Climate</td>
<td>Improve student reported contact with and understanding of diverse populations as measured on the CCSSE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Certificates and Degrees Awarded</td>
<td>Increase the number of certificates, diplomas, and degrees awarded by 8.45% over five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Related Employment of Graduates</td>
<td>Improve the percentage of students reporting employment related to their program or major one year after graduation by 8.45% over five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. CT/CE Enrollment</td>
<td>Increase the number of students enrolled in customized training courses by 5% over five years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Institutional Support Expenses</td>
<td>Maintain institutional support expenses as a percentage of total expenses within the range of 10-11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Space Utilization</td>
<td>Increase the % of the time that academic rooms are used for credit courses by 20% over five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Instructional Cost Per FYE</td>
<td>Maintain a ratio of 1.0 or less for actual to expected value for instructional expenditures per FYE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Composite Financial Index</td>
<td>Increase CFI by 12% over five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Facilities Condition Index</td>
<td>Maintain the dollar value of deferred maintenance as a proportion of facility replacement value at a ratio between .07 and .13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Private Giving</td>
<td>Increase the number of dollars raised to dollars invested by 30% over five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Grants</td>
<td>Increase annual grant revenues by 15% over five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. CT/CE Revenues</td>
<td>Increase annual customized training revenues by 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Transfer Credits Accepted</td>
<td>Increase the % of total credits accepted in transfer as a % of college-level credits earned at sending institutions by 18% over five years.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8R4. Comparing Results for Planning Continuous Improvement
LSC has not compared its results for the performance of its processes for planning continuous improvement with those of other higher education institutions.

8R5. Evidence that Planning for Continuous Improvement is Effective
The AQIP Steering Committee is an advocate for continuous improvement on campus. The Committee regularly solicits ideas for new Action Projects. Any individual or unit may propose a project. The Steering Committee charters new projects, monitors their progress, and communicates that progress to the entire campus through duty day updates. The Steering Committee regularly receives three or four proposals for each project it approves.

Because the Steering Committee is a relatively recent replacement for the long-time Institutional Effectiveness Committee, during the 2013-14 academic year the Committee is undertaking a review of its role and effectiveness. The review will include discussions with the College’s senior administrators.

8I1. Recent Improvements in Planning Continuous Improvement
The College’s first Master Academic Plan was developed in late 1999 and finalized in March, 2000. It looked five years ahead and reflected the needs of an institution that was then only five years old. If any subsequent Master Academic Plans were prepared between then and preparation of the College’s current Master Academic Plan, they have been lost to institutional memory.

Therefore, the recent development of the College’s FY 2012 – 2015 Master Academic Plan (MAP) during the first half of 2012 was an important improvement. It reaffirmed the central role of Academics (teaching and learning) in fulfilling LSC’s mission. The process used to develop it (described in more detail in Section 1I1) achieved buy-in from the faculty as well as associated units of the College. The Plan generated a sense that everyone was “reading from the same script” and subsequent academic planning and activities, from grant applications to committee work, have drawn from the MAP.

8I2. Selecting Processes to Improve for Planning Continuous Improvement
As noted elsewhere, a singular characteristic of LSC’s culture is the faculty and staff’s strong student orientation. That student focus naturally motivates efforts to continuously improve, especially in areas such as student retention where there is clearly significant room for improvement.

The College’s infrastructure includes numerous structures (e.g. Administrative Council, AQIP Steering Committee, Planning Task Forces) that in the ordinary course of their work select specific processes to improve. However, there is no one group or structure that focuses exclusively or predominately on planning continuous improvement.
CATEGORY 9 – BUILDING COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

INTRODUCTION

LSC’s mission to benefit diverse learners, employers, and the community cannot be achieved without partnerships. Therefore, building and maintaining collaborative relationships with its partners is an important part of what the College does on a daily basis.

Nevertheless, the College has not always coordinated its work among units internally to best support its partnerships. The partnerships have always been valued, but actual practice did not always match the intent.

Recently, the College has improved many of its processes to better support collaborative relationships. For example, through its participation in the Higher Education Partnership Survey, LSC has institutionalized a process of seeking and analyzing feedback from its valued partners.

Moreover, the College’s Academic and Workforce and Community Development units have increasingly coordinated their efforts. This came about for several reasons. First, reporting lines were changed so that the Executive Director of Workforce & Community Development reports to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs and is part of the Academic and Student Affairs team. Second, for a one year period, the Executive Director of Workforce & Community Development also served as interim Dean of Business & Industry. This increased internal coordination and collaboration is reflected in the Master Academic Plan, in joint work on grant applications, in better coordination on facilities usage, sharing of faculty, etc.

