

Minnesota West Community and Technical College - MN

HLC ID 1562

OPEN PATHWAY: Reaffirmation Review

Review Date: 11/8/2021

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Context and Nature of Review

Review Date

11/8/2021

Mid-Cycle Reviews include:

- The Year 4 Review in the Open and Standard Pathways
- The Biennial Review for Applying institutions

Reaffirmation Reviews include:

- The Year 10 Review in the Open and Standard Pathways
- The Review for Initial Candidacy for Applying institutions
- The Review for Initial Accreditation for Applying institutions
- The Year 4 Review for Standard Pathway institutions that are in their first accreditation cycle after attaining initial accreditation

Scope of Review

- Reaffirmation Review
- Federal Compliance (if applicable)
- On-site Visit
- Multi-campus Visit (if applicable)

- 2021–22 COVID-19 Response Form
- Multi-campus Review

Institutional Context

Minnesota West Community and Technical College (Minnesota West) is one of 37 colleges and universities in the Minnesota State system. Minnesota West is a merged comprehensive two-year college that includes five campuses and three additional locations in Southwest Minnesota that comprises 19 counties and spans 21,000 square miles. Campuses are located in Worthington, Canby, Pipestone, Jackson, and Granite Falls. Additional locations include Marshall, Fairmont, and Luverne. In addition to the five campuses and three locations, Minnesota West offers courses and programs via distance learning- online and through ITV, and offers concurrent enrollment courses in several local high schools. Minnesota West offers AA, AS, and AAS degrees, as well as several certificates and diplomas, and participates in the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum. and the statewide Transfer Pathways.

This review included a comprehensive evaluation, a Federal Compliance Review, and a multi-campus visit to three campuses: Worthington, Canby, and Pipestone.

Interactions with Constituencies

President

President's Cabinet: President, Provost, VP Finances and Facilities, Senior Human Resources Officer

Provost and Academic Deans: Provost, Dean of Allied Health, Dean of Liberal Arts, K-12, and CIO, Dean of Science and Nursing, Interim Dean of Technical Education

VP of Finance and staff: VP/Finance & Facilities, Director of Financial Operations, Accounting Clerk, Director of Facilities, Facilities Lead, Network Administrator

Criterion 3 & 4 Open Sessions: 32 participants

Students: 15 participants

Academic Affairs and Standards Council: Academic Affairs & Council Chair, Faculty: English and Political Science, Health Information Technology, Psychology, Sociology, Math; Dean of Science and Nursing, Staff/Diversity, Director of Admissions, Financial Aid, Registration, Interim Dean of Technical Education, Dean of Student Services, Dean of Liberal Arts, Administrative Assistant, Provost

Provost and Student Affairs: Provost, Dean of Student Services, Advisor/Perkins Coordinator, Advisor/International Students/Transfer Specialist, Mental Health and Wellness Coordinator, Dean of Equity, Inclusion and Student Development, Director of Admissions, Financial Aid, Registration, Student Support Coordinator, Resource Specialist.

Assessment Team: Assessment Coordinator, Provost, Dean of Liberal Arts, CTL leader, Dean of Student Services, Student Advisor, and 5 division chairs.

Criterion 1 & 2 Open Session: 30 participants

Faculty Open Session: 20 participants

Staff Open Session: 20 participants

K-12 Partners: 15 participants from a variety of high schools

Minnesota State Trustees and Chancellor's Cabinet: Trustees (3), Sr. Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, Interim Director, Accreditation and Assessment

Community Stakeholders: 10 participants representing communities in Minnesota West service area

Criterion 5 Open Session: 33 participants

Additional Documents

Several program review documents

Organizational Chart

Student Complaint Log

President's Advisory Council bylaws, agendas and minutes

Program Learning Outcomes for several programs

Annual Review of Program Assessment Activities Form

One Stop Shop review SWOT

Assessment Standards

At-Risk alert samples

Assessment Follow-up Standards

1 - Mission

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

1.A - Core Component 1.A

The institution's mission is articulated publicly and operationalized throughout the institution.

1. The mission was developed through a process suited to the context of the institution.
2. The mission and related statements are current and reference the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission and related statements identify the nature, scope and intended constituents of the higher education offerings and services the institution provides.
4. The institution's academic offerings, student support services and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
5. The institution clearly articulates its mission through public information, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans or institutional priorities.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The mission statement of Minnesota West Community and Technical College (Minnesota West) is derived from the Minnesota State Statutes and State Board Policies. [Minnesota State Board Policy 1A.1 Part 2, Subparts A-C](#) sets forth an over-arching vision and mission statement for the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities and requires (in Subpart C) that, "Each college and university has a distinct mission that is consistent with, and supportive of, the overall mission of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities."

The distinctive mission of Minnesota West – to prepare learners for a lifetime of success – was reviewed as a part of the College's 2017 strategic planning process. Input was gathered from internal and external stakeholders through email, listening sessions, and other interactions. The statement was approved by the Minnesota State Board of Trustees in May 2017.

Minnesota West has identified five core values that it believes will support "learners for a lifetime of success." These also serve as the institution's Institutional Learning Outcomes. These five components are:

- Community Engagement and Courage
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Innovation
- Integrity
- Student Success

Minnesota West joins other public higher education institutions in the state to serve all Minnesotans. In fulfilling this mission, the College attends to the needs of all students, with particular attention to the needs of part-time students, veterans, and those who are academically underprepared.

The College's strong participation with local high schools and CTE programs demonstrates an awareness of its responsibility to promote college attainment. Through partnerships and through faculty and staff activity, the College shows a strong engagement with its area communities. On the campus, a wide array of student activities demonstrates an awareness of and appreciation for diversity within the student body.

Approximately 90% of Minnesota West students are pursuing an Associate's degree. The College offers transferable general education courses, as well as programs in business, health, technical programs, customized training services, continuing education courses, and contract for training programs to enhance job skills. The College's classes are offered in various times and through multiple modalities to ensure access to higher education. Developmental education courses are available across all educational platforms for students who are under-prepared. A "One Stop" model of Student Services was adopted in 2013. In 2020, feedback from the participating staff members was collected and minor adjustments were made to improve the system.

