

*AQIP Category One, HELPING STUDENTS LEARN, focuses on the design, deployment, and effectiveness of teaching-learning processes that underlie your institution's credit and non-credit programs and courses, and on the processes required to support them.*

**Processes (P)**

**1P1.** How do you determine which common or shared objectives for learning and development you should hold for all students pursuing degrees at a particular level? Whom do you involve in setting these objectives?

**Address Core Component 3B under 1P1 and 1P2**

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

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

**1P2.** How do you determine your specific program learning objectives? Whom do you involve in setting these objectives?

**Address Core Component 3B under 1P1 and 1P2**

**Address Core Component 4B under 1P2 and 1P18**

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

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

**1P3.** How do you design new programs and courses that facilitate student learning and are competitive with those offered by other organizations?

**1P4.** How do you design responsive academic programming that balances and integrates learning goals, students' career needs, and the realities of the employment market?

**Address Core Component 4A under 1P4 and 1P13**

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

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

**Address Core Component 3A under 1P4 and 1P12**

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

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

**1P5.** How do you determine the preparation required of students for the specific curricula, programs, courses, and learning they will pursue?

**1P6.** How do you communicate to current and prospective students the required preparation and learning and development objectives for specific programs, courses, and degrees or credentials? How do admissions, student support, and registration services aid in this process?

**Address Core Component 2B under 1P6**

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

**1P7.** How do you help students select programs of study that match their needs, interests, and abilities.

**Address Core Component 3D under 1P7 and 1P15**

3.D. The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.

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

**1P8.** How do you deal with students who are underprepared for the academic programs and courses you offer?

**1P9.** How do you detect and address differences in students' learning styles?

**1P10.** How do you address the special needs of student subgroups (e.g., handicapped students, seniors, commuters)?

**Address Core Component 1C under 1P4 and 1P10**

**1P11.** How do you define, document, and communicate across your institution your expectations for effective teaching and learning?

**Address Core Component 2D under 1P11**

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

**Address Core Component 2E under 1P11 and 4P7**

2.E. The institution ensures that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

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

**1P12.** How do you build an effective and efficient course delivery system that addresses both students' needs and your institution's requirements?

**Address Core Component 3A under 1P4 and 1P12**

**1P13.** How do you ensure that your programs and courses are up-to-date and effective?

**Address Core Component 4A under 1P4 and 1P3**

**1P14.** How do you change or discontinue programs and courses?

**1P15.** How do you determine and address the learning support needs (tutoring, advising, placement, library, laboratories, etc.) of your students and faculty in your student learning, development, and assessment processes?

**Address Core Component 3D under 1P7 and 1P15**

**1P16.** How do you align your co-curricular development goals with your curricular learning objectives?

**1P17.** How do you determine that students to whom you award degrees and certificates have met your learning and development expectations?

**Address Core Component 3E under 1P16**

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

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

**1P18.** How do you design your processes for assessing student learning?

**Address Core Component 4B under 1P2 and 1P18**

**Results (R)**

**1R1.** What measures of your students' learning and development do you collect and analyze regularly?

**1R2.** What are your performance results for your common student learning and development objectives?

**1R3.** What are your performance results for specific program learning objectives?

**1R4.** What is your evidence that the students completing your programs, degrees, and certificates have acquired the knowledge and skills required by your stakeholders (i.e., other educational institutions and employers)?

**1R5.** What are your performance results for learning support processes (advising, library and laboratory use, etc.)?

**1R6.** How do your results for the performance of your processes in *Helping Students Learn* compare with the results of other higher education institutions and, where appropriate, with results of organizations outside of higher education?

**Improvement (I)**

**1I1.** What recent improvements have you made in this category? How systematic and comprehensive are your processes and performance results for *Helping Students Learn*?

**1I2.** How do your culture and infrastructure help you to select specific processes to improve and to set targets for improved performance results in *Helping Students Learn*?

## Helping Students Learn

Category One exhibits a variety of maturity levels, depending on the process. We have systematic to aligned processes in general education, having developed a philosophy of general education and objectives based on faculty determinations of what students need to know and be able to do. The formation of the ND General Education Council brought new insight and discussions for all ND institutions about the role of general education. The adoption of the AAC&U (Association of American Colleges and Universities) essential learning outcomes (ELOs) presents a new opportunity for BSC to re-evaluate our general education program and begin the incorporation of the new ELOs. Making this move aligns us with the North Dakota University System (NDUS) and a national approach to general education.

The discussions about general education have led our General Education Committee to complete a curriculum map of general education outcomes. We are also initiating a process for revalidating general education courses to ensure that courses are focused on general education outcomes. This revalidation process will occur regularly. These changes in our general education program and processes will help BSC to reach an aligned maturity level.

Assessment processes at BSC are systematic, but in recent years, it has become apparent that we need to direct our focus to using assessment data for making more systematic improvements in programs. BSC is fortunate to have a dedicated Academic Assessment Committee and a supportive administration. Traditionally, faculty participation in assessment has been strong, but seems to be waning somewhat. A series of AQIP Action Projects focusing on assessment processes will help us to revitalize our assessment program. The first Action Project is designed to gauge faculty perceptions about assessment and determine what the faculty needs to engage more effectively.

In the last decade or so, BSC has developed many new technical programs. Because of these efforts, the College has developed a good process of program development with aligned to integrated maturity levels. While the pace of program development has slowed recently, the College uses a well-defined process with involvement and input from faculty and the business community. Steps are outlined for completing program proposals and submitting documentation to the NDUS.

Efforts are being made to improve processes for supporting student needs. Currently, our processes in this area are aligned. We strive to evaluate student needs and, for that reason, have embarked on the development of a student success course as an AQIP Action Project. The development of such a course will add to the strong learning supports already in place, such as tutoring, advising, library services, and computer support. The goal of the student success class is to help students transition to college life and to acquire personal management and academic skills necessary for collegiate success.

**1P1 General education objectives are the common learning objectives for students pursuing degrees. The objectives are appropriate for a community college and meet the needs of transfer students and students in technical programs. These objectives are determined by the faculty. The philosophy of general education, which undergirds the common learning objectives, states “Bismarck State College is dedicated to providing innovative educational programs that develop individual abilities, strengthen human relationships, enhance community life, and heighten global consciousness. The General Education requirements at Bismarck State College promote the development of an informed and educated person who recognizes and respects the diversity of communities; understands the value of active, critical thinking; and is competent and proficient at fundamental skills which encourage a positive attitude toward lifelong learning and equip students to participate in a complex, interdependent world.” (3B)**

In 2011-2012, the College's General Education Committee initiated a mapping process of AAC&U's essential learning outcomes. The impetus for the mapping was to align BSC's general education outcomes with statewide recommendations for essential learning outcomes from the North Dakota General Education Council. The other eighteen member institutions (public, private, and tribal) in the council are undertaking the same process. BSC has completed a three-year assessment cycle of its general education programs that focuses on Awareness, Communication, and Thought (ACT) and is in the process of integrating the AAC&U's ELOs into our existing ACT plan. **The ACT plan is designed to ensure that students develop competencies in awareness (including diversity), communication, and thought processes, including critical thinking. The goal of the ACT plan is to develop a student's ability to successfully function in a diverse society, to communicate in interpersonal relationships, working environments, and civic activities, and to think in a manner that is imaginative, methodic, or even provocative. (3B)**

The General Education Committee is comprised of one member from each academic department. All faculty members, regardless of discipline or technical program, were asked to map their courses and identify the essential learning outcomes pertinent to their discipline or program. The results were coordinated through the departmental assessment liaison. At least one member of the General Education Committee is also a member of the Academic Assessment Committee. Through this process, the recommendations for assessment of student learning are coming from faculty to the assessment committee.

**Faculty are expected to contribute to scholarship and service as the mission of the College and their programs allow. Campus committee work, participation in professional associations, and community involvement are some of the ways they demonstrate service and scholarship. Faculty are also committed to the discovery of knowledge and are supported in their efforts to acquire and advance knowledge. Students are actively involved in creative work and in the discovery of knowledge through the general education program and in technical programs. (3B)**

**1P2 All degree programs are designed to engage students in collecting and using information appropriately, in ongoing inquiry and creative work that pertains to their program, and in developing lifelong learning skills that will help them adapt to change. (3B, 4B)**

**General education courses are essential to all our program areas and serve as the basis for our common learning objectives. For Associate in Applied Science, Associate in Arts, and Associate in Science degrees, general education credits are required which include Communications, Arts and Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Math/Science/Technology. The number of required credits varies depending upon the degree. This set of general education categories is designed to ensure that students acquire broad knowledge and the intellectual concepts that a college-educated person should possess. Our general education assessment program, ACT, also encompasses the general education categories and measures learning in awareness, communication, and thought. (3B)**

Led by the General Education Committee, we are currently undergoing a revalidation of general education courses to ensure that general education concepts are adequately addressed and measured in courses designated as general education. This process will strengthen our general education program and improve assessment activities.

