

AQIP Category Nine, BUILDING COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS, examines your institution's relationships – current and potential – to analyze how they contribute to the institution's accomplishing its mission.

Processes (P)

9P1. How do you create, prioritize, and build relationships with the educational institutions and other organizations from which you receive your students?

9P2. How do you create, prioritize, and build relationships with the educational institutions and employers that depend on the supply of your students and graduates that meet those organizations' requirements?

9P3. How do you create, prioritize, and build relationships with the organizations that provide services to your students?

9P4. How do you create, prioritize, and build relationships with the organizations that supply materials and services to your institution?

9P5. How do you create, prioritize, and build relationships with the education associations, external agencies, consortia partners, and the general community with whom you interact?

9P6. How do you ensure that your partnership relationships are meeting the varying needs of those involved?

9P7. How do you create and build relationships between and among departments and units within your institution? How do you assure integration and communication across these relationships?

Results (R)

9R1. What measures of building collaborative relationships, external and internal, do you collect and analyze regularly?

9R2. What are your performance results in building your key collaborative relationships, external and internal? [9R1]

9R3. How do your results for the performance of your processes for Building Collaborative Relationships compare with the performance results of other higher education institutions and, if appropriate, of organizations outside of higher education?

Improvement (I)

9I1. What recent improvements have you made in this category? How systematic and comprehensive are your processes and performance results for *Building Collaborative Relationships*?

9I2. How do your culture and infrastructure help you to select specific processes to improve and to set targets for improved performance results in *Building Collaborative Relationships*?

Building Collaborative Relationships

Three foundational principles of BSC are “Engage, Connect, and Deliver.” These principles are expressed in our extensive network of internal and external partnerships and other collaborative relationships. Not only do we strive to engage and connect with students, but we also do so with the community, business and industry, private and public educational institutions and agencies, and many others. We recognize the value and need to pool resources and share expertise. Collaborations and partnerships have allowed the College to be more efficient and to expand services and opportunities.

BSC has significant experience in building collaborative relationships and partnerships, and has developed many integrated processes in this category to facilitate these activities. Most processes are well-designed and stable. They are well managed and monitored for effectiveness and changing needs. Key strategic and operational goals are tracked with an electronic tracking system and reported regularly.

Even though we believe we are effective in building collaborations, we do recognize that there is room for improvement. Through the strategic planning process we identified the need to strengthen our collaborative relationships and to build on the success the College has already experienced. One objective in the plan is to improve collaboration processes to streamline efforts and reduce duplication. A related strategy is to develop a collaboration team that will work across campus to centralize collaborative efforts. This strategy will improve efficiency and raise levels of awareness of our many collaborative efforts. Another strategy is to increase the efficiency of our workforce. This strategy encourages streamlined work functions and more collaboration and cross-training among departments.

With a focus on collaboration identified in our new strategic plan, BSC should make more progress and improvement in this area that is so important to the College.

9P1 BSC is actively involved in creating, prioritizing, and building relationships with educational and other organizations from which we receive students. Priorities are established through strategic planning and the identification of goals and objectives at the college and program levels. Partnerships generally arise out of an identified need and are structured to contribute to the success of the College.

The College strives to collaborate with many kinds of partners, actively seeks relationships with partners in and outside of the region, and responds to partnering requests by exploring the benefits for the College and the potential partner. Members of the Executive Council, the Operations Council, and other committees and employees monitor development of emerging needs in the industries served by the College, in other educational institutions, and in the marketplace to identify opportunities for new partnerships. The College also encourages students, faculty, and staff to suggest prospective partners.

Recruiting is an important part of the College’s partnerships, especially with area high schools. BSC reaches out to prospective students and the high schools they attend through school visits from college personnel, by bringing high school students to BSC for campus visits, through mailings, by hosting career fairs and other college informational events, and offering financial aid presentations. The relationship with the Bismarck Public Schools, in particular, is strong because of the Career and Technical Center and the Career Academy located on the BSC campus. These facilities provide the educational setting for career and technical programs for both the public school district and BSC students. This collaboration functions very well for both entities in sharing facilities and equipment, and in reducing the high cost of providing technical programs, such as agriculture, automotive technology, automotive collision, electronics, and welding.