Minnesota West publishes its mission, values, and strategic goals in its Course Catalog and Faculty Handbook. The statements are also readily available on the College website which also offers Read-Speaker technology for accessibility. The mission and vision statements are scrolled on television monitors in campus building and shared via College-related social media sites.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.B - Core Component 1.B

The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

1. The institution's actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public, not solely the institution or any superordinate entity.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its external constituencies and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Rating

Met

Rationale

As one of 37 colleges in the Minnesota State system, Minnesota West organizes its efforts to meet local needs while remaining in alignment with state policies. Colleges and universities support the Minnesota State system through funding requirements and in return benefit from shared services such as information technology, the Integrated Student Reporting System (ISRS), a facility scheduling system, a web platform for online courses, and a centralized human resource service. Beyond the shared services, Minnesota West allocates its resources to teaching, learning, and support services. Local functions include academic affairs, student services, institutional support, administration, athletics, and its physical plant.

Minnesota West demonstrated its commitment to its particular mission within the system by using its strong financial reserves to fund \$1M in one-time investments, and further allocated \$1.8M to the support of its academic programs. In an open, College-wide process, thirty-two proposals related to the strategic plan were submitted from faculty, staff, and administration. Fourteen proposals were approved, supporting projects that increased services for students, purchased equipment, added and/or expanded programs, improved campus safety, and upgraded facilities.

The College and Minnesota State system conduct an annual review of each academic program that compares instructional costs for each academic program and publishes an annual cost formula that calculates the cost per student for programs and courses at the institution. The data gathered in the annual review is used to evaluate program vitality and plan for the future.

In addition to funding basic academic, student, and administrative services, Minnesota West has invested in numerous initiatives to enhance the curricular and co-curricular experience for students. Those related to specific academic programs include the annual Diesel Extravaganza, Breaking Traditions (for aspiring educators), Future Farmers of America and the Ag Bowl.

Minnesota West is focused on its role in encouraging college enrollment and completion. The REACH concurrent enrollment program allows high school juniors and seniors to enroll in Post-Secondary Education Option (PSEO) courses. The Assurance Argument reports that 46 different Minnesota West colleges classes are offered across the southwest Minnesota region. Programs have received NACEP accreditation, a demonstration of the College's commitment to the quality of the programs it offers in schools across the region. In addition, Minnesota West participates in a consortium of nine school districts and one area learning center to positively impact students and lead the way in school improvement efforts. The Student Services staff of Minnesota West support high schools, including alternative schools, with presentations and services related to college admissions and financial aid.

Engagement with external constituents takes many forms at Minnesota West. At a leadership level, the President's Advisory Council (PAC) is comprised of regional industry leaders. On a quarterly basis, the group provides the president of Minnesota West with advice and information on the present and anticipated employee training needs of the region. Advice from the PAC led to the College's revision and reintroduction of the Plumbing and Heating Technology program. During the campus visit, members of the PAC team described their ability to set and control the agenda along with the President. Specific program advisory boards provide feedback and new ideas to occupational faculty and administrators. For example, the Nursing Advisory Committee receives and reviews the student learning outcomes for the program and provides input on opportunities for its graduates.

The College engages with its constituents through numerous partnerships. In partnership with Southwest Minnesota State University, the Southwest/West Central Service Cooperative, and the Minnesota Workforce Centers, Minnesota West hosts a career expo, connecting 100 local employers with more than 2000 high school students/potential workers.

Specific programs at Minnesota West foster faculty and student engagement within area communities. For example, instructors in the Management program work with approximately 700 farmers and small business owners and with local lenders to support agribusiness in the region. Agriculture classes have engaged in several water and wildlife habitat projects within the region – these include a pollinator project, the establishment of native plants, and the creation of natural areas for public enjoyment. The College's Allied Health and Nursing programs work directly with local health care settings to provide clinical experiences for students.

To encourage community partnerships, Minnesota West works with several agencies to lease campus space at rates below market value. These include space for non-profits such as childcare and women's advocacy; residential space; and space for the Minnesota Emergency Response and Industrial Training Center.

Some projects represent both an institutional partnership and hands-on involvement by faculty and students. An example of such an effort is the work of the Minnesota West agriculture department that worked with a school district, a trust fund, county, and city government to design, construct, and maintain a retention pond on the Worthington campus to collect runoff prior to water entering Lake Okabena. A further example can be found in the Carpentry and Plumbing/Heating program which partners with the Pipestone Economic Development Authority to renovate a house in tax forfeiture. The renovation provides hands-on learning for students and adds to the affordable housing stock in the area.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

1. The institution encourages curricular or cocurricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success.
2. The institution's processes and activities demonstrate inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations.
3. The institution fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff and administrators from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives.

Rating

Met

Rationale

As discussed in Core Component 1B, Minnesota West students are engaged in their communities. Examples provided to the review team include students who are working to preserve and protect the environment, contribute to the stock of affordable housing, and to promote good health in their communities. The Southwest Minnesota Teacher Preparation Partnership provides a further example of student engagement in the Minnesota West communities. The Partnership aims to increase the diverse pool of quality teacher candidates in the region, especially supporting students of color with aspirations to teach in their communities. Teachers and staff involved in the program participate in ongoing cultural competency training to ensure that they meet the needs of all students.

The College offers an active Student Senate which engages in service projects on campus and in the community. The College is affiliated with the National Junior College Athletic Association and the Minnesota College Athletic Conference. It offers football, men's and women's soccer, volleyball, men's and women's basketball, wrestling, softball, baseball, and women's golf.

The College's student activities incorporate diverse perspectives, many of which are sponsored by the Culture Corner. Activities encourage sensitivity training and reciprocal respect for all members of the campus community. By assisting in student recruitment and admissions activities, the Culture Corner promotes minority enrollment. Sponsored programs have included presentations on Hispanic heritage by natives of Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, El Salvador, and Honduras. The Mixed Blood Theater company visits the campus at least once each year with presentation on the African and African-American experience. The annual Celebrations Around the World event has (until the COVID interruption), included displays and/or foods from 30 different cultures.

The activities of the Cultural Diversity Club on the Worthington campus are directly tied to the Institutional Learning Outcome: Diversity and Inclusion. The group meets regularly to plan events, including leadership training for those who want to deepen their understanding of people of varying ethnicity, cultures, social levels, and gender. The community-wide organization, Nobles County Integration Collaborative, is housed on the Worthington campus and works with the Culture Corner to promote understanding of diverse cultures.

The College's Affirmative Action Plan ensures that services are provided consistently and equitably. Minnesota West has one diversity officer who oversees all college-wide activities. The diversity officer is assisted by student services advisors assigned to assist diverse students. Advisors plan awareness activities in addition to working with students individually.

Minnesota West is certified by the Minnesota State Approving Agency for Veteran's Educational Benefits. In 2015, Minnesota West's Veteran's Service officer was one of three people in the state to be awarded a Certificate of Excellent for outstanding work in certifying, monitoring, and managing veteran's records.