**A number of courses are designated as diversity courses that focus on the many facets of human and cultural diversity. Students seeking an AA or AS must successfully complete a diversity course. The diversity requirement is designed to enhance the AA and AS student's overall educational experience by focusing in a central and substantial way on issues, theories, and methods relevant to analyzing and understanding inter-group dynamics and diversity in its broadest sense. The Embracing Diversity Committee on campus works diligently to add special events and programs to develop cultural understanding in our students and employees. (3B)**



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Learning objectives are included in new course requests and are reviewed by the Curriculum Committee, Faculty Senate, the dean of academic affairs, and the provost. **Student learning goals are clearly stated for courses and programs and are communicated to students in syllabi and through other course and program materials. (4B)**

**Our occupational programs foster individual goals and outcomes that are established by the faculty with the advice and assistance of advisory committees consisting of employers and working professionals. (4B)** The program review process conducted by the North Dakota Department of Career and Technical Education requires programs to thoroughly review their education goals and program effectiveness. Through BSC's department review process program faculty also review educational outcomes and assessment information and practices.

Information provided by accrediting agencies and certification boards is also used to determine objectives. Numerous programs are accredited by outside agencies; their objectives must follow accreditation guidelines. In conjunction with those guidelines, BSC works closely with the high schools on articulation and transfer agreements, which are updated per agreement and reviewed by lead faculty, BSC, and high school administration.

More information on specialized accreditation can be found in 1P4 and in Figure 1.1 that lists specific accreditations, certifications, and licensures.

**1P3** The process for defining new programs and courses includes collecting and analyzing data, and then reviewing and revising it prior to implementation.

Ideas and suggestions for new programs may come from faculty or from business and industry. Input from advisory committee members and accrediting agency standards are used in decision-making about new program and course development. New programs must gain the approval of the administration; curriculum must be approved by the College Curriculum Committee and Faculty Senate.

As a member of the North Dakota University System (NDUS), BSC must follow established procedures for offering new programs, starting with a Stage I announcement of intent to deliver a program. If approved, the College may then submit a Stage II request once it has finalized a desire to proceed with offering the program. This process (1) ensures need and opportunity for the program, (2) ensures that adequate resources to effectively deliver the program have been secured, and (3) reduces wasteful duplication of programs.

New courses are developed for a new program, to meet changing industry standards, to address suggestions by advisory committees, or as a response to student assessment results. Faculty and advisory committee members most commonly make suggestions for new courses, however, staff, administrators, employers, students, or others may also make suggestions. New course request forms are completed that review the need or rationale for the course, and contain the course description and specific details about the course. The new course request must be submitted with a copy of the standard format syllabus required by the Curriculum Committee. The new course request is reviewed by the appropriate administrators, the Curriculum Committee, and Faculty Senate. Upon approval, the course becomes a part of the master catalog.

As the curriculum evolves, and the character and content of courses change, course revisions are submitted on the course change form, and are reviewed by administrators and academic records personnel. Upon approval, revised course titles and credit hour values are changed in the master catalog.

**1P4** As a community college, BSC strives to develop courses and programs that meet student desires and career goals, as well as address the needs of business and industry. Matching student needs with the employment market is important to ensure that the College offers courses and programs that attract students and serve the labor needs of employers. To do this we:

- use the feedback of advisory committee members, alumni, and business and industry representatives
- monitor employment needs, top jobs, salaries, job placement, and related factors
- acquire student and employer feedback through surveys
- use specialized accreditation standards and credentialing competencies (see Figure 1.1)
- monitor course and program enrollment and completion patterns.

Technical Program	Accreditation/Certification/Licensure
Auto Collision	Automotive Service Excellence – National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation
Auto Technology	Automotive Service Excellence – National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation
Carpentry	National Center for Construction Education and Research
Clinical Laboratory Technician/Phlebotomy Technician	National Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs
Computer Information Systems	Microsoft Certified Application Specialist Linux certifications CISCO certifications Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer
EMT-Paramedic	Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs
Engineering Technology	ABET
Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning	National Center for Construction Education and Research
Nursing	National Council Licensure Examination
Surgical Technology	Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs
Welding	American Welding Society Certified Welder Exam
Web Page Development and Design	Certified Internet Webmaster Exam

*Figure 1.1 Accreditations, certifications, licensures*

Bismarck State College established a Technical Studies program (Associate in Applied Science or Certificate) intended for incumbent workers or other students whose career objectives cannot be met by BSC's existing programs. Students work with an advisor to customize a program that combines skills and knowledge of different disciplines. The objectives of the Technical Studies program are:

- to provide flexibility in programming through a customized plan of study
- to help meet the career goals of students that cannot be met by a single instructional program
- to provide opportunities for those in the workforce to broaden or enhance skills.

**The BSC Curriculum Committee, the General Education Committee, Academic Standards Committee, and Faculty Senate exercise authority over the curriculum through a process of review and approval. During the process, course prerequisites, quality and rigor, access to learning resources, and expectations for student learning are evaluated. Faculty qualifications are assured through the hiring process. (4A)**

**Bismarck State College evaluates all credit that is transcribed, including prior learning. The [Transfer Credit policy](#) assures the quality of the credit that BSC accepts in transfer and the [Prior Learning Assessment – Portfolio Development policy](#) governs the transcription of credit for prior learning. (4A)**

**Bismarck State College's dual credit program allows high school students to participate in college coursework. Our dual credit courses are college courses offering the equivalent rigor,**

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requirements, and student learning outcomes. The dual credit faculty are adjunct instructors who must meet the degree requirements and/or teaching experience required of all adjunct instructors.

Dual credit students have access to college learning resources such as the library and academic support services. BSC's document, [Dual Credit/Early Entry Program Best Practices](#), recommends practices and processes that ensure integrity of the dual credit program. The North Dakota University System and the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction have established [joint standards](#) for dual credit courses to maintain high quality. (4A)

The Mystic Advising and Counseling Center (MACC) publishes a yearly [Placement Report](#) which contains employment and continuing education information concerning graduates of the respective programs in which they were enrolled. The placement rate for technical programs for 2010-2012 is slightly over 97%. (4A)

**1P5** Bismarck State College along with the North Dakota University System requires all students to take a placement assessment: ACT, COMPASS, Accuplacer or SAT. ACT or COMPASS is preferred. One of these assessments is required for all new degree-seeking students wishing to enroll in BSC classes. The Accuplacer test is most commonly taken by online students or students at a distance from the college. Students 25 years of age or older are required to take the COMPASS exam. [Placement testing requirements](#) are outlined in the College catalog and website. Although the tests do not affect admission to the college, students are required to meet established criteria in certain courses and programs.

The purpose of placement testing at Bismarck State College is to match the academic readiness of the incoming student with the academic requirements of the curriculum. If test results do not meet the standards of college-level courses, students are required to register in courses which help them to improve their learning and increase their opportunity to succeed in college. Algebra Prep, Composition Lab, College Writing Prep, and Effective Reading are developmental courses taken by students whose placement scores indicate a need for greater competency in basic skills. The skills required for each course or program are determined by discipline faculty and are regularly reviewed for effectiveness.

Revisions to placement scores were made as part of a recent NDUS review of placement scores. Faculty from colleges in the University System determined the appropriate scores for English and Math. Under NDUS policy 401.1.2 an ACT score of 18 is required for students to take English 110; students with scores between 14-17 may take English 110 if co-enrolled in a developmental course. Students scoring lower than 14 must complete a developmental course prior to taking English 110. An ACT score of 21 is required for students to enroll in College Algebra. Students scoring lower must successfully complete one or more developmental mathematics courses before enrolling in a college-level mathematics course.

The effectiveness of English-related developmental courses is assessed each year and reported in the annual assessment report. The data show that students who complete developmental courses are better able to successfully complete English 110. Because math developmental courses were recently adjusted, the assessment of math developmental courses is under revision and will be in use in fall 2013.