Another way BSC partners with area high schools is by offering dual credit and early entry enrollment for high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors who may benefit from getting a head start on college. These classes, taught by a BSC instructor or qualified high school teacher (BSC adjuncts), are available for students to take at BSC or at their local high school. Through the [Great Western Network](#) 30-35 classes taught by our full-time or adjunct faculty are transmitted each semester from our campus or high school sites via interactive video. This arrangement has proved beneficial for 42 regional high schools in supplementing course options and providing students an early start in acquiring college credit. BSC has also developed articulation agreements with the Bismarck and Mandan public schools, allowing students to use part of their high school course work to supplant some college courses, thereby reducing college costs and saving time.

BSC partners with the ND Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, offering classes throughout the academic year to inmates at the state penitentiary. In addition, BSC offers an auto technology program at the Missouri River Correctional Center (MRCC), a minimum security facility; this program has received the Automotive Industry Planning Council Award for Excellence for over ten years. Continuing Education, Training, and Innovation (CETI) at BSC also provides non-credit training in welding at the MRCC and continues to explore opportunities to develop additional programs.

BSC has agreements in place with all branches of the military to increase recruitment of military personnel and their families in technical and general education courses. The College offers six online degree programs through the Navy Distance Learning Partnership and has established one Army Career Degree for the 21P – Prime Power School. Selected credits are awarded to BSC’s energy degrees after successful completion of this military school. For the Air Force, BSC offers general education classes each semester in an effort to assist airmen in acquiring associate degrees. BSC’s partnership with the military also includes a close relationship with the North Dakota National Guard (NDNG) and the College enrolls many National Guard soldiers.

9P2 Building relationships with educational organizations and employers that depend on the supply of BSC’s graduates are achieved in several ways:

- participation of College personnel with the North Dakota University System, Board of Higher Education, Academic Affairs Council, College Technical Education Council, Career and Technical Education, and others
- articulation agreements with other colleges
- regular interaction of BSC personnel with those at other institutions
- connecting regularly with employers, and business and industry leaders, including the use of advisory committees for career and technical programs that are composed of knowledgeable professionals
- participation of BSC personnel in various System-wide councils.

Educational Institutions:

As a community college, BSC recognizes the importance of BSC graduates having the skills and knowledge required to transfer to other colleges. Through NDUS and its various councils and committees, the transfer of students among North Dakota colleges has become much easier. With the common course numbering agreement and the General Education Requirements Transfer Agreement (GERTA), all colleges can be assured that courses meet the standards and objectives agreed upon by faculty across the state college system. The effectiveness of these two agreements is amplified by the close ties developed by colleagues from NDUS institutions as they interact with one another as system-wide councils meet.

In an effort to provide local access to public baccalaureate education, BSC entered into cooperative agreements with Dickinson State University, Minot State University, and Sanford Health College of Nursing. In addition, graduate programs are offered through the University of North Dakota. These cooperative colleges work closely with BSC to readily transition BSC students and graduates into their college programs. These arrangements are a boon to students who are unable to leave the local area.

Educational partnerships are prioritized by faculty, staff, and administration based on direct correlation to the mission, goals, and objectives of the institution, departmental goals, resources needed, current capacity, and benefit to the student. Formal agreements with other institutions, such as articulation agreements, must be approved by the provost.

Employers:

Relationships with employers are created and built through personal connections with employees in the course of their daily work. Through the placement office, employers are surveyed for their perceptions of BSC graduates. Internships and cooperative education programs offer employers a firsthand look at the abilities of students. Program advisory committee members are very valuable in ensuring that students are learning what is needed for success on the job. Students in nursing and allied health programs complete clinical experiences in partnering medical facilities, benefiting the student, medical facility, and college.

Many programs have developed strong relationships with local and regional employers. This is particularly true of energy programs. Because of the national scope of these programs, many business and other organizational relationships exist to meet the economic development and workforce needs of the energy industry. For over 25 years of energy education, BSC has continuously responded to the ever-changing workplace needs with the high quality training and state-of-the-art technology that can be customized to a company's specific needs and requirements. A list of the industry partnerships can be found on the [energy education website](#).