The Minnesota West Foundation promotes and awards scholarships to the College's students. College employees donate generously to the fund and faculty and staff from all the College's campuses participate in the scholarship application review funding. The Foundation also provides emergency funding for students in financial crisis.

Minnesota West uses its Federal Work Study funding to assist area employers with student employment opportunities, thus systematically addressing opportunities for student support and engagement. The America Reads program at the Rock County Plum Creek Library is one example of such support.

During the 2020-21 academic year, Minnesota West and Southwest Minnesota State University shared an AmeriCorps Health VISTA position to focus on student basic needs and health. Emergency "pop-up" food and hygiene pantries were created on each campus and Basic Needs Insecurity advisory group was formed to address students in crisis.

Students on the Pipestone campus meet regularly and present programs about their cultures and ethnic traditions. These may include films, discussions, or hands-on activities. Native American culture, especially the significance of the Pipestone Quarry, have been significant programs on the campus.

The Jackson campus hosts, "See It, Learn It, Be It" day for transitional students from area high schools and Adult Basic Education programs. It also works with the Western Community Action agency to promote "Generation Next," focusing on recruiting and retaining female students in non-traditional programs for women.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

Rationale

The mission of Minnesota West has been clearly and publicly articulated, and can be found in a variety of print and electronic formats. Meetings with a variety of internal and external stakeholders, including faculty, staff, students, and community members confirms that the mission is well understood by students, faculty, and staff members.

Through evidence provided in the Assurance Argument and in meetings with the operational leaders at Minnesota West, the team found that operational decisions are driven by the College mission, vision, and values. The College Strategic Plan, Master Academic Plan, Affirmative Action Plan, Facilities Plan, and a variety of other documents, including the zero-based budgeting process all align with the mission and vision of Minnesota West.

Minnesota West aligns its core values with the Institutional Learning Outcomes. Each of the core values: community engagement, courage, diversity and inclusion, innovation, integrity, and student success are also identified as measurable ILOs. This unique and direct connection between the mission/vision/core values ensures that not only do the programs and services align, but that student learning is also tied directly to those core beliefs of Minnesota West.

The College has successfully aligned its career and technical programs with industry needs specific to the communities served by the five campuses. Evidence in the Assurance Argument and a meeting with community partners throughout Minnesota West's service area confirmed that active advisory committees work with faculty and administrators to identify skill needs and anticipate demand for future workers as well as identify additional resources to support educational programs.

The College provides a variety of programs and services to support its diverse student population. Activities, many of which are supported through the Culture Corner, encourage sensitivity training and reciprocal respect for all members of the Minnesota West community. The activities at each campus are directly tied to the Institutional Learning Outcome of Diversity.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

2.A - Core Component 2.A

The institution establishes and follows policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty and staff.

1. The institution develops and the governing board adopts the mission.
2. The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources and auxiliary functions.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The Minnesota West mission statement was last reviewed and approved by the Minnesota State Board of Trustees in May of 2017, as confirmed by a review of the Minnesota Board of Trustees minutes. The Board of Trustees, appointed by the Governor, approves the mission statement of each of its member colleges and universities. Prior to submitting the revised mission statement to the Board of Trustees, the College reviewed the mission through its strategic planning process, which involved input from stakeholders from across its service area. A review of this process, and those involved, confirmed that input to the process was provided by a diverse group of community members, students, faculty, and staff. The Minnesota State system office and Board of Trustees ensures that all requirements and standards of the system are current and that Minnesota West is in compliance with these standards.

The President's Advisory Council works directly with the Minnesota West president, and provides guidance and support to each Minnesota West campus to meet the unique needs of each of the communities served by the College.

The financial integrity of the College is safeguarded through the development of the annual operating budget through a recently adopted zero-based budgeting process that includes participation from a variety of stakeholders. Reports from a variety of employees confirmed that the new budgeting process is transparent and widely supported. The Minnesota State system requires an independent audit of the College budget, as a part of the Annual Financial Report. Through documents provided in the Assurance Argument and in meetings with internal stakeholders, the review team confirmed that strong internal controls safeguard College assets and ensure that policies and procedures are followed.

The integrity of Minnesota West's academic programs is maintained through both internal and external policies and procedures. Externally accredited programs must meet rigorous accrediting standards essential to validate that graduates have a solid educational foundation prior to graduation. All programs are required to submit program learning outcomes and evaluate those outcomes regularly. Program quality and consistency is monitored by the Minnesota West Academic Affairs and Standards Council (AASC). In a meeting with the Council, and through a review of the evidence documents in the Assurance Argument, the review team confirmed that the AASC processes curricular changes approved by College divisions, monitors the system for maintaining curriculum records, course outlines, and course descriptions, ensures the academic integrity of all curriculum proposals, and updates and revises curricular processes.

As a member of the Minnesota State system, Minnesota West adheres to the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum and the Minnesota State Transfer Pathways to ensure seamless transfer to any state four-year university. A review of the MSCF Master Agreement confirms that Minnesota State adheres to the obligations and responsibilities of the faculty and administration in the development of curriculum and delivery of programs.

Minnesota West adheres to the policies and procedures of the Minnesota State system that ensure the fair and ethical treatment of all employees and students, specifically Minnesota State's policy 1B.1: Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination in Employment and Education, and Procedure 1B.1.1: Report/Complaint of Discrimination/Harassment Investigation and resolution. Additionally, Minnesota West provides regular workshops that address all Human Resources policies, including those that protect student information and due process. Faculty and staff reported satisfaction with the level of information and training provided them related to all Human Resources policies and procedures.

Minnesota West policy and Minnesota State procedures ensure that the auxiliary functions of the College operate in support of the academic experience and are provided to enhance students experiences. In FY 19, Minnesota West moved from on-site campus bookstores to a book fulfillment center, housed at the Worthington Campus. Administration reported to the review team that all Minnesota West students order textbooks and materials online, and those items are shipped to the student at no cost. Interviews with students on three campuses (Worthington, Canby, and Pipestone), confirmed that this process is both timely and efficient.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.B - Core Component 2.B

The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public.

1. The institution ensures the accuracy of any representations it makes regarding academic offerings, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, governance structure and accreditation relationships.
2. The institution ensures evidence is available to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through research, community engagement, experiential learning, religious or spiritual purpose and economic development.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Minnesota West presents itself clearly and comprehensively to the public. Relevant and extensive information about the institution is presented on the website, in the student handbook, and in the catalog. Additionally, information about programs and services is provided in printed format, via social media, and by way of informational meetings and new student orientation.