International students must have their official secondary and/or post-secondary transcripts evaluated through World Education Services (WES). Secondary school transcripts must be evaluated unless they have completed 24 or more semester hours of college level coursework that has been evaluated through WES. F-1 immigrant students (whose first language is not English) must submit certification of satisfactory completion of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) before they are admitted to BSC.

Students applying for admission to limited enrollment technical programs are required to reach or exceed specific placement scores before being accepted in that program. The placement scores are established to reflect the probability of academic and employment success. Each program has a placement score requirement. Faculty and department chairs in those areas determine the minimum score required. The

scores are examined by the testing and assessment coordinator on a regular basis to verify their validity. In addition, some programs, nursing, as an example, have additional course and certification requirements before students can enroll in the program. Some programs will have a composite placement score, whereas others will have placement scores in specific areas, such as, math or English. [Technical Placement Charts](#) are outlined in the college catalog and website. These scores have been revised and will go into effect the fall 2013 semester.

New online students take an orientation tutorial offered by Pearson eCollege, developers of the learning management system used by BSC, that explains the elements of a course and the processes to use in navigating through an online course. Online students have access to Smarthinking, an online tutoring service.

Many courses and programs have prerequisites or sequence requirements established by faculty members to help students succeed in a program or make smooth transitions into increasingly challenging courses. Prerequisites are found in the printed and electronic forms of the catalog.

**1P6 Bismarck State College uses multiple methods of communication to inform current and prospective students, as well as the public, about program and educational requirements. These methods include: live/in person, printed materials, and online/technology based materials. Information about tuition and fees, program requirements, college control, faculty and staff, and accreditation can be readily found on the BSC website, as well as through the college catalog and other information materials, such as program fact sheets. (2B)**

The admissions office is often the first point of contact for high school students across the region through informational sessions. Admissions counselors supplement this contact with print and online material. The admissions counselors' first contact is supplemented through early contact by faculty, who provide more specific information about the program. Some programs, including Nursing, Medical Laboratory Sciences, Surgical Technology, Carpentry, and Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning require prospective students to interview with a program instructor to more fully explore the program and determine eligibility and interest.

**As students enter BSC, they learn more about the College's expectations through academic advisors, placement testing, counselors, and academic records personnel. Registration sessions and orientation are designed to inform students of objectives for courses and degrees, as well as other types of preparation necessary for success. (2B)**

**Student preparation and learning outcomes are communicated to students through the Bismarck State College website, college catalog, the students' CampusConnection interface, course schedules, program fact sheets, student planning guides, and worksheets. Course syllabi specify objectives and expectations of course instructors. The syllabi and objectives are in printed and electronic formats. Student policies are available on the BSC website and include policies related to student conduct, academic warnings, the academic honor code, and other applicable policies and procedures. (2B)**

	Live/In Person	Print	Online/Technology Based
Prospective Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions office</li> <li>• Mystic Advising and Counseling Center</li> <li>• Career Fairs</li> <li>• Financial Aid Presentations</li> <li>• High-school dual credit offerings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course catalog</li> <li>• Course Syllabi</li> <li>• Program-specific brochures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Admissions Newsletter</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Future Students - webpage</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Catalog</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Credit Programs online info</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Student Planning Worksheets</a></li> </ul>
Current Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic Advising</li> <li>• Academic Support/Tutoring</li> <li>• Alcohol &amp; Drug Information</li> <li>• Mystic Advising and Counseling Center</li> <li>• Multicultural Services</li> <li>• Personal Counseling</li> <li>• Placement Testing</li> <li>• Student Accessibility</li> <li>• Veteran's Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course Catalog</li> <li>• Course Syllabi</li> <li>• Program-specific brochures</li> <li>• Student Handbook and Planner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Student Handbook and Planner</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Student Policies &amp; Procedures</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Mystic Guide for Planning Success</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Catalog</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Student Planning Worksheets</a></li> </ul>

*Figure 1.2 Summary of communication methods for prospective and current students*

**1P7** Advisors, faculty, and counselors help students select programs that match their needs, interests, and abilities. The College Student Inventory (CSI) is taken by entering first-year students. The CSI helps counselors, advisors, and faculty know more about the student's background, support systems, and interests, and serves as a useful tool in providing advice and counsel. **A faculty advisor is assigned to each student who has chosen a technical program or discipline. Other advisors are assigned to those students who are undecided about a specific course of study. Students may also enlist the help of academic advisors in the Mystic Advising and Counseling Center who can assist them in making decisions about classes, schedules, transfer, and programs and majors. (3D)**

**A variety of [counseling and career services](#) are available to students to help in the areas of decision making, dealing with problems, and locating employment. Counseling and Career Services personnel offer assistance to help BSC students in making informed decisions about career and educational goals, including determining a major and using a variety of resources to explore possible careers. After completing a self-assessment and interest inventories, acquiring occupational information, and/or finishing a job shadow experience, a student will move toward selecting a major. (3D)**

Referral activities assist students, faculty, and employers in developing a relationship for possible student employment. These activities may include on-campus interviews and informational sessions, workshops on résumé/cover letter writing, interviewing techniques, or electronic job search skills. Placement statistics are also available related to past graduates of BSC programs. To better serve BSC student employment needs, the online career service system [Job Seekers Network](#) is available for students and alumni seeking employment with local, regional, and national companies.

**1P8** Students who are underprepared for academic programs are identified through the placement testing process. Those who need help with reading, English, and math are placed in academic skills courses offered both online as well as on ground. The academic skills courses are Applied Study Skills, Effective Reading, College Writing Prep, Composition, and Algebra Prep I, II, III.



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In the school year of 2012-13, a first year experience class, Seminar on Success, was established for those students who are enrolled in two or more ASC courses. Seminar on Success covers vital topics such as time management and study skills, and other strategies for college success.

The Sykes Student Success Center offers a wide-range of services to assist students in developing the background, knowledge, and skills needed to be successful in their college courses. The center has dedicated professional and student staff to provide assistance. Tutorial services are provided free of charge on a drop-in basis. Peer tutors are current students recommended by faculty. They are trained through a nationally recognized certified program. As students adjust to the transition of campus life, they are supported through the center's academic success workshops. Various topics are offered such as learning styles, note-taking, and exam preparation.

The center also offers two Learning Fairs, one in September and one in February. The purpose is to provide opportunities for students to build skills and gain knowledge relevant to academic success, to increase awareness of and access to support programs and centers, and to bring focus and visibility to the concept and importance of academic success.

For online and distance students who cannot avail themselves of the Sykes Center, BSC offers Smarthinking, an online tutoring service for English, writing, and math. This service provides subject matter experts who interact with students on a virtual learning platform 24/7. Smarthinking delivers on-demand student support. Online students also have access to advisors, career counseling, and library resources through email, messaging, and telephone. Online chats are available through eCollege and there is 24/7 technical support through the eCollege help desk.

**IP9** Individual instructors and the Academic Support Services staff detect and address student learning style differences. The FYE course, Seminar on Success, includes a session on learning styles in which students identify their learning style and develop skills to strengthen their learning abilities. To accommodate students, this class is offered in traditional and online formats.

Academic Support Services offers learning styles workshops for students. The student accessibility coordinator identifies learning styles to help disabled students understand how they learn and provides the accommodations that address their learning style needs.

Each year every new faculty member receives training through BSC's faculty mentoring program, part of which is a series of workshops. Two of the workshops specifically target learning styles. One of the benchmarks for Workshop One *Deliver Practical Tips and Techniques for Effective Instruction* is to illustrate different pedagogy and teaching styles; one of the benchmarks for Workshop Nine *Incorporating Interactive and Active Learning* is to raise awareness of different learning styles and multiple intelligences. Faculty members in technical programs are required to be certified through ND Career and Technical Education. As a part of the certification, faculty attends a workshop on active learning.

As part of its strategic plan, BSC has established a committee to increase the variety of teaching techniques in the classroom. The Learn by Doing Committee prepared a report that addresses ways to add more experiential learning opportunities into classrooms. The report focuses on three main goals: 1) introduce active learning to campus, 2) move towards a culture of student engagement at BSC, and 3) sustain the active learning culture. The Learn by Doing Committee completed several of the specific recommendations of the report and work continues on other recommendations. The committee received the department chairs' permission to include the following sentence in all faculty job opening announcements as a preference for hiring: *Experience with non-traditional teaching methods such as facilitating group work, use of inquiry-based and other active learning pedagogies, and/or contextualized instruction.*

To introduce active learning to the campus, Karl A. Smith, Cooperative Learning Professor of Engineering Education, School of Engineering Education, at Purdue University West Lafayette, delivered the keynote speech and conducted workshops for faculty development days in August of 2012. Karl has worked with thousands of faculty all over the world on pedagogies of engagement, especially cooperative learning, problem-based learning, and constructive controversy.