BSC is a member of the Bismarck-Mandan Chamber of Commerce and works with the Bismarck-Mandan Development Association. Through these associations, college personnel are able to ascertain community needs and concerns, and to ensure that BSC graduates meet the requirements of businesses and employers. Through the resource development office, relationships are established and maintained with businesses and corporations that provide funding and scholarship support.

Partnerships with employers are prioritized based on state-defined priorities, institutional mission, goals, objectives, strategic planning, needs assessment surveys, and our institutional environmental scanning process.

9P3 BSC uses student and employee survey data, environmental scanning, and professional knowledge of faculty, staff, and administrators to prioritize student needs. Services to students are primarily provided through BSC, including housing, food service, custodial services, bookstore, and grounds keeping. Through the North Dakota University System, some services are centralized, such as ConnectND, the computer system for human resources, financial and student data. Other centralized services include [ODIN](#), a computer-based library catalog system, and the Interactive Video Network.

Bismarck State College was an early adopter of online education and partners with [Pearson eCollege](#) to deliver online course content in a highly interactive and engaging educational manner. Pearson eCollege is an application service provider that builds online courses for colleges and universities worldwide. The educators and technologists at Pearson eCollege provide professional services such as intensive faculty training, support in course development and design, evaluation and research, enrollment, marketing, and 24/7 Help Desk support.

BSC has a memorandum of understanding with the North Dakota National Guard that provides office space for a representative of the National Guard to be on campus. The role of this person is to assist students from all military service branches with questions regarding educational benefits and the application process involved in each. Additionally, the National Guard has installed a kiosk in our student union that allows military students who have a computer access card (CAC) to access military networks and check their official email.

9P4 Organizations that provide materials and services to BSC include businesses in a variety of industry sectors. These relationships are created, prioritized, and built through personal contacts and through formal policies and contracts. Budget managers and staff responsible for the oversight of contracted services are essential in building relationships.

In accordance with North Dakota law and SBHE policy, BSC develops requests for proposals for construction projects, equipment leases, and other contracts to ensure the best return on investment of public funds. The BSC [general policy on purchasing](#) (aligned with SBHE policy 803.1) is very thorough in outlining the required procedures and necessary steps that must be followed by any employee authorized to make purchases. The policy includes procedures for purchase orders, bid processes, payment, and other requirements. A campus purchasing officer oversees purchasing procedures and assists employees to ensure the policy and procedures are followed. Purchases and procedures are regularly audited by the state.

The BSC Foundation and Office of Resource Development are particularly instrumental in working with businesses to acquire funding and equipment for new programs. Through the efforts of the foundation and resource development personnel, the College is able to secure significant donations essential for the development of programs and the acquisition of equipment and supplies. Bismarck State College and the Bismarck State College Foundation are very diligent about being mindful of multiple requests to our industry partners. BSC employees must make requests through the Foundation for donations of materials or services.

The University of North Dakota Family Practice Center, and extension of the medical school, and BSC are currently planning a jointly staffed student medical clinic to be open on the BSC campus at least two half-days per week, beginning Fall 2013.

9P5 Bismarck State College creates, prioritizes, and builds relationships with organizations, external agencies, consortia partners, and general community for the following reasons:

- to meet federal, state, and other regulatory requirements (e.g., North Dakota University System)
- to provide access to instructional programs and enhance quality (e.g., AQIP, Dakota Nursing Program)
- to maintain professional skills of employees and expand institutional knowledge (e.g., discipline-related associations, American Association of Community Colleges)
- to meet workforce needs (e.g., Train ND)
- to be more efficient and share resources (e.g., paramedic program)
- to meet the objective of the strategic plan (e.g. increase internships, improve collaborative processes).

Partnerships and collaborations are prioritized to fit the mission of the College, our capacity and resources, and the relevance of the partnership to our priorities.

Bismarck State College is a member of several national educational associations, including the:

- American Association of Community Colleges
- League for Innovation in Community Colleges
- National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO)
- Association of Community College Trustees
- Council for Accreditation for Higher Education (CHEA)
- Council of College & Military Educators (CCME)
- Community College Baccalaureate Association.
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State education entities with which we maintain relationships include the North Dakota University System and the North Dakota Department of Career and Technical Education. From NDCTE, BSC

receives funding for technical programs and assistance from staff. To ensure effective technical programs, NDCTE conducts a program review every five years.