The College catalog and student handbook or available on the website and are updated annually. Printed copies of the course catalog are also available in print copy. The College class schedule is available on the website, and provides links to course descriptions, course outlines, required books and other materials.

Minnesota West provides information about the cost of attendance on the Tuition and Fees page of the website, including a net calculator to estimate the cost of attendance. Additional financial aid information is available on the Finance Your education section of the website.

A review of the website provided evidence of Minnesota West's accreditation status with the Higher Learning Commission and 16 other accrediting agencies. This information is also found in the college catalog.

In a search of the Minnesota West website, the review team found that the Student Right-To-Know consumer information is not readily available unless a prospective student knows how to search for it. The search engine results directs a student to a page with a listing of a variety of items that must be searched to find a specific piece of information. Reviewing the search engine process to reach pertinent resources in just two to three clicks could improve the overall website experience.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution in compliance with board policies and to ensure the institution's integrity.

1. The governing board is trained and knowledgeable so that it makes informed decisions with respect to the institution's financial and academic policies and practices; the board meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
3. The governing board reviews the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
4. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties.
5. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the institution's administration and expects the institution's faculty to oversee academic matters.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The Board of Trustees is sufficiently autonomous and works in the institution's best interests, as evidenced by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Policies and Procedures manual. This manual sets general standards of conduct for each trustee in their role on the Board. Board policy 1.C.1 specifically outlines prohibited activities, including the use of position to secure benefits and influence to impact hiring or awarding of contracts.

The Minnesota State system is governed by a single 15 member Board of Trustees, appointed by the governor for six-year terms. The Board meets a minimum of seven times/year, and the meetings are open to the public. The duties of the Board are clearly articulated in its policies, which clarify the scope of its decision-making authority. New members undergo a comprehensive orientation to acquaint them with the Minnesota State System. The Board preserves its independence from undue influence through strict adherence to Board Policies and Procedures, as evidenced in the Board's Code of Conduct.

During a meeting with Board members and administrators of the Minnesota State system, evidence was provided that the Board understands its oversight role and its leadership, fiscal, and human resources responsibilities.

The Board operates through a series of standing committees, including Executive, Finance, Human Resources, Academic and Human Resources, Audit, Diversity, Equality and Inclusion, Facilities, and Nominating Committees. Other ad hoc committees are appointed as necessary.

Day-to-day management of the College is assigned to each college president, per Minnesota State policy 4.2, which states that 'the president is the chief executive officer of the college or university. The president shall report to the chancellor and is responsible for leading the college or university faculty, staff, and students in developing and implementing the college or university mission, consistent with the board mission and goals.'

Minnesota West is home to four employee unions AFSCME Council 5, Middle Management Association (MMA), Minnesota Association of Professional Employees (MAPE), and Minnesota State College Faculty (MSCF). Minnesota Management and Budget provides the Commissioners Plan for college employees classified as Confidential and the Managerial Plan covering all college deans and cabinet officers. The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Personnel Plan for Administrators provides the terms and conditions of the president's contract. Each union has a representative/steward that acts on their behalf in any communication with leadership. These representatives report a level of transparency within the leadership when addressing union issues. Information is readily shared, and representatives report that their concerns are heard. Those unions with smaller memberships stated that leadership could provide them better representation on College-wide committees.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

Minnesota West is committed to ensuring an environment for its faculty to provide instruction that assures academic freedom and freedom of expression. A review of Minnesota State Policy 3.22.1 confirms that faculty are responsible for the creation of their own syllabi, and that the syllabi reflect the creative work of faculty. A review of syllabi provided by the College supports adherence to this policy.

The Minnesota State College Faculty Contract (MSCF) specifies the rights of each faculty member to select all teaching materials and to teach 'in an atmosphere of free intellectual inquiry'. In an open meeting with faculty, the review team confirmed that Minnesota West is committed to academic freedom in its policies and day-to-day actions.

The College also articulates the academic freedom of faculty in the Faculty Handbook and Curriculum Development Manual. Interviews with faculty involved in various committees support the importance of the Curriculum Development Manual as the guide for implementing new courses and programs of study and insuring these goals are met.

Minnesota West Policy 3.1 outlines student rights and responsibilities, including the freedom to learn, freedom of expression, and freedom of association. Meetings with students on three campuses (Worthington, Pipestone, and Canby) confirmed that students are provided freedom of expression, particularly as articulated by members of each campus Student Senate.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.E - Core Component 2.E

The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, staff and students.

1. Institutions supporting basic and applied research maintain professional standards and provide oversight ensuring regulatory compliance, ethical behavior and fiscal accountability.
2. The institution provides effective support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students.
3. The institution provides students guidance in the ethics of research and use of information resources.
4. The institution enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Minnesota West has policies and procedures in place to ensure academic integrity on the part of both students and faculty, as articulated on Policy 5.22.1: Acceptable Use of Computers and Information Technology Resources.

The MSCF contract (Article 23, Section 4, subdivision 1 and 2) states: 'Faculty are entitled to complete ownership and control of a patentable discoveries or inventions, or of intellectual property and copyrighted material, except where the faculty member's normal workload was reduced for purposes of the development project, where the college has provided substantial support for or involvement in the project, or where the inventions or discoveries are produced as a result of agreements of contracts between the college and external sponsors'.

The College utilizes the Library and Academic Resource Center (LARC) to assist in the guidance of students in research endeavors. Interviews conducted with the staff of the LARC confirm oversight of these activities. Examples were provided of seminars provided to students to ensure all are afforded the opportunity to learn about academic integrity in writing research papers. The LARC also provides in-service opportunities to faculty to ensure currency regarding topics related to academic integrity.

The College maintains a policy on the reporting of academic integrity issues. The Academic Integrity Infraction form is available on the website. Any faculty or staff may access the form under the "Faculty & Staff Forms" page maintained on the website. The form allows the reporting individual to cite the type of infraction, review the Code of Conduct, identify the proper procedure, and when warranted, referral to administration for further action.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

Rationale

Minnesota West regularly review and updates its mission statement with input from many different stakeholders; the most recent update was approved by the Minnesota State Board of Trustees in May 2017. The College provided evidence to the visiting team through several documents in the evidence file of the Assurance Argument and through a variety of meetings during the comprehensive visit that academic, student services, and resource allocation decision are driven by the mission and vision statements. Significantly, the institutional values have recently been identified as the Institutional Learning Outcomes. This strategy to tie College values to student outcomes ensures that the mission, vision, and values are truly 'lived' at Minnesota West.