**1P10 BSC recognizes its role in a multicultural society and is committed to providing and enhancing diversity-related learning experiences for students and to offering enrichment opportunities for the community. We realize that we must prepare students for life in a multicultural society, as is evidenced in the College mission to “reach local and global communities,” by our emphasis on providing diversity courses, offering appropriate services, and by making available culturally diverse activities and experiences. (1C)**

Bismarck State College **addresses the special needs of student subgroups in a variety of ways identified in the Figure 1.3. (1C)**

Services for Special Needs of Student Subgroups		
Student Subgroup	Service/Response	Office Providing Service
<b>Disabled</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide reasonable accommodations and support services in compliance with ADA</li> <li>faculty may refer students to the Student Accessibility Office</li> <li>College provides handicapped access to buildings, handicapped parking, wheelchair access, elevators, and other accommodations</li> </ul>	Student Accessibility Office
<b>Military</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BSC is a designated Military Friendly School by <i>G.I. Jobs</i> magazine</li> <li>offer flexible, student-centered learning on campus or online</li> </ul>	Distance Learning Office
<b>Incarcerated</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>collaborate with the Department of Corrections and the Missouri River Correctional Center to provide academic classes and technical classes and programs</li> <li>welding and automotive technology are currently provided</li> </ul>	CETI
<b>Seniors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BSC offers a variety of events that are well-attended by seniors in the community</li> <li>class audit policy provides a tuition waiver for persons age 65 or older to audit an on-campus course</li> <li>many classes and enrichment offerings are available</li> <li>Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) program provides events, programs, and experiences targeted to those over 50 years old</li> </ul>	Academic Affairs, CETI
<b>Commuters</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>some campus services, such as computer labs and library services, have extended hours</li> <li>online and evening classes are offered</li> <li>extended hours are in place for campus offices prior to and during the first week of the fall and spring semester to help students who are enrolling and registering for classes, meeting with advisors, buying textbooks, and working with financial aid and student finance</li> <li>city bus makes regular stops on campus</li> <li>ample free parking on campus</li> </ul>	Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, Student Finance, Financial Aid, Bookstore
<b>Diverse Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>culturally appropriate student support services to enhance academic and personal success of all students of color</li> </ul>	Multicultural Advisor

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• services include admission assistance, transition support and mentoring, academic and social advising, financial advising, tribal higher education scholarship and other minority scholarship information, referral services for career planning, counseling, disability services, and tutoring programs</li> <li>• Gay Straight Alliance student-run organization promotes a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning (GLBTQ) students, faculty, staff</li> </ul>	
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*Figure 1.3 Services for special needs of student subgroups*

Services for students are communicated through a variety of electronic and print means, including the BSC website, email, social media, college catalog, student handbook and planner, brochures, and flyers. Services are often publicized through workshops and student information fairs. Instructors inform students of services available and often refer students to support offices. Campus events open to the public are widely publicized through the local newspaper, social media, website, direct mail, flyers, and other means.

**1P11** BSC uses several methods to define, document, and communicate expectations for effective teaching and learning including:

**Certification** is required by faculty teaching in career and technical education programs. The certification program provides courses in classroom management, effective teaching, assessment, and the value and purpose of career and technical education.

**Student outcomes assessment** is achieved through faculty-developed assessment plans and assessment techniques. Faculty assess students throughout a course with assignments and examinations that are designed to provide feedback to students whereby they can improve learning. Summative assessments include comprehensive projects, certification exams, portfolios, and other major projects that assess learning at the end of a course or program.

**Faculty performance evaluations** are conducted on full-time and adjunct faculty. The process is described in 4P10. As a part of the evaluation process, faculty members complete a self-evaluation and are observed in the classroom by the department chair and/or dean of academic affairs. Online faculty members are evaluated by students each semester and are monitored by the department chair or program manager. The results of the evaluations are shared with the faculty member. If any of the evaluation tools present evidence of issues or instructional deficiencies, the department chair and dean of academic affairs work with the faculty member to develop performance goals to address the concern.

A formal **orientation and mentoring** program is used to help new instructors. Experienced faculty members serve as mentors and provide valuable support and information about effective teaching techniques and practices. The orientation program consists of a year-long series of workshops related to teaching.

**Student evaluations** are a significant part of the evaluation of effective instruction and are used in courses taught by both full-time and adjunct faculty. Course evaluations are completed each semester. Questions on the evaluation form focus on assessing the course, instruction, and faculty performance. Should students have complaints about courses, faculty members, or the kind of instruction provided, policies and procedures are in place that allow for concerns to be communicated. The department chair serves as the first contact for a complaint. If not resolved, the dean of academic affairs works with the student and faculty member to resolve the problem. More formal processes exist for serious allegations or grievances that cannot be readily settled.



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BSC is committed to high-quality teaching and the right of students to learn in an environment that fosters inquiry. Faculty expectations are communicated through the hiring process, faculty orientations, professional development activities, and performance reviews. Faculty members are supported by the NDUS policy 605.1 on Academic Freedom and Tenure. BSC policies, such as the Code of Ethics statement and the Student Honor Code help to ensure an environment that fosters free inquiry in the teaching and learning process. (2D, 2E)

**IP12** Effective and efficient course delivery that meets the students' needs and College's requirements happens in traditional, fully online, and in hybrid or blended formats. The variety of delivery methods serves local and distant students, those who are traditional-aged and older than average, those who are currently employed, and those looking for their first job. (3A)

Classes are offered during the day and evening and with various schedules including full semester, eight week classes, and block style. Regardless of the delivery method or the class schedule, learning goals for courses and the quality of the courses are consistent. This is true of dual credit courses, as well, that may be taught at a high school. College Algebra, for example, will meet the same requirements for student learning outcomes, course objectives, and high quality instruction, regardless of whether it is taught as dual credit or in a regular credit-bearing course on campus. (3A)

Learning goals differ among certificate, associate degree programs, and the baccalaureate program. Certificate programs focus on learning technical skills that prepare students for entry level jobs. Certificate programs over 45 credits require students to complete four semester hours of general education credits. The Associate in Applied Science is also a job preparation degree but requires fifteen credits of general education. (3A)

The Associate in Science and Associate in Arts degrees require 36 hours of general education credits, plus two credits of enrichment. The Associate in Science degree requires that students complete a greater number of general education credits from the Math, Science, and Technology area. Students must also complete three diversity credits which can be achieved by successfully completing a designated diversity course. The purpose of the Associate in Science and the Associate in Arts degrees is to prepare students for transfer to a baccalaureate degree-granting institution and the learning goals are appropriate to the overall purpose of the degrees. (3A)

BSC offers a Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Energy Management. The degree requires 48 technical credits from an energy-related AAS, Certificate or Diploma, 42 general education credits and 30 credits of energy management for a total of 120 credits. The BAS prepares students for supervisory and management positions in energy facilities. (3A)

**IP13** Bismarck State College continually monitors the currency and effectiveness of its programs and courses. Each technical program is required to have an advisory committee that meets at least twice a year. Programs are evaluated and reviewed by the advisory committee members who, as professionals in the field, can provide real-world input about the industry. As changes occur in a field, the advisory committee members are an invaluable resource in helping programs adapt or change. The North Dakota Career and Technical Education (NDCTE) department conducts in-depth reviews of job-readiness programs every five years, focusing on curriculum, facilities, equipment, resources, faculty, and other program components. (4A)

Through our department review process we monitor the effectiveness of each of the College's departments. Departments are made up of technical programs and liberal/transfer and general education disciplines. The process reviews the following measures:

- goals and objectives
- professional development
- enrollment

- **program/discipline demand**
- **program/discipline relationships**
- **student success**
- **student learning outcomes**
- **resources**
- **promotion and marketing.**

**Both programs and disciplines undergo the in-depth departmental review every five years. However, each year, the departments are provided current enrollment and graduation numbers as well as a financial status report. With this snapshot of key factors, the departments can identify concerns or issues that need to be addressed immediately.**

**Each department review identifies strengths and weaknesses in departmental disciplines and programs, makes recommendations for improvement, and develops action plans. The department reviews are studied by a response team that provides feedback and support of needed improvements. Departments are expected to use the review data to aid in budgeting and planning for continuous quality improvement. (4A)**

The General Education Committee has begun a revalidation process of all existing general education courses. This will ensure that all courses that are currently designated as general education fit the new essential learning outcomes criteria. After this initial revalidation process, general education courses are required to revalidate at least every five years, or sooner, if curriculum changes are enacted.