For these reasons, LSC judges the maturity of its processes for building collaborative relationships to be generally systematic and well on the way to becoming aligned.
9P1. Building Relationships – Organizations Sending Students to LSC

LSC’s mission to benefit diverse learners and the College’s status as an open enrollment institution lead naturally to a priority on creating and building relationships with the organizations from which LSC receives students. Often, those relationships are inherently collaborative. Accordingly, the creation and maintenance of those relationships is built into the College’s regular planning processes.

A list of the educational institutions and other organizations from which LSC receives students is shown in Table 9-1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Partnership</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>K-12 Schools</strong></td>
<td>College in the Schools (CITS)</td>
<td>Dual Enrollment Courses for Qualifying High School Students – Students Receive College Credit for CITS Courses Taken at their High Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-Secondary Education Option (PSEO)</td>
<td>High School Students Take College Courses for College Credit On-Campus or Online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summer Camps</td>
<td>Middle School and High School Students Participate in Summer Camps on Campus (e.g. Robotic Camp)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High School Recruiting Visits</td>
<td>Admissions Representatives Visit Area High Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carl Perkins Grant</td>
<td>Assist High School Students Transitioning to Career and Technical Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adult Basic Education</td>
<td>Preparation for College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Colleges and Universities</strong></td>
<td>Arches</td>
<td>Partnership with University of Minnesota – Duluth to Assist Students Denied Admission to Meet UMD’s Standards for Admission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student Transfer</td>
<td>Transfer of College Credit Earned at Universities or Other Colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employers</strong></td>
<td>Customized Training</td>
<td>E.g. Hazmat, Lean Practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minnesota Department of Transportation</td>
<td>E.g. Construction Materials Testing, Bridge Inspections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minnesota Job Skills Partnership</td>
<td>E.g. Onsite Welding Training, Aircraft Assembly Pre-employment Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>United States Military</strong></td>
<td>Veterans Education Transfer System (VETS)</td>
<td>Grants Veterans Who Enroll at LSC Transfer Credits for their Military Training and Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Military Bridges Program</td>
<td>Military Trained Physical Therapy Assistants Earn Civilian Credentials</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The United States Military is an example of an organization from which LSC receives students. Ways in which LSC partners with the military for the benefit of students include:

- The College participates in MnSCU’s Veterans Education Transfer System, an innovative online application that helps servicemen and servicewomen determine how their military training may count for credit at LSC. After entering the branch of the military they served in, their military occupation, their training dates, and their rank, they are able to see specific LSC programs that will give them credit for their military training.
- LSC’s Military Bridge Program offers military trained physical therapy personnel qualify for civilian licensure by earning an AAS degree as a Physical Therapist Assistant upon completing 20 credits online.
- LSC also partners with the Minnesota National Guard, offering courses to the 148th Fighter Wing, headquartered in Duluth.
- The College’s relationship with veterans is facilitated by LSC’s Veterans Resource Center, staffed by a Regional Veterans Education Coordinator.
- LSC has been designated a Military Friendly School for several consecutive years.

### 9P2. Building Relationships – Organizations Receiving Students from LSC

As a combined community and technical college, LSC has dual purposes. The College prepares students for employment through occupational programs that give them the knowledge and skills that employers need. The College also prepares students to continue their educations by transferring to baccalaureate institutions.

Creating and building relationships with employers and transfer institutions is, therefore, an important part of what LSC does. Such relationships are a high priority, validated through the College’s regular planning processes.

A summary of LSC’s partnerships with educational institutions and employers that depend on its students to meet their needs is shown in Table 9-2:
Table 9-2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner</th>
<th>Partnership</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employers</td>
<td>Clinical Sites</td>
<td>Students Learn and Apply Medical Skills under Supervision in Medical Clinics and Hospitals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Advisory Committees</td>
<td>Employers and Program Graduates Provide Advice and Feedback to Programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internships</td>
<td>Career Programs Partner with Employers to Provide Authentic Work Experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Fairs</td>
<td>Employers Recruit Current or Graduating Students for Open Positions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement Services</td>
<td>Post Job Openings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleges and Universities</td>
<td>Articulation Agreements</td>
<td>Facilitate Transfer of Degrees and Credits to Public and Private 4-year Institutions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An example of how the College ensures that the needs of its partners are being met is its use of Program Advisory Committees to obtain input on employer, learner, and community needs. Advisory Committee members assist LSC in developing programs, keeping them current, setting long-range goals, and understanding and interpreting community and employer needs.