The Minnesota State Board of Trustees is sufficiently autonomous and work in the College's best interests, as evidenced by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Policies and Procedures manual. The duties of the Board are clearly articulated, which clarify the scope of its decisions-making authority.

Minnesota West is a member of the Minnesota State system, and therefore is guided by the system and Board of Trustees policies and procedures that ensure integrity and accountability in its financial, human resources, academic, and auxiliary functions. The evaluation team reviewed Minnesota State policies and procedures manuals, and the corresponding Minnesota West documents to confirm that the College has controls in place to ensure accordance with the system and all laws governing higher education in Minnesota.

Minnesota West complies with the Minnesota State policies on academic freedom and freedom of speech. Interviews with College faculty confirmed that those policies are followed, and that administration supports and respects the faculty role in determining course and program content, as well as learning activities for students.

3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

The institution provides quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

3.A - Core Component 3.A

The rigor of the institution's academic offerings is appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of student performance appropriate to the credential awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate and certificate programs.
3. 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).

Rating

Met

Rationale

As part of the Minnesota State system, courses at Minnesota West adhere to the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum and the Minnesota State Transfer Pathways. Courses and programs are reviewed by Minnesota State compliance specialists as well as faculty and program directors from other Minnesota State institutions. At a local level, curriculum is developed in coordination with the Academic Affairs and Standards Council (AASC). Minnesota West employs a system of course outlines which require each course to illustrate learning objectives and identify how courses align with program and institutional learning outcomes. Course outlines must be approved by the AASC prior to a course being offered.

The College has encouraged faculty to use Quality Matters (QM), although it is entirely voluntary. Those who have used the process report that it strengthens their understanding of what should be taught and creates goals for future course revisions and development. One instructor reported having developed 30 Student Learning Outcomes (SLO), and after using QM, reduced the number to 4 or 5. This, and other similar examples were shared with the review team that demonstrates faculty engagement in maintaining program quality and learning goals.

To aid faculty in developing courses that adhere to the expectations of the College, Minnesota West has created a Curriculum Development Manual that provides templates for course outlines, syllabi, and illustrates best practices for writing learning outcomes.

A review of the evidence files provided within the Assurance Argument support that claim that the College maintains appropriate rigor for the academic programs it offers. In addition, meetings held on campus with faculty and administration confirm the processes articulated in the Assurance Argument.

Discussions with faculty and staff affirmed a very robust, collegial, and dynamic atmosphere. The institution has a strong mentor system in place for working with dual credit instructors located at the high school. There was considerable discussion in a review team meeting with the high school partners about ensuring that rigor in the course and course assessments is maintained, while still allowing the high school instructor the freedom to teach the course using his/her own tools and strategies. To ensure consistency, the College might want to consider using the same assessment tool in all iterations of its offerings whenever possible.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.B - Core Component 3.B

The institution offers programs that engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in mastering modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity and provides students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world.
4. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their offerings and the institution's mission.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Minnesota West participates in the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum. This agreement identifies a standard core curriculum for general education across all the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. In 2019-20, Minnesota West undertook a review of the general education and transfer courses to ensure compliance and adequate course offerings, resulting in revised course designations. A comparison of the Minnesota West curriculum and the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum provides evidence that there is strong alignment as a result of this review.

Minnesota West has established programs and services designed to promote and nurture diversity within the student population. One such service is the Culture Corner that organizes events and services designed to improve the retention of students of color. Minnesota West also has a dedicated Institutional Learning Outcome (ILO) of Diversity and Inclusion that is mapped to most courses in the curriculum ensuring that diversity is encouraged in the classroom.

In a meeting held with the President's Advisory Council (PAC), several initiatives concerning the College's impact on diversity were highlighted. The committee reported a collaborative effort between Minnesota West and Minnesota State University to offer a program designed to recruit more students of color who were interested in becoming teachers. A local public school was selected in which 78% of the student body were students of color. Dual credit courses were offered and students were able to matriculate on to Minnesota West to complete the Associate degree. Upon completion, the students moved on to Minnesota State to complete the Bachelor's degree. The desired outcome of the program was to encourage more students to become teachers.

The PAC also reported efforts of the College in reaching out to local tribal communities to see what needs might be identified; the survey confirmed a request that programs be offered on site. The College was able to offer such programs as construction, welding, CNA, and dental assisting to better meet the needs of the communities.

Minnesota West employs faculty who actively contribute to their disciplines and to the greater community through research and other academic activities. For example, instructors have presented research at regional conferences in the fields of History, Information Technology, and Physics. Additionally, faculty and program directors engage with the community through events such as annual Star Parties (public telescope viewings) hosted by physics instructors.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.C - Core Component 3.C

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

1. The institution strives to ensure that the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflects human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.
2. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance, assessment of student learning, and establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff.
3. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual and consortial offerings.
4. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
5. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.
6. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
7. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising and cocurricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their professional development.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Minnesota West abides by the Minnesota State College Faculty Master Agreement stipulating specific thresholds of full-time and unlimited full-time faculty, and regularly exceeds the required number of full-time faculty. In a review of the HR documents that identify the demographics of the faculty, evidence was provided that the faculty has continued to grow more diverse since 2015.

The credentialing requirements for all College faculty are outlined in the Minnesota State Board Policy and Procedures. Minnesota West also employs alternate credentialing processes for technical faculty requiring two full-time years of verified, paid work in a credentialed field or recent successful post-secondary teaching experience.

Minnesota West takes active steps to ensure that the faculty are sufficiently trained and knowledgeable in the area of classroom pedagogy. All new faculty are required to take three credit-bearing courses within three years of their employment at Minnesota West. Faculty have a number of options available for them to complete this requirement including online or in-person classes. Faculty are active in the curriculum review process through their departments and participation on various institutional committees, including the Academic Affairs and Standards Council, which approves all curricular changes.

The College maintains a comprehensive review of a faculty member's performance in the classroom. Probationary faculty are evaluated in several classes during each year of a 3-year probationary period. Others are evaluated on a 3-year rotation. Evaluations consist of classroom observations, written self-evaluations, student evaluations, evaluation conferences, and optional peer review. The stated purpose of evaluation is to encourage growth and self-reflection. A meeting with faculty confirmed the structure of the evaluation process. During the meeting, faculty and administration reported satisfaction with the process, and spoke of a very collegial environment at the College. Everyone in attendance at the faculty meeting affirmed the desire of the evaluation process to promote growth and excellence, rather than a punitive process.