**Graduate success is measured through the alumni survey, employer survey, and a survey of the graduates of the technical programs. We monitor placement and graduation rates. A number of programs have specialized accreditation that indicates how well our students do in meeting the standards set by the accrediting agency. Pass rates and licensure exams provide information on the quality of programs, such as nursing and medical laboratory technician. (4A)**

**Based on the General Education Requirements Transfer Agreement (GERTA), an approved set of general education courses are transferable between NDUS campuses and North Dakota's tribal colleges. The agreement improves student access to college degrees and avoids course duplication. Student learning outcomes and quality are the same, or sufficiently similar, across campuses to ensure that students completing GERTA courses are prepared for transfer to other colleges. (4A)**

**IP14** Course changes are made by department faculty in consultation with the department chair. Because changes can have significant impact on the CampusConnection academic records module, course changes require a discussion with Academic Records office personnel. Changes are then approved by the administrative chain of officers and entered into the master catalog. Department faculty and the department chair can start the deletion process of courses that have had low enrollment for several terms or are considered obsolete. The deletion of courses follows the same chain of approval as do course changes.

An in-depth review is conducted for programs that need to be changed or discontinued. Programs with declining enrollment for several years are subject to such a review. Working with the advisory committee, the department chair and dean reviews enrollments and the costs and revenues associated with the program. They will also review the curriculum, course and program objectives, tasks and competencies, equipment, structure, and staffing for the program. Similar programs in the state or across the nation may be contacted for input on industry trends. These external programs can provide much information about improvements in curriculum and other program components. After analysis, a recommendation is made to the provost to either change or discontinue the program. The College may request that a program that is discontinued be put on inactive status by the NDUS for three years, after which time, it may be permanently deleted.

A program may be discontinued when it is not meeting its objectives, when labor market projections indicate a decrease in occupational needs, or when student enrollment, interest, retention, placement, and other variables indicate that the program is no longer needed. Courses are changed based on new technology or developments within the discipline or industry. Advisory committees play a significant role in assisting instructors in changing or updating courses. Courses are discontinued when the subject matter has been deemed irrelevant or obsolete. In technical programs classes are usually redeveloped every two-three years.

**IP15** Identifying learning support needs is accomplished through the use of faculty, staff, and student input, data collected from surveys, the planning and budgeting process, and community representatives.

More information about students' needs is learned directly from students through faculty/course evaluations, input from the Board of Governors, the Mystic Advising and Counseling Center, advising, and informal conversations. Assessment and placement exams, such as the ACT, COMPASS, and Accuplacer, provide additional information about the kinds of learning support students will need. **As discussed further in 1P5 and 1P8, assessment and placement exams are also used to place students in appropriate developmental courses where they will improve their knowledge and skills preparatory to enrolling in regular college courses. (3D)**

The College Student Inventory (CSI), given to new students early in their first semester, reveals areas of need and provides a mechanism to connect students with appropriate support resources. This early intervention is designed to forge a positive relationship between students and advisors who can refer them to campus services for assistance. Two additional surveys, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI), also provide insight into students' needs and their satisfaction with campus support services.

**Long term support needs of students are addressed through:**

- **career and personal counseling and advising**
- **multicultural office and coordinator**
- **student success course**
- **open computer labs**
- **library print and electronic resources**
- **an active library instruction program aimed at helping students learn how to effectively assess and use research and information resources. (3D)**

**The Sykes Student Success Center offers numerous opportunities for the students to succeed through study skills workshops, presentations, and tutoring. Online tutoring is provided to students through Smarthinking and the state of North Dakota offers *TutorND*, free to North Dakota residents. (3D)**

**Effective teaching and learning is supported by a robust information technology services department that provides computer labs, wireless internet, access to specialized software, and technical support through a helpdesk. Faculty have access to instructional assistance through the Instructional Technology department. The College maintains up-to-date equipment, shops, performance spaces, galleries, and laboratories. Clinical sites are maintained by our medical partners and are regularly evaluated by BSC and the facilities' accreditors. Campus buildings, including the library and instructional spaces, are attractive, well-equipped, modern facilities. (3D)**

Community input is provided by technical program advisory committees. Employer surveys provide feedback on student preparedness as they enter the job market. The data from advisory committee members and employer surveys enables the College to assess the value of support services.

Faculty support needs are identified through the annual planning and budgeting process. Strategic initiatives are submitted to address deficiencies in service and make improvements that will ultimately

impact student learning and development. The department review process offers faculty the opportunity to identify and discuss classroom conditions, resources, and any weaknesses in their programs or disciplines that affect learning.

Department meetings and department chair meetings, faculty in-service sessions, as well as informal dialog among faculty, are other avenues in which faculty identify ways to more effectively serve students. Instructors regularly make referrals to appropriate service points on campus.

**IP16 Student organizations, societies, and clubs are considered an integral part of the College's educational program. Involvement in student activities contributes significantly to students' personal development, intellectual growth, and social responsibility. (3E)** The establishment and maintenance of student organizations, societies, and clubs is governed by [student policy](#).

**BSC is committed to providing students with co-curricular activities that enrich the academic experience and that complement our learning objectives, and to meet our mission of providing a "high quality education."** (3E) One focus of our general education program is that of awareness and includes the recognition of the diversity of people, examination of one's attitudes, values, and assumptions, and knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of citizens in society. Through these objectives, BSC strives to help students develop leadership skills and community responsibility, to know and understand themselves better, and to become more adept at living in a diverse world.

Our general education program also focuses on communication and thought. Co-curricular activities provide expanded opportunities to develop oral and written communication skills and to communicate through creative expression. Problem solving, analysis of arguments, and the ability to draw reasonable conclusions are all enhanced in student activities and organizations. Developing students' awareness, communication, and thought processes is not only the goal of the curriculum but also a function of the many co-curricular clubs, organizations, activities, and events offered on campus for student involvement and enrichment.

Several student clubs are linked to technical programs and academic disciplines to extend activities beyond the classroom and to work toward common goals. These clubs include the Agriculture, Technology, and Natural Resources Club, Energy Club, Drama Club, Engineering Club, Student Nursing Organization, and Psychology Club. Faculty advisors for the clubs assist in aligning club activities with professional and program, discipline, or course competencies. In some of these clubs, students have the opportunity to compete in local, state, and national competitions. Student participation in these organizations strengthens classroom skills and enhances leadership, teamwork, and communication skills. Several of the clubs have a service component and sponsor projects to support the College or local community.

In addition to program or discipline related clubs, other student activities are available on campus. Intramural sports are open to all students who want to participate in a team sport. Students interested in writing, editing, and photography can be involved in the student newspaper, the literary magazine, and the online news cast, Mysticast.

Through BSC's athletic, theater, art, and music programs, students develop and improve learning and performance abilities. National competitions, such as the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) basketball tournament and the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival offer BSC students opportunities for performance and intense competition that foster confidence and personal fulfillment. Art shows provide students the chance to display their artistic creations.

Leadership and personal growth are promoted through a variety of activities, in addition to those already mentioned. Students are encouraged to participate in the Board of Governors and act as student ambassadors. Phi Theta Kappa, an international honor society for two-year colleges, encourages scholarship, service, and leadership for its members. Students in some career and technical programs are encouraged to participate in Skills USA contests that develop leadership, as well as technical skills.

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Service learning experiences are available that involve students in the community. Through the recently completed AQIP Action Project, the service learning program was improved by the development of an online service learning class. The class was created to make a stronger connection between service and learning. The online class requires regular discussion with the instructor and other service learning students, as well as student reflections about their service learning experience. (3E)

As a community college, Bismarck State has a varied mission. Most importantly, the College focuses on the education of students, both for those who will transfer to other institutions and those who are entering the world of work. In addition, BSC provides non-credit enrichment courses/programs for the local and surrounding communities and offers workforce training to business and industry. The College is structured in a way that ensures that the mission is met. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning has responsibility for assuring the collection of data that demonstrates that BSC is meeting its goals and overall mission. (3E)

**IP17** Bismarck State College uses a variety of methods to determine that the students who are awarded degrees and certificates have met our learning and development expectations. We do this by regularly obtaining information on how well-prepared our students are for employment. Results are used to make program improvements. The tools used to gather the information include:

- graduate follow-up survey one year after graduation
- employer satisfaction survey
- licensure or certification exam results
- feedback from employer advisory committees
- employer evaluations for students completing internships and clinical experiences.