Advisory Committees are called upon to assist programs with respect to a number of program-related activities, including curriculum and instruction, program review, student recruitment and job placement, student organizations, staff development, community and public relations, resources, and legislation.

All LSC Advisory Committees meet on campus on common days during fall semester (in October) and spring semester (in February). A dinner is provided in conjunction with the meetings. Following the dinner, the LSC President provides an overview and update on the College and responds to questions.

Each advisory committee member receives a handbook describing the purpose of the committee, terms of service, and annual plan of work. The handbook also describes the roles and responsibilities of committee members, program faculty, the committee chairperson, and the LSC administration with respect to the committee.

Minutes are prepared for all program advisory committee meetings and all advisory committee members are asked to complete an advisory committee evaluation form at the spring semester meeting.

9P3. Building Relationships – Organizations Providing Services to LSC’s Students

A summary of LSC’s partnerships with the organizations that provide services to its students is shown in Table 9-3:
9P4. Building Relationships – Organizations Supplying Materials and Services

A summary of LSC’s partnerships with organizations that supply materials and services to the College is shown in Table 9-4:

Table 9-4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUPPLY MATERIALS AND SERVICES TO LSC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Partner</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributors to LSC Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and Industry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9P5. Building Relationships – External Agencies, Partners, and the Community

LSC is reliant on multiple partnerships with external agencies and the local community to achieve its mission. The depth and breadth of those partnerships, which are treated as high priorities at all times, is indicated by the summary, in Table 9-5, of LSC’s partnerships with external agencies and the local community:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner</th>
<th>Partnership</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Host Public Meetings</td>
<td>Campus Facilities Available to Community Organizations and State Agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Businesses</td>
<td>Facilities Rental</td>
<td>Campus Facilities Available for Training, Meetings, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSC Foundation</td>
<td>Foundation Board of Directors</td>
<td>Foster Community Awareness and Support for LSC; Review Scholarship Applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accrediting Agencies</td>
<td>HLC and Specialized Accreditors</td>
<td>Ensure Institutional and Program Quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundations</td>
<td>Grant Support</td>
<td>Targeted Support for Scholarships and other Initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Agencies</td>
<td>Grant Support</td>
<td>Targeted Support for Innovation and other Initiatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Minnesota</td>
<td>Minnesota Legislature - State Appropriations</td>
<td>State Support = Approximately 40% of College Revenue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Department of Employee Relations, Office of Management and Budget</td>
<td>Negotiates Collective Bargaining Agreements: AFSCME (staff), MAPE (Professional Employees), MMA (Supervisors)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MnSCU</td>
<td>System Office Support</td>
<td>Student Records and Degree Auditing Software, Other Administrative Functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Campus Service Cooperative</td>
<td>Shared Service Delivery and Strategic Sourcing of Purchased Goods and Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collective Bargaining and Contract Administration</td>
<td>Negotiates Collective Bargaining Agreement: MSCF (Faculty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Office of General Counsel</td>
<td>Legal Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>System IR Office</td>
<td>Most IPEDS Reporting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**9P6. Ensuring Partnerships Meet the Needs of Partners**

An example of how LSC ensures that its partnerships are meeting the needs of those involved is the multiple ways that the College interacts with local high schools.

The College connects with area high school counselors through an annual breakfast meeting. At the meeting, representatives of LSC provide an overview of the College’s academic programs and solicit feedback on ways to improve communication.

The LSC High School Connections Coordinator also meets with high school administrators and counselors on a regular basis to follow up on articulation agreements and the need for additional college programming for high school students. Finally, as described elsewhere, LSC’s College in the Schools program has been revamped to ensure more thorough and timely communication with participating high schools.

In a much broader way, LSC checks to ensure it is meeting the needs of its partners through its annual Higher Education Partnership Satisfaction Survey. That Survey is described more fully in 9R3.
9P7. Creating and Building Relationships Between Departments and Units

Lake Superior College works hard to create and build relationships between and among departments and units on several different levels. The President’s Cabinet (PC) is made up of the College President and his three direct reports. PC generally meets at least weekly.