Faculty are encouraged to participate in professional development activities and are supported by a \$50,000/year Faculty Professional Development Fund with awards distributed by the committee to faculty, staff, and administration applicants to attend conferences or otherwise pursue professional development activities. Additionally, experts are brought to campus to provide on-site professional development experiences such as workshops and presentations. Finally, faculty are presented the opportunity to apply for sabbaticals to pursue more rigorous professional development opportunities. Twenty instructors were granted a sabbatical between 2011 and 2020.

Minnesota West provides students with the support of a talented and dedicated student services staff. As a multi-campus institution, the challenges can be daunting, but the College has placed like positions on each campus, and students, faculty, and staff from all campuses reported that there was significant support at each campus. The College has created a One Stop team to provide students information and services from trained individuals who are able to answer most general questions and provide academic advisement. The team conducts annual assessment of its services to highlight the need for additional training.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and resources for effective teaching.

1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.
2. 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.
3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its offerings and the needs of its students.
4. 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 and museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).

Rating

Met

Rationale

The College strives to provide appropriate services to the students that it serves. In several meetings conducted by the review team, those services, such as advising, financial aid support, tutoring, career guidance, and and personal support were described, and specific examples provided that demonstrated the level of support for students. In meetings with students, several shared that their questions were always answered, and that the student services staff was friendly and supportive.

Minnesota West serves students who are not academically prepared for college-level work. The Minnesota State system has selected the Accuplacer Assessment of Basic Skills as the primary placement exam for students. If students have taken the ACT, SAT, or MCA, and have the requisite high school GPA, an exemption from the Accuplacer Assessment is allowed. The College has also piloted a Multiple Measures placement tool, with promising results, although it was interrupted due to COVID-19. The College also provided evidence of the implementation of co-requisite courses to replace some traditional developmental education courses. Most of this work was implemented by the math department, however, it was reported that pilots are also implemented by the language arts department.

The College utilizes a series of "Getting Connected Days" throughout the summer to assist incoming students in orienting to campus. The days are designed to provide intensive, small group settings for activities, so that students may complete registration, review financial aid, access campus technology, obtain a student identification card, and review the Student Code of Conduct. Students reported that the Getting Connected Days provided them the tools to confidently begin classes at Minnesota West.

The College relies on the One Stop center to provide oversight for much of the student support services. Review team meeting with student services staff provided evidence that the One Stop center conducts annual reviews to ensure consistency of service across the campuses, and to identify areas for professional development for staff.

Students requiring accommodations have access to the coordinator of Disability Services. Meetings with those involved in student services confirmed the availability of those services and the willingness of the coordinator to be present when asked and to assist when requested.

Minnesota West recognizes the challenges it faces to provide quality learning environments to a diverse population in a large geographic area. The College has implemented services to prepare students for online learning. The College implemented Zoom in 2019 for video and audio-conferencing needs. The College continues to provide supportive services to acquaint both faculty and staff on best practices for distance learning. Meetings with staff, students, and faculty confirm the support and affirm the support provided by administration. The College also continues to offer a limited number of classes through the ITV system.

Minnesota West strives to constantly assess and improve student support. Changes to the traditional library are a specific example of implemented change to better meet student needs. The College implemented a system of one-stop academic support services referred to as Library and Academic Resource Centers (LARC)s. Meetings with staff, students, and faculty affirm the support provided by administration for continuous improvement in all services to meet student needs. The LARC)s are a concrete example of how the College strives to provide the necessary support required by those served.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

The institution provides quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

Rationale

A review of the programs offered by Minnesota West demonstrates a commitment by the College to deliver strong academic programs. Visits with a variety of constituents affirmed the reputation of programs offered and industry demand for program completers.

Minnesota West is mandated by the State of Minnesota to participate in the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum, which assures seamless transfer within the Minnesota State system. The College regularly participates in state-wide reviews with peer institutions to facilitate a smooth transfer. process for students.

The College is very deliberate in maintaining adequate levels of faculty and staff to serve its students as outlined in the Minnesota State College Faculty Master Agreement. The College expects its faculty to participate in the oversight of curriculum and maintain appropriate credentialing. The College maintains a policy on annual evaluations. Interviews with faculty and staff affirm the College follows its established policies.

Minnesota West ensures that the appropriate levels of staff and resources are available to support student learning. The College is very thoughtful in placing students in courses appropriate to their ability and in providing the appropriate College on-boarding experiences. Once the students are actively enrolled, the College offers a wide range of support services to assure the success of its students.

4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews and acts upon the findings.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that ensure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. 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 ensures 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.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution ensures that the credentials 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.

Rating

Met

Rationale

Minnesota West conducts administrative program reviews of its programs. A review of program reviews from the Lamb and Wool and Carpentry programs reveals two-page 'health status' reports that collate enrollment, program efficiency, and funding trend data while also sharing brief statements about topics such as community partnerships, advisory committees, student retention and other pertinent information. During interviews with faculty and administration, the review team found some disconnect between program review documents and the program review policy as outlined in Minnesota West Policy 3.10 regarding Academic Program Review. The policy outlines an annual review process that incorporates the Program Analysis System (PAS) that evaluates individual instructional cost centers and incorporates a two-year action plan based on an analysis of both assessment and program review data. Some of the provided program review documents included such an analysis, others did not. Without a central location where program review, assessment data, and action plan information is collected, the review process suffers from a level of siloing where information exists but is not consistently used together to conduct regular comprehensive reviews of the programs. One of the effective frameworks in place at Minnesota West is the budgeting process centered around an in-house RFP process. This process as implemented at the institutional level leverages administrative support and systematized documentation that results in a process fully understood by all levels of internal stakeholders from faculty, to staff, to administration. While program review data is extant, it could benefit from the type of institutionalization used to create and maintain the RFP initiative at the College.

Adequate processes are in place to evaluate the transfer of credits in and out of the institution. The registrar employs the Transfer Evaluation System (TES) to compare incoming credits to Minnesota West course descriptions. In addition, Minnesota West employs transfer specialists to assist with transcript evaluation and transfer of credits. Transfer processes and agreements are maintained at the state level under the Minnesota State policies and procedures such as Minnesota State Policy 3.21 Undergraduate Course Credit Transfer, and Minnesota State Policy 3.37 Minnesota Transfer Curriculum.

Minnesota West maintains and exercises authority over all facets of the curriculum. While agreements and policies exist at the state level such as the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum agreements, the institution maintains its own local authority over the curriculum through the actions of faculty, division chairs, and committees such as the Academic Affairs and Standards Council (AASC) and the Liberal Arts Transfer Pathway Curriculum Committee.