Employer feedback, both formal and informal, is a valuable resource for determining how well our students are performing on the job and the adequacy of our teaching practices and learning outcomes. Surveys of employers are developed on campus and completed annually by employers. Additionally, the NDUS has regularly conducted a survey of all employers of University System graduates to determine their satisfaction with the graduates' skills, knowledge, and abilities. Feedback is obtained informally through advisory committee members who, as subject matter experts, are in an excellent position to provide information on our graduates' skills and abilities.

Several programs, particularly in health careers, require that students pass a state or national licensure or certification examinations. Other programs require or strongly encourage students to take skills examinations for specialized certifications.

A number of technical programs use internships as a means for students to draw together their classroom learning into real world experiences. In programs such as Criminal Justice and Human Services, internships serve as capstone experiences; in other programs internships are optional, but highly recommended, and serve to mesh on-campus learning and field work. Students in health-related programs are rigorously evaluated by clinical supervisors, providing an excellent method to determine how effectively students have met learning outcomes. Program and general education assessment activities are additional methods that provide direct and indirect measures of learning.

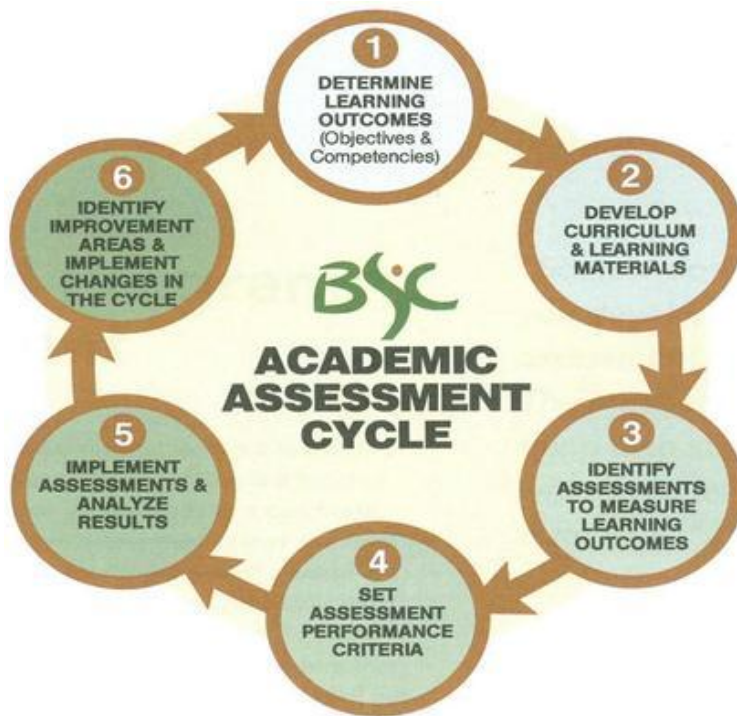
**IP18** Goals for student learning are clearly stated for courses and programs, including general education. These goals are a part of each program's assessment plan and communicated to students through the course syllabus and other program information. (4B) The processes for designing the formal assessment of student learning at Bismarck State College are the responsibility of the Academic Assessment Committee with input from faculty members. The committee consists of faculty from technical programs and from general education disciplines. In addition, the provost, effectiveness and assessment coordinator, and the associate vice president for the National Energy Center of Excellence are permanent members. The committee is headed by the associate vice president for institutional effectiveness and strategic planning. (4B) The committee meets monthly throughout the



academic year with a committee retreat culminating the year's activities. The retreat serves as a venue to evaluate the effectiveness of our assessment program and to finalize plans for the coming academic year.

The assessment plan promotes assessment at pre-enrollment, at the classroom level, and at the program level for general education and technical programs. Assessment timelines, responsibilities, and resources form the components of the assessment plan. **BSC follows good practice in establishing assessment processes and activities and follows an assessment cycle that encompasses the development of outcomes and measurements, implementation of assessments, analysis of assessment data, and instituting course and program improvements. (4B)**

The BSC assessment cycle is shown below:



*Figure 1.4 BSC assessment cycle*

To promote student success, incoming assessments of students were implemented in 1997-1998. Pre-enrollment assessment is required for first time and non-continuously enrolled degree-seeking students. Assessment scores are screened for proper placement of students in math, English, reading, and limited enrollment programs. Incoming assessment data is included the annual assessment report.

Course specific outcome assessment and campus-wide essential learning outcomes are the responsibility of individual instructors. Course-specific outcomes are used by instructors within their courses, while the campus-wide essential learning data is also forwarded to the Academic Assessment Committee and to the General Education Committee for analysis and course revalidation. The essential learning outcomes are incorporated into our existing ACT (Awareness, Communication, Thought) format. Support for individual instructors is provided throughout this process by members of the Academic Assessment and General Education Committees.

**The general education assessment program focuses on three main categories of student learning: awareness, communication, and thought (see response to 1P1). For a number of years, these categories have been assessed on a three-year rotation cycle. (4B)** At this point, the ELOs have been identified for general education courses and the courses have been mapped. The assessment timeline/cycle is in the planning stages; the hope is to implement the assessments in fall of 2013.

Classroom level informal assessment is the responsibility of individual instructors. **Program assessment for the general education program and for technical programs is managed by the assessment committee. Technical programs are on a two-year assessment cycle. The first year consists of formalizing a plan for assessment, developing assessment activities and processes, completing a matrix of assessment measures, and gathering the data. In the second year, assessment results are analyzed at the program and departmental levels. Action plans are developed and improvements implemented in year two, after which, the assessment cycle begins again. (4B)**

**A majority of BSC faculty members participate in assessment activities and plans. Their participation is strengthened through the efforts of the assessment committee members who believe that one of their principal roles is that of providing assistance to faculty in developing assessment plans and activities, and to provide faculty development opportunities that increase understanding of the value of assessment. (4B)** The assessment committee members are regular presenters at faculty development days prior to the start of fall semester, where they may present assessment results, introduce new assessment concepts, or develop plans with faculty for the year's assessment activities.

### 1R1

Technical program faculty members collect and analyze student learning through:

- lab exercises
- comprehensive projects
- internship evaluations
- clinical evaluations
- portfolios
- skills assessments
- case studies
- presentations/demonstrations
- comprehensive exams
- reports

General education faculty use:

- writing assignments
- presentations
- case studies
- comprehensive exams
- capstone projects

Other measures collected and analyzed include:

- licensure and certification data
- graduation rates
- Sophomore Survey results
- national surveys
- retention rates
- placement rates
- student course evaluations

**1R2** Performance results for common student learning and development objectives follow the ACT (Awareness, Communication, Thought) three year cycle of general education assessment. Rubrics have been developed for each of the specific objectives of the program. The following tables show the performance results in each area:

**2009-2010 Thought**

Competency	Indicator	Results
Identification of a problem and an approach to the solution that is realistic and creative	Identification	Accomplished, Competent – 60% Developing, Beginning – 40% N=242
	Approach	Accomplished, Competent – 64% Developing, Beginning – 36% N=203
	Creativity	Accomplished, Competent – 67% Developing, Beginning – 33% N=203
Interpretation of results and the reasonable drawing of conclusions	Numerical Interpretation	Accomplished, Competent – 76% Developing, Beginning – 24% N=409
	Graphical Interpretation	Accomplished, Competent – 80% Developing, Beginning – 20% N=323
	Drawing Conclusions	Accomplished, Competent – 62% Developing, Beginning – 38% N=189
Recognition and analysis of arguments that support divergent theories and perspectives	Recognition	Accomplished, Competent – 52% Developing, Beginning – 48% N=82
	Analysis	Accomplished, Competent – 63% Developing, Beginning – 37% N=111

*Figure 1.5 Performance results for Thought***2010-2011 Awareness**

Competency	Indicator	Results
Recognizing the diversity of people	Perception	Accomplished, Competent – 80% Developing, Beginning – 20% N=133
	Attitude Acceptance	Accomplished, Competent – 100% N=53
Examining one's attitudes, values, and assumptions	Identification (Self)	Accomplished, Competent – 87% Developing, Beginning – 13% N=186
	Recognition (group)	Accomplished, Competent – 94% Developing, Beginning – 6% N=50