Relationships with external agencies include the Higher Learning Commission for institutional accreditation. Various technical programs also have accreditations and/or require the successful completion of licensure or certification exams. These programs are listed in Figure 1.1.

The College is a member of the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL). CAEL is a nonprofit international organization whose services provide solutions for business, higher education, and community and workforce development. Through our association with CAEL we work to broaden opportunities for adult learners.

Through CAEL Bismarck State College maintains an agreement with the Energy Providers Coalition for Education (EPCE). EPCE is a group of industry representatives that develops, sponsors, and promotes industry-driven, standardized, quality online learning programs to meet the workforce needs of the energy industry. BSC's affiliation with the CAEL-sponsored Energy Providers Coalition for Education helped expand BSC's adult programs. BSC brought the coalition many years of experience in energy education. The EPCE network gave BSC the opportunity to expand into Electric Power and Nuclear Power markets and to provide curriculum to a national pool of energy industry employees.

BSC has several educational partners for the provision of programs and courses as shown in Figure 9.1. We have collaborated for more than twenty-five years with Medcenter One Hospital (now Sanford Health) for the delivery of our Clinical Laboratory Technician program and for a dozen years with St. Alexius Medical Center to offer the EMT-Paramedic Program. In the fall of 2012, we began the partnership with Miles Community College in Montana to provide the technical courses for the Clinical Laboratory Technician program. The Dakota Nursing Program (DNP) is a partnership of five community colleges in North Dakota whose mission is to respond to the nursing needs of the people of North Dakota by delivering a high-quality nursing educational program to students through innovative instruction. Students can study close to home without uprooting families and find employment where they reside upon completion of their degrees. BSC also partners with the North Dakota Department of Corrections to provide academic and technical courses.

Educational Partner	Educational Program
St. Alexius Medical Center	EMT-Paramedic Program
Miles Community College	Clinical Laboratory Technician
Dakota Nursing Program	Licensed Practical Nurse; Associate Degree Nurse
ND Department of Corrections	Academic courses; auto technology; welding
Garden City Community College	Energy courses
Connecticut Community College System	Electric Power Technology courses

Figure 9.1 Educational program partnerships

The college is committed to workforce training and is a member of the Bismarck-Mandan Chamber of Commerce, the Bismarck-Mandan Development Association, and the North Dakota Chamber of Commerce. We maintain close ties to industry through our advisory committees and involvement with numerous business and industry organizations, including the Center for Energy Workforce Development, the Information Technology Council of ND, the ND Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives, and others.

BSC is pleased to play an important role in a vibrant community. We have formed strong relationships with community organizations and participate in civic organizations. The campus takes part in community activities, such as United Way campaigns and Jeans Day for local charities, United Blood Services for campus blood drives, and similar activities. Many BSC employees serve as leaders of community groups and volunteer to help local charities. By maintaining this level of involvement, BSC shares its talent,

resources, and knowledge with the community. We are also provided the opportunity to hear the concerns and needs of the community and to respond to requests. Local businesses and employers collaborate with the College by hiring students, attending job fairs, serving on advisory committees, and serving as adjunct faculty members.

Bismarck State College collaborates with the City of Bismarck, the Parks and Recreation Department, local schools, and the University of Mary to provide and manage a Community Bowl to be used for field and track sports, football, soccer and other field activities and community events. A similar collaboration resulted in the construction of the BSC Aquatic and Wellness Center. This Center on the BSC campus is operated by the Parks and Recreation Department and is open to the public, BSC students, and BSC employees for swimming, fitness classes and training, and the use of athletic equipment.

These and similar projects are part of the BSC campus facilities plan and are a part of the budgeting process. Revenues for these projects are usually obtained through a combination of efforts, including the regular college budget, legislative funding, and contributions from the business community, agencies, and individuals. The 2013-2018 Strategic Plan includes an objective “to integrate BSC and community activities, facilities, and recreation areas, such as the Community Bowl, the Aquatics and Wellness Center, and the Missouri River.” Initial planning for this objective is being done by the Excellence Through Leadership program participants as their leadership project.