The Administrative Council (AC) is made up LSC’s 11 administrators (The President, two Vice Presidents, three Academic Deans, the Associate Dean, the Executive Director of Customized Training and Workforce Development, the HR Director, the Director of Diversity, and the Director of Public Affairs and Advancement. AC generally meets at least monthly.

Administrators and Supervisors work collaboratively, with cross unit representation on all major committees and task forces to draw upon all relevant expertise and ensure effective communication. Employees are encouraged to take advantage of opportunities to meet and work with their colleagues from across the College through regular committees, search committees, task forces, and the like.

Other opportunities for employees to create and build relationships among departments include:

- Open calls to all employees for members of standing committees, search committees, and task forces
- College-wide in-service days throughout the year
- Assessment projects that include participants from across the College
- Center for Teaching & Learning programs open to all faculty and interested staff
- The “Wave” and “Newssplash” Online Newsletters
- Shared governance meetings
- The Campus Climate Committee

RESULTS

9R1. Measures of Building Collaborative Relationships

HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP SATISFACTION SURVEY

LSC administers the Higher Education Partnership Satisfaction Survey (HEPSS) annually in the spring. The HEPSS was developed in 2011 as a collaborative effort by a group of nine AQIP institutions, led by Eastern Arizona College. The objective was to create measures and a benchmark tool for partnership satisfaction. LSC was one of the nine institutions, and LSC’s Director of Accreditation, Research, and Assessment actively participated in developing the survey questions.

ADVISORY BOARD SURVEY

Advisory Board members are asked to complete a standard survey annually. The program faculty and academic deans review the survey results to identify strengths as well as areas of concern.

FOUNDATION REVENUES AND SCHOLARSHIPS

The LSC Foundation tracks net worth, revenues, scholarship applications, and scholarship awards. Foundation revenues are one of the MnSCU Strategic Framework Performance metrics.

COLLEGE IN THE SCHOOLS

The number of schools participating in LSC’s College in the Schools (concurrent enrollment) is tracked, along with the number of courses offered. Enrollments are tracked through ISRS, the College’s student record system.
CUSTOMIZED TRAINING
The Continuing Education and Customized Training Division tracks revenues and enrollments. Continuing Education and Customized Training revenues are tracked through the MnSCU Strategic Framework Performance metrics.

9R2. Results for Building Collaborative Relationships

NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAMS
The following new academic programs have been recently added as a result of collaboration with local business and industry:
- Wildland Firefighter Certificate
- Welding Technology Certificate
- Rapid Prototyping & Design Certificate
- Integrated Manufacturing Certificate
- Machine Technologist Certificate
- Production Technologies Certificate
- Aircraft Maintenance Technician Diploma (pending MnSCU approval)
- Aircraft Maintenance Technician AAS (pending MnSCU approval)

FOUNDATION GROWTH
Results for the LSC Foundation are described in 2R2.

ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS
LSC now has 73 formal articulation agreements under which two and four year institutions of higher education will accept degrees earned at LSC toward specific academic programs. In addition, the 40 credit Minnesota Transfer Curriculum and the 60 credit AA Degree both transfer in their entirety to any public institution of higher learning in Minnesota.

The following LSC degree programs are the subject of one or more articulation agreements:
- Accountant AAS
- Business Administration AS
- Civil Engineering Technology AAS
- Commercial and Residential Wiring AAS
- Computer and Web Programming AAS
- Dental Hygiene AAS
- Electronic Technology – Industrial Health Sciences Broad Field AS
- Individualized Studies AAS
- Individualized Studies AS
- Individualized Studies DIP
- Integrated Manufacturing – CNC Machine AAS
- IT Specialist: Network Administration AAS
- Nursing AAS
- Nursing/Advanced Standing LPN Track AAS
- Practical Nursing DIP
- Professional Pilot AAS
- Radiologic Technology AAS
- Respiratory Therapy AAS
Programs into which one or more of the foregoing programs will transfer under existing articulation agreements include the following majors:

- Accounting
- Business Administration
- Construction Management
- Operations Management
- Manufacturing Management
- Dental Hygiene
- Individualized Studies
- Community Health
- Exercise Science
- Nursing
- Health Teacher Education
- Communication Disorders
- Psychology
- Corrections
- Family Consumer Science Education
- Food Science Technology
- Recreation, Parks and Leisure Services
- Social Work
- Athletic Training
- Biology
- Exercise and Rehabilitative Science
- Health Promotion

LSC’s articulation partners include the following two year institutions:

- Anoka-Ramsey Community College
- Central Lakes College
- Century College
- Fond du Lac Tribal & Community College
- Hibbing Community College
- Inver Hills Community College
- Minneapolis Community & Technical College
- Minnesota State College – Southeast Technical
- Minnesota State Community and Technical College
- Minnesota West Community and Technical College
- Normandale Community College
- North Hennepin Community College
- Northland Community & Technical College
- Northwest Technical College
- Pine Technical College
- Ridgewater College
- Riverland Community College
- Rochester Community & Technical College
- South Central College
- St. Cloud Technical and Community College
LSC’s articulation partners include the following four year institutions:

- Bemidji State University
- College of St. Scholastica
- Franklin University
- Herzing University
- Metropolitan State University
- Minnesota State University, Moorhead
- Minnesota State University, Mankato
- St. Cloud State University
- Southwest Minnesota State University
- University of Minnesota, Crookston
- Winona State University

COLLEGE IN THE SCHOOLS

A total of 30 high schools are participating in LSC’s College in the Schools program during academic year 2013-14. The program is offering 150 course sections (a 5.4% increase over the prior year) taught by 127 different teachers, each of whom is mentored by an LSC instructor.

9R3. Comparing Results for Building Collaborative Relationships

LSC has now administered the Higher Education Partnership Satisfaction Survey (HEPSS) twice - in 2012 and again in 2013.

The 2012 Survey was administered by nine institutions. LSC sent 224 survey invitations and had 114 responses, for a 51% return rate. LSC’s mean scores on most measures were slightly lower than the aggregated mean scores for all institutions. However, that was not unanticipated as LSC was aware of significant problems with its College in the Schools program that were coming to a head at the time of the survey administration. The open ended comments on the survey reflected those problems. Nevertheless, statistical analysis showed that the difference between LSC’s mean scores and the mean scores for all participating institutions was not statistically significant at the 0.05 confidence level.

The 2013 Survey was administered by twelve institutions, including all but one of the original nine. LSC sent 479 survey invitations and had 206 responses for a 43% return rate. LSC’s mean scores again were generally lower than those of the group. In-between the 2012 and 2013 survey administrations, the College totally revamped its CITS program. Unfortunately, the survey was revised for 2013 to change the Likert scale from four to five responses, so a direct comparison of mean scores for change was not possible. However, the open ended comments clearly reflected improvement as a result of the changes to LSC’s CITS program.

Overall, LSC has found the HEPSS Survey results quite valuable and response from its partners to being offered the opportunity to provide feedback has been very positive. The Survey results have also confirmed that a strong majority of the College’s partners are satisfied with their relationship with LSC:
Table 9-6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2013 HEPSS SURVEY ITEM</th>
<th>% STRONGLY AGREE OR AGREE</th>
<th>% NEUTRAL</th>
<th>% DISAGREE OR STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
<th>DOESN’T APPLY OR DON’T KNOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall, our organization is satisfied with the relationship between LSC and our organization.</td>
<td>78.81%</td>
<td>11.82%</td>
<td>3.94%</td>
<td>5.42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IMPROVEMENT**

9I1. Recent Improvement for Building Collaborative Relationships

After a change in personnel disclosed problems with LSC’s College in the Schools program, the College hired a new program coordinator and totally revamped the program. The changes included:

- Institution of LSC administered placement testing at high school sites to ensure student eligibility for the program.
- Tighter monitoring and enforcement of high school teacher credentialing requirements to ensure credentials comparable to those required of LSC instructors teaching the same course.
- Documented policies, procedures, and expectations
- Revised contracts
- Revised calendars and clearly stated deadlines coupled with better communication with the high schools
- New forms to document site visits, student eligibility determinations, etc.
- Information sheets for schools and parents

The program has continued to grow and the most recent administration of the Higher Education Partnership Survey showed improved satisfaction with the program on the part of the high schools.

9I2. Selecting Processes to Improve Results for Building Collaborative Relationships

LSC selects specific processes to improve performance results in Building Collaborative Relationships in one of four ways:

1. Through its long range planning processes (e.g. Strategic Plan, Master Academic Plan, and Functional Support Plans).
2. Through its process for selecting AQIP Action Projects (AQIP Steering Committee)
3. In response to outside mandates (e.g. MnSCU Strategic Framework Performance Metrics, HLC and other Accreditation Requirements, and Regulatory Compliance).
4. On an Ad Hoc Basis, in response to Recognized Problems (e.g. CITS Process Revisions).