*Figure 1.6 Performance results for Awareness*



**2011-2012 Written Communication and Oral Communication**

Competency	Indicator	Results
Written communication	Context of purpose	Accomplished, Competent – 70% Developing, Beginning – 30% N=253
	Content development	Accomplished, Competent – 63% Developing, Beginning – 37% N=253
	Genre and conventions	Accomplished, Competent – 54% Developing, Beginning – 46% N=253
	Sources and evidence	Accomplished, Competent – 60% Developing, Beginning – 40% N=253
	Syntax and mechanics	Accomplished, Competent – 60% Developing, Beginning – 40% N=253
Oral Communication	Organization	Accomplished, Competent – 79% Developing, Beginning – 21% N=105
	Language	Accomplished, Competent – 85% Developing, Beginning – 15% N=105
	Delivery	Accomplished, Competent – 77% Developing, Beginning – 23% N=105
	Supporting materials	Accomplished, Competent – 70% Developing, Beginning – 30% N=105
	Central message	Accomplished, Competent – 87% Developing, Beginning – 13% N=105

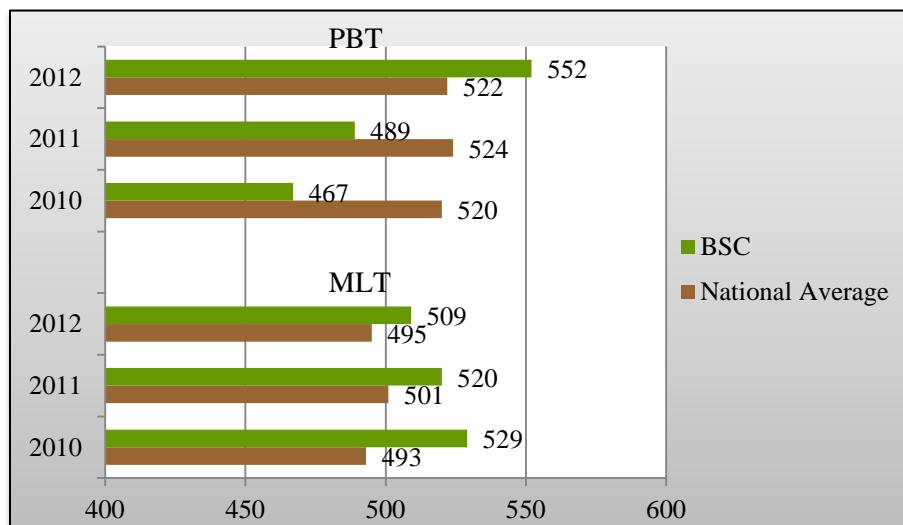
**Figure 1.7 Performance results for written and oral communication**

The 2011 Sophomore Survey was completed by 427 students. The survey revealed that 75% of students felt their ability in 13 academic/personal skill areas improved as a result of completing general education courses at BSC.

**IR3** Technical programs have specific learning objectives. These objectives are assessed and entered into TracDat to be monitored. The latest summary report of performance results for several programs are provided below:

- Electronics/Telecommunications Technology reports that overall examination comparisons to state and national averages show that the program average was 6.93% above the ND state average and 9.45% above the national average.
- 100% of the internship evaluations for the Human Services program showed average, above average, and excellent ratings for 15 students in the program
- the nursing program reported that their three competencies/measures were met at a 100% rate
- all three program objectives for surgical technology were met based upon a 100% pass rate on the certification exam. Employer surveys indicated an 85% satisfaction rate.

An illustration of mandatory exam data and licensure pass rates for medical laboratory technician, phlebotomy technician, practical nurse, and registered nurse are located in the following figures:



**Figure 1.8 National examinations for clinical lab technicians and phlebotomy technicians**

First Time Licensure Pass Rates						
	2010		2011		2012	
	BSC	National	BSC	National	BSC	National
CLS-MLT	100%	76%	100%	77%	100%	77%
PBT	100%	85%	85%	86%	100%	85%
PN	100%	86.4%	100%	86.7%	100%	83.9%
RN	90.9%	88.8%	100%	87.7%	100%	88.9%

**Figure 1.9 First time licensure pass rates**

**IR4** BSC uses placement rates, employer surveys, alumni/graduate surveys, and licensure and certification rates as evidence that students have acquired the knowledge and skills required by stakeholders.

The Counseling and Career Services office tracks technical student placement into employment positions and annually prepares a placement report presenting the data (see 1P4). This report contains information concerning graduates of the respective programs in which they were enrolled. Students are identified for follow-up by the Registrar's Graduate Report.

Employer surveys are used to provide further evidence that students are prepared as they enter the job market. Counseling and Career Services office personnel work with technical program faculty to survey those employers who hire BSC graduates. The data gathered is compiled and provided to faculty in the program areas. Employer survey results are then included in program assessment reports. In addition, the latest NDUS employer survey provides information from employers who hire our students. Results of the employer survey can be found in Figure 3.7.

BSC alumni provide valuable information about the quality of instruction at BSC and the level of preparedness for their employment as a result of their experience at the College. Results of the ACT Alumni Outcomes Survey with comparison data are found in question 3R6, including Figures 3.9 and 3.10.

Data from the National Community College Benchmark Project (NCCBP) shows strengths in the following areas related to student success:

Benchmark	Value	% Rank	Number
% completed in three years – full-time, first-time	42.17%	97%	261
Credit college-level retention, success – enrollee success rate	79.72%	85%	265
Credit developmental retention, success – math completer success rate	80.65%	90%	261
Credit developmental retention, success – reading completer success rate	88.89%	88%	242
Institution-wide credit grades - % enrollee success	79.52%	90%	265

*Figure 1.10 NCCBP student success benchmark results*

Many of our technical programs require that students take licensure, certification, or national examinations for employment. The following programs have mandated licensure examinations for students:

- Computer Support Specialist – MCP Microsoft Certified Professional
- Information Processing Specialist – MCAS Microsoft Certified Application Specialist
- Phlebotomy – NAACLS Board of Registry National Accrediting Agency Clinical Laboratory Science
- Clinical Laboratory Specialist – NAACLS Board of Registry National Accrediting Agency Clinical Laboratory Science
- Practical and Associate Degree Nursing – N-CLEX.

In addition to required examinations, there are a number of programs that have voluntary licensure and/or completion examinations:

- Power Plant/Process Plant – NIULPE-National Institute for the Uniform Licensing of Power Engineers and the Minnesota Boiler Operators Certification
- Agribusiness – Private and Commercial Applicators License Tests
- Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning – EPA 608 Certification, RSES Refrigeration Service Engineer Society Test and the National Center for Construction Education and Research
- Automotive Collision Technology – ASE Certification Test
- Automotive Technology – ASE Certification Test
- Welding – Qualifying of Welders to AWS D1.1: 2000 Structural Welding Code
- Electronics Technology – ISCET International Society of Certified Electronic Technicians
- Carpentry – National Center for Construction Education and Research certification.

**IR5** BSC's performance results for learning support services can be shown through the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI). The SSI tracks three scores: an importance score, a satisfaction score, and a performance gap score. The performance gap indicates the difference between how students view the importance of an item and their level of satisfaction. A larger performance gap on an item indicates that an institution is not meeting the expectation; a small gap score indicates that an institution is close to meeting an expectation, and a negative performance gap shows that an institution is exceeding students' expectations.