When designing courses, faculty are guided by the Curriculum Development Handbook and must complete a detailed course outline for all courses that articulates learning outcomes, assessment methods, pre-requisites, and other curricular details. All curricular changes must be approved at the division level and then through the AASC. Detailed minutes of the AASC demonstrate this process in action and reflect a positive practice of internal and local control over curricular decisions.

Minnesota West has a Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) program that is administered through the REACH program. The REACH Program Guide document outlines the responsibilities and credentialing requirements of all concurrent enrollment courses. According to the REACH program guide and as confirmed in on-campus visits, instructors seeking to teach concurrent enrollment courses must meet the same eligibility requirements as faculty at Minnesota West. Additionally, the communication between faculty at Minnesota West and Concurrent Enrollment faculty is very strong, and Minnesota West faculty serve as hands-on mentors to their peers at local high schools.

Faculty credentials adhere to both the Minnesota State Board Policy 3.32 for faculty credentialing and Minnesota West Policy 3.32 regarding faculty qualifications. A review of employee files demonstrates appropriate documentation of qualifications for full-time and part-time instructors from both general education/transfer and technical programs.

Minnesota West has several programs that participate in third-party accreditation. Program pages on the Minnesota West website identify the accrediting

agencies for these programs. However, on many of the program pages, only the link to the accrediting agencies website is listed with little specific detail on the actual status of the accreditation of the program that is easily accessible. A more standardized approach to sharing the accreditation status of these programs would be helpful for students and stakeholders.

Minnesota State makes readily available information relating to its graduates. Reviews of documents such as the Student Right-to-Know report, IPEDS report, and Accountability Dashboard Strategic Framework Performance Measures reveal a robust offering of data regarding current and past graduates of both academic and technical programs as well as holistic data regarding institutional retention, graduation, and persistence data.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.B - Core Component 4.B

The institution engages in ongoing assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students.

1. The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and cocurricular offerings.
2. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
3. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty, instructional and other relevant staff members.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The assessment program at Minnesota West has been in place for several years. Annual assessment reports on the website date back to 2007-2008 and persists across multiple authors, which reflects a commitment to the gathering of data with the goal of continuous student improvement. The commitment to evolving the assessment process has continued in recent years, with the addition of co-curricular assessment in the 2018-19 academic year. In 2019 the process continued to expand with the creation of Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs). The ILOs were assessed for the first time in the 2019-20 academic year. While the changes to the assessment process represent positive steps forward, particularly in co-curricular assessment, there remains significant room for growth in how data is collected, organized, stored, used, and disseminated at Minnesota West.

A framework Minnesota West employs in their assessment handbook is the list of six Foundational Questions related to assessment and learning outcomes generated by the Higher Learning Commission. Employing this framework to support a more comprehensive structure to examine the effectiveness of the assessment process at Minnesota West could be used to suggest improvements that will strengthen and help better institutionalize the assessment process.

There were several areas in which the College has been able to evidence effective adaptation of a strong Foundational Questions framework. The college has, for example, demonstrated the alignment of learning outcomes to the mission and has done an excellent job articulating its outcomes at the course, program, and institutional level. Processes are in place at both the course and program level that support the identification of student learning outcomes and foster development and measurement of outcomes related to student learning. Further areas that warrant the College's focus are addressing the subsequent Foundational questions two through six to help better frame and support a comprehensive assessment program.

Minnesota West has in place a system to foster shared responsibility for the assessment of student learning. Faculty participation in the assessment of student learning is very high at Minnesota West, with 100% full-time faculty participation and an average of 80% part-time and adjunct faculty participation over the past several years. Though participation is high, the process is limited to individual faculty use of assessment data for improvement. As discussed in the assessment team meeting, coordinating efforts between faculty within divisions would be a productive strategy to help share assessment methods and data and synchronize efforts and provide benefits outside of individual courses.

In a review of the evidence that students achieved the stated learning outcomes, the review team confirmed Minnesota West gathers extensive assessment data related to student learning, particularly at the course level. The data represented in the actual Assessment Summary Reports are primarily related to the effectiveness of measuring student learning. Actual data regarding student mastery of a particular program or institutional learning outcomes is not required for the Program Assessment Tool. During review team conversations in the on-site meetings, it was revealed that there is an optional form for programs to use to aggregate student mastery data, although it is not required for programs to utilize.

Further examination of the 2020-21 Assessment Summary Report provides data related to the Institutional Learning Outcomes at both the course and the program level. There was clarity in the intent and focus of the data presented for both course and program-level assessment. However, where data is gathered related to student mastery, it suffers from a lack of institutional benchmarks to place the data in a purposeful context to help make improvements across the campus. Creating such benchmarks and a focus on sharing student mastery data are effective strategies to quantify better student learning across all levels of outcomes.

Analysis of student learning outcomes was evidenced by the institution's use of assessment data to impact student learning, which was robust at the course level, inconsistent at the program level, and yet to be analyzed at the Institutional Outcome level. The Assessment Data Set report released annually contains copious amounts of information. However, the 109 pages of data are not organized according to course, which makes it very difficult to be referenced for future review or to compare outcomes as a result of curricular or delivery changes to courses. The course-level data ultimately remains in control of the faculty who generate it. Faculty articulated an ability to identify specific course-based improvements they made based on the assessment data, and provided several examples to the review team. The faculty further acknowledged that the data, and those improvements were made primarily within their courses. There was difficulty identifying instances where assessment data was generated that led to specific changes at the program level other than third-party accreditation agencies such as allied health and teacher education programs.

The assessment process at Minnesota West is headed by the assessment coordinator responsible for evaluating and improving efforts to assess and improve student learning. The team meets regularly to review assessment results and recommend changes to the assessment process. It is unclear to what degree administration is involved in the planning and execution of the assessment of student learning. A robust assessment process requires support from all levels of the institution; continued support from senior levels of administration will help galvanize and direct the assessment process at Minnesota West as it continues to mature.

The Assessment Summary Reports and Assessment Data Sets are the primary public-facing methods of sharing assessment data. As such, they should be readable and contain relevant assessment data for prospective students and stakeholders. The current forms of assessment reports present the public with little searchable or usable data. Some programs have 'Faculty Program Pages' on the website, where assessment data is included, which provides excellent information to the public. Setting an institutional standard for sharing assessment data would assist in providing information about assessment processes at Minnesota West and program and institutional outcomes data for all interested parties.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.C - Core Component 4.C

The institution pursues educational improvement through goals and strategies that improve retention, persistence and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence and completion that are ambitious, attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations and educational offerings.
2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence and completion of its programs.
3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

Rating

Met

Rationale

Minnesota West has clearly articulated goals for retention and completion articulated in its current strategic plan. Specifically, the College set the goal to increase retention by 1% and graduation rates by 4% by FY 21. Additionally, the College has identified a goal to increase enrollment of underrepresented populations to 25% of the student body by FY 21. These goals are attainable and appropriate to the mission of the institution, including the emphasis on diversity and inclusion, which is a defined institutional value.