9P6 Partner relationships are monitored frequently by faculty, staff, and administrators of the College. Personal contact is critical in ensuring that we know and understand the needs of our various partners and can respond, as appropriate. We regularly review articulation and affiliation agreements, monitor occupational and workforce needs and shifts, and survey employers.

There are more than 20 advisory committees for the various career and technical education programs. These committees are made up of BSC faculty and various business and industry leaders. The committees meet regularly to discuss how effectively BSC is meeting the needs of business and industry in the various programs. Business and industry experts share their knowledge of career tasks and competency requirements for specific occupations.

Admissions and Enrollment Services provides satisfaction surveys to all high school counselors through the DACAC (Dakota Association of College Admissions Counselors) to determine whether the high school’s needs are being met. They also provide surveys to the students and parents who attend the various high school events that BSC offers.

All participants and partners involved in events, conferences, community programs, enrichment classes and workforce training sessions through the Division of Continuing Education, Training and Innovation (CETI) are provided with evaluation forms or links to surveys to determine whether the participants are satisfied and to determine whether their needs are being met. All programs through CETI are also analyzed by the retention and repeat business of their partners and participants.

9P7 Bismarck State College has informal and formal processes for creating and building relationships within the College in a culture that is quality-focused and encourages open dialogue. The Executive Council, Operations Council, the Faculty Senate, the Staff Senate, and other committees meet regularly. Weekly meetings of the department chairs and the dean of academic affairs are essential in ensuring that communication flows to academic departments and that concerns and problems are shared. Ad hoc committees and cross-functional teams are formed to plan and/or implement all projects. The administrative teams of the Academic Affairs Division and the National Energy Center of Excellence, the

two academic divisions of the College, meet bimonthly to share information, discuss issues of mutual concern, and to plan strategies for improving communications between the divisions.

An objective of the 2010-2012 Strategic Plan was to investigate ways to improve communication, trust, and efficiency on campus. The Operations Council drew together a cross functional team to address the objective. The result of the team's deliberations resulted in a report that outlined several ways that improvements could be made. Process mapping was initiated as a result of the team's recommendations and other recommendations are being implemented, as well.

Employee training sessions are designed to communicate, provide information, and encourage team building. Strategic initiatives, WE projects, and AQIP Action Projects help to coalesce teams and share information. Faculty members strengthen the integration of new faculty through the mentoring program.

Bismarck State College utilizes many forms of communication including the CORE portal where BSC now provides employees with the latest news. The many ways in which we communicate as a campus can be found in 5P7.

9R1 Measures of building collaborative relationships that are collected and analyzed regularly include:

- college student enrollment data
- articulation agreements with high schools and colleges
- dual credit enrollments
- affiliation and clinical agreements and memoranda of understanding
- alumni survey
- employer survey
- TrainND contracts and surveys
- licensure and certification results
- internships and cooperative education
- donations to the BSC Foundation
- grant funding received.

9R2 The following information outlines results from some of Bismarck State College's collaborative relationships:

- student enrollment data can be found in 3R3
- there are 850 students enrolled in secondary CTE programs offered on campus in the Technical Center and Career Academy
- BSC has 70 agreements with higher education institutions which include affiliation agreements, collaborative agreements, clinical agreements, and transfer/articulation agreements. Four high school articulation agreements are in place.
- there has been an increased interest in dual credit options from the local high schools and from high school students and parents that is reflected in increased enrollments.