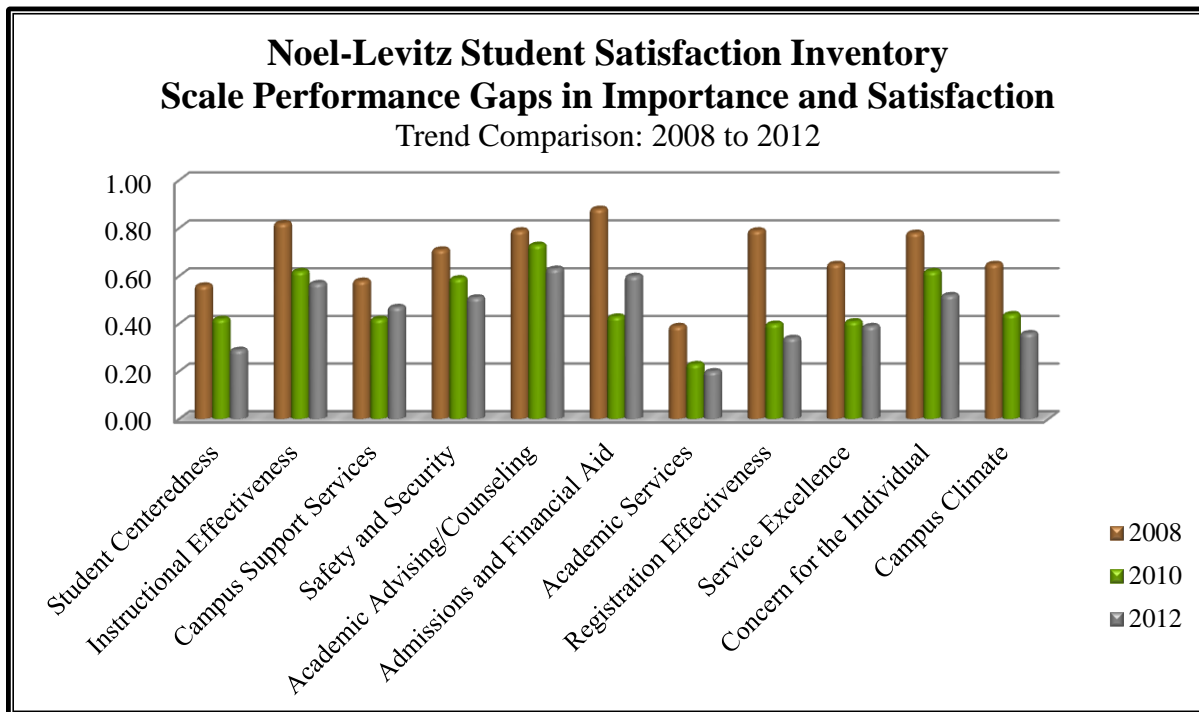


Figure 1.11 SSI trend comparisons of performance gaps

One assessment-related question on the SSI, *The assessment and course placement procedures are reasonable* has a mean of 5.97 and a performance gap of 0.25 compared to a 5.25 mean and gap of 0.71 for other community colleges nationally.

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) also measures student satisfaction with learning support processes as shown in Figure 1.12. Importance and satisfaction are measured on a three point scale.

Measure	BSC Satisfaction Mean	Small Colleges Satisfaction Mean	BSC Importance Mean	Small Colleges Importance Mean
Academic advising/ planning	2.22	2.29	2.48	2.56
Peer or other tutoring	2.17	2.19	2.07	2.13
Skill labs	2.16	2.28	2.08	2.22
Computer lab	2.57	2.51	2.38	2.48

Figure 1.12 CCSSE results for learning support processes

The Alumni Outcomes Survey asks questions related to learning support services. Results from that survey reveal that alumni were pleased with services provided at BSC. On a five point scale, Library Services and Materials were ranked #1 with a 4.26 average; Academic Advising was 4.21, and Academic Support Services (tutoring and related services) was rated 4.13.

Additional information about learning support processes and services can be found in 6R2.

**IR6** Comparisons of performance results for processes in Helping Students Learn can found in 1R3 through 1R5. Comparisons are made with state and national means.

The Student Satisfaction Inventory administered in 2012 asks a number of questions of students regarding the effectiveness of learning. The SSI was not administered at all ND two year colleges, thus, our 2012

results are compared to 2010. National comparisons for 2012 are provided. Our results, when compared with community colleges across the nation, indicate that student satisfaction is higher in all of the survey's scales, as is displayed in Figure 1.13.

Scale	Bismarck State College		National Community Colleges		North Dakota Two-Year Composite 2010	
	Satisfaction	Gap	Satisfaction	Gap	Satisfaction	Gap
Student Centeredness	5.94	0.29	5.39	0.62	5.45	0.46
Instructional Effectiveness	5.80	0.57	5.42	0.79	5.44	0.61
Responsiveness to Diverse Populations	5.84		5.51		5.37	
Campus Support Services	5.26	0.47	4.98	0.52	4.91	0.32
Safety and Security	5.55	0.51	5.03	1.02	4.94	0.83
Academic Advising/Counseling	5.76	0.63	5.20	0.97	5.49	0.56
Admissions & Financial Aid	5.69	0.60	5.16	0.92	5.26	0.59
Academic Services	5.98	0.20	5.49	0.59	5.48	0.30
Registration Effectiveness	5.96	0.34	5.44	0.75	5.50	0.47
Service Excellence	5.79	0.39	5.29	0.70	5.35	0.46
Concern for the Individual	5.77	0.52	5.23	0.88	5.37	0.60
Campus Climate	5.83	0.36	5.32	0.69	5.35	0.51

*Figure 1.13 SSI state and national comparison (seven point scale)*

The Priorities Survey of Online Learners (PSOL) (shown below) provides a picture of the satisfaction of students enrolled in online classes.

Scale	Bismarck State College		National Community Colleges		ND PSOL Composite 2010	
	Satisfaction	Gap	Satisfaction	Gap	Satisfaction	Gap
Institutional Perceptions	5.91	0.44	5.89	0.61	5.85	0.44
Academic Services	5.77	0.49	5.81	0.57	5.69	0.54
Instructional Services	5.81	0.43	5.81	0.59	5.73	0.51
Enrollment Services	6.02	0.32	6.00	0.49	5.85	0.44
Student Services	5.87	0.34	5.77	0.58	5.67	0.47

*Figure 1.14 PSOL state and national comparison (seven point scale)*

**III** Several improvements have been made in this category since the last portfolio was submitted. We piloted a first year experience course, Seminar for Success, for students who placed in two developmental courses. Seminar for Success offers students information about college services, provides a supportive classroom environment, shares important academic and personal management skills, and helps students make a smooth transition to college life. Future plans are to broaden participation in the program.

Improvements have been made in the assessment process for technical programs. A faculty assessment handbook was created that clearly lays out the process for faculty to use to assess their program outcomes. With the addition of the effectiveness and assessment coordinator, more help is available to individual faculty members as they review learning outcomes, map their curriculum, and update their graduate surveys.

An AQIP Action Project is underway to improve student learning assessment processes and to ensure that data is used effectively for program and general education assessment. To achieve our improvement goals, we will develop a series of Action Projects aimed at improving assessment activities and practice. The first Action Project focuses on faculty understanding of assessment and determining what faculty members need to improve their assessment efforts. Future Action Projects will help us refine our assessment processes, provide faculty development, and analyze and use assessment data more effectively.

Other recent improvements include the use of lecture capture software to provide students with access to classroom lectures that can be viewed as needed. The Learn by Doing initiative outlined several ways that active learning can be strengthened throughout the curriculum. One improvement is the requirement for faculty applicants to demonstrate their support of active learning and their ability to incorporate active learning practices into their courses.

**112** From the time BSC was approved by the Higher Learning Commission to use AQIP as our means of maintaining regional accreditation, we have been actively developing a continuous quality improvement culture. Improving student learning was, and is, the central theme. The arrival of a new president two years into the process brought a focus on two additional cultural attributes that support continuous quality improvement: empowerment and innovation. Through ongoing training for all employees over several years, and with the unstinting support and modeling of this culture by the president, we have made measurable progress in establishing an institutional culture that celebrates innovation, rewards the active identification and improvement of areas of weakness, and that applauds reasonable risk-taking.

A well-funded Office of Innovation, and an even better funded Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning provide philosophical, pragmatic, and fiscal support for projects targeting specific areas destined for improvement.

The Title III grant allowed for the addition of three staff members. Through the grant, and with the help of the staff, we are building an evidence-based culture and a focus on data-driven decision making. The effectiveness and assessment coordinator has the role of working directly with faculty to help them develop sound and effective assessment practices. TracDat is used as a repository of assessment plans with a mechanism to enter and track assessment results. As faculty members develop more familiarity and skill with TracDat, reporting of results is expected to be improved and needed actions clearer.

The AQIP Action Project on assessment also helps to establish the importance of high quality assessment activities and contributes to the nascent evidence-based culture that is developing at BSC. Adopting the essential learning outcomes as suggested by the statewide General Education Council and the revalidation of general education courses strengthens the curriculum and reinforces the need for sound assessment data.

A culture focused on improving learning is demonstrated in the 2013-2018 Strategic Plan. Two action items in the plan are the development of a Teaching and Learning Center and improving reading and writing across the curriculum.