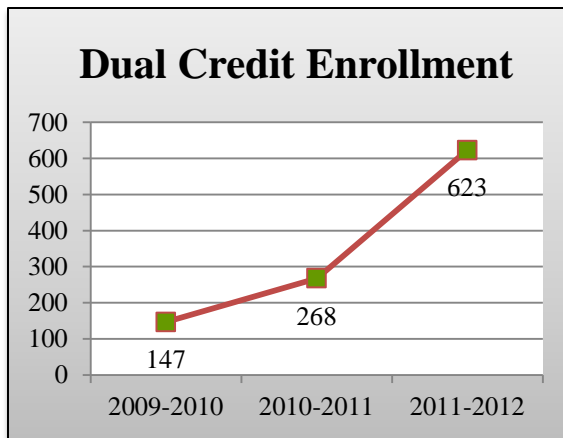


Figure 9.2 Dual credit enrollment

- the number of collaborative students that identify BSC as their home campus and are enrolled in credits at other NDUS institutions totaled 439 students between Fall 2010 – Fall 2012. For the same period, there were 1208 NDUS students taking classes collaboratively at BSC while declaring “degree seeking” status at another NDUS campus.
- alumni survey information is located in 3R6
- employer survey is located in 3R6
- results of TrainND activities are in 2R2
- licensure and certification results are provided in Figures 1.8 and 1.9
- the number of students participating in internships and/or cooperative education experiences has increased in recent years, up from 66 students in 2009-2010 to 112 in 2011-2012
- business and industry donations are shown in 2R2
- the number of grants received through the Foundation are provided in 2R2
- on the BSC campus DSU offers 17 baccalaureate programs; MiSU offers six baccalaureate programs; UND offers three graduate programs.

In 2010 BSC earned CAEL’s Institutional Service award for expansion of lifelong learning opportunities and innovation to improve access and quality of academic programs for adult learners. Accomplishments cited include:

- development of education and training for the energy industry
- online courses with interactive simulations to enhance learning
- the development of the online bachelor’s degree in energy management
- workforce training programs through TrainND
- partnerships with other colleges for adults earning four-year degrees on the college campus.

9R3 Comparative results include the following:

- the NDUS Enrollment Report provides much information about enrollment at NDUS institutions. BSC has the third largest enrollment of the NDUS colleges and universities. BSC has the largest enrollment (4109 headcount) of the five community colleges in the state.
- dual credit and collaborative enrollment comparisons are included in the ND Enrollment Report. Comparisons for Fall semester 2012 with other ND community colleges are shown in the following table:

Institution	Collaborative Enrollments	Dual Credit Enrollments
Bismarck State College	159	257
Dakota College	53	154
Lake Region State College	286	464
ND State College of Science	35	198
Williston State College	37	18

Figure 9.3 Dual credit and collaborative enrollment

- results of licensure exams are located in 1R3
- comparison data for workforce training is in 2R3.

9I1 The number of our articulation agreements, memoranda of understanding, and other partnerships has made it difficult for all employees on campus with an interest to keep track of the various agreements and the duties and responsibilities they entail. BSC is developing a website to consolidate the sum of our agreements and provide all stakeholders with a single location to find the current status and extent of all agreements. The compilation will be maintained in the office of the provost.

An example of seeking collaborative relationships is that of our initiative to foster collaboration with the local public school system to provide more opportunities for dual credit enrollment. This initiative required much conversation with high school and college administrators and faculty to develop plans and processes that would work for all parties.

BSC hired an alternative learning coordinator to oversee opportunities for dual credit students and their high schools. The improved collaboration with regional school districts coincided with over a three hundred percent increase in numbers of dual credit students.

BSC relies on the analysis of survey and evaluation data, formal and informal communication and feedback from partners, and the monitoring of collaborative relationships. BSC targets relationships to cultivate or improve, develops plans, and allocates resources to relationship building to be consistent with the mission and strategic plan. Collaborative relationships are reviewed by staff, community members, advisory committees, and others.

9I2 Major initiatives to advance a culture of innovation and continuous quality improvement have had direct impact for selecting specific processes to improve and in setting targets for improved performance. Process mapping of the student life cycle has yielded information on where BSC could improve student retention and success by increasing or creating various partnerships such as those shared with Dickinson State University, Minot State University, and other colleges. As a result, in the past eighteen months BSC has entered into a number of transfer agreements with the University of Mary. We have also initiated a partnership with the University of Mary and United Tribes Technical College to jointly deliver special programming in leadership, ethics, and cultural issues.

Building collaborative relationships has become second nature at BSC. Over the years, we have learned that working with others enables us to better serve and educate students and the community. The emphasis on innovation and employee empowerment fostered in the College encourages responsiveness and collaboration. BSC employees are confident in their authority and ability to recognize and develop mutually beneficial relationships. An emphasis on accomplishment and overcoming barriers gives everyone the freedom to look for new ways to collaborate with others.