Minnesota West engages in efforts to both track and improve its retention and persistence rates. IPEDS data is used to identify retention rates while the CCSSE is used to provide contextual information on the student experience at Minnesota West. These and other data sources such as the Minnesota State Developmental Education Analysis roadmaps are used to inform curricular and pedagogical changes to enhance student retention.

Evidence that Minnesota West uses data to drive decision-making is provided in both the Math and English department's approaches to changing the developmental model based on completion and persistence data. Both departments recently moved from a pre-requisite to a co-requisite developmental model based on persistence data generated by the various developmental education analysis. While this pre-requisite change is still new, and not enough data has been collected to adequately measure success, faculty and administration are encouraged by early results.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

Rationale

Minnesota West has systems in place to facilitate the continuous improvement of student learning and increase retention, persistence, and completion metrics across the institution. Progress has been shown in recent years in the development of these processes such as the creation of the ILOs and the move towards a comprehensive co-curricular assessment process. Significant faculty participation is evident in the area of assessment, particularly at the course level, as nearly all faculty participate in assessment activities.

Other elements of assessment processes are still in the early stages of development, including program review and program/ILO level assessment. With the continued development of these processes through enhanced administrative participation, the development of institutional benchmarking, and institutionalized approaches to storing, using, and disseminating the data gathered these processes will continue to mature and improve. Minnesota West has the framework in place to guide the development of these processes. The budgeting and RFP application and dissemination processes are good examples of successful institution-wide processes that are integrated throughout the institution.

The assessment process at Minnesota West is robust, but still maturing. It is most developed at the course level, developing at the program level, and in its infancy at the Institutional Outcome level. With continued support from senior leadership and the establishment of institutional benchmarks to compare results and standards for the manner in which data is shared and used across the institution, the assessment program will continue to improve student learning at Minnesota West.

5 - Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

The institution's resources, structures, processes and planning are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

5.A - Core Component 5.A

Through its administrative structures and collaborative processes, the institution's leadership demonstrates that it is effective and enables the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. Shared governance at the institution engages its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students—through planning, policies and procedures.
2. The institution's administration uses data to reach informed decisions in the best interests of the institution and its constituents.
3. The institution's administration ensures that faculty and, when appropriate, staff and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy and processes through effective collaborative structures.

Rating

Met

Rationale

As documented in the Assurance Argument and affirmed during the review team's visit, Minnesota West is a member of the Minnesota State system, governed by a board of directors and led by a chancellor. The president of Minnesota West reports to the system chancellor. Board of Trustees members and System administrators confirmed that Minnesota West follows the standards formally articulated in legislation and in the policy manuals guiding bargaining units, budgeting processes, and curriculum development processes.

Internally, Minnesota West engages stakeholders in shared governance through the use of formal and informal structures. Formal structures include President's Cabinet, which makes final decisions about College-wide resource allocation and strategic planning. The Academic Affairs and Standards Council and Faculty Shared Governance Council are chaired by faculty, and included broad representation from across the College. Members of both committees confirmed their role in planning and recommending policy and procedure that govern College programs and services.

Each of the Minnesota West campuses has a Student Senate. Student representatives reported that the Senate works with the administration to develop services and activities to meet student needs. The president regularly meets with students for Pizza with the President lunches to share ideas and concerns. The College is required to present the budget and tuition recommendations to students; the Student Senate issues a formal letter to the Minnesota State system acknowledging that tuition and budget information has been presented to them.

Data is collected and shared across the institution using a variety of tools and communication strategies. Several documents shared with the review team confirmed widespread dissemination of data, including the Minnesota West Strategic Plan goals and outcomes, the Master Academic Plan goals and measure of success, the Student Success Performance Metrics report, a variety of assessment data, CCSSE results, IPEDS data, and individual program data. Discussions with faculty and staff confirmed that these documents, and others, provide information that is used in planning for continuous improvement across the College.

As a member of the Minnesota State system, Minnesota West is guided by system-wide policies as procedures, such as the Minnesota State College Faculty (MSCE) Master Agreement and the Minnesota State Student Success Performance Measures that guide faculty roles and responsibilities and expectation of student performance. Minnesota West offers internal stakeholders myriad opportunities for setting College-wide policy and procedures. Member of the Faculty Shared Governance Council provided specific examples of policy or personnel issues raised that were subsequently resolved in collaboration with College administration. In a discussion with the review team the Academic Affairs and Standards Committee members provided information about the committee's charge to provide direction to and oversight of academic standards and course and program offerings.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.B - Core Component 5.B

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

1. The institution has qualified and trained operational staff and infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The goals incorporated into the mission and any related statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources and opportunities.
3. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring its finances.
4. The institution's fiscal allocations ensure that its educational purposes are achieved.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The College administration provided the review team with comprehensive organizational charts for the institution and for each campus. Additionally, information on the number of full-time and part-time faculty and staff at each campus was provided to the team, demonstrating Minnesota West's commitment to access for all students, regardless of location. Administrators are located at a number of Minnesota West's campuses, which allows for strong connections across campuses and with the communities served.

Courses, programs, and student services are delivered through face to face instruction, hybrid courses, online, and through the ITV system. Tours of facilities on three of the campuses confirmed adequate classroom space, computer labs, and ITV facilities available for students. A review of the facilities plan, and discussions with IT staff confirmed that all campuses are well maintained and computer labs are regularly updated.

Minnesota West operates under its own fiscal policies, guided by the Minnesota State Board Policies and Procedure related to budget and resource allocation. A review of recent financial audits confirms that all College finances are regularly audited to ensure that the financial records are accurate and meet all state and federal applicable laws.

Minnesota State's Biennial and Annual Operating Budget Instructions requires Minnesota West to prepare balanced budgets consistent with the system and Board policies and procedures. The College is required to accurately report financial data, including the Composite Financial Index, primary reserve ratio, return on net assets, viability ratio, and operating margins ratio. Through a review of Minnesota West's financial statement, and in meetings with the Chief Financial Officer and team, the visiting team confirmed that the College abides by all Minnesota State and internal budget preparation and reporting requirements.

Through a review of strategic planning documents and interviews with President's Cabinet, the Vice President of Finance and Facilities, and the Provost, the review team confirmed that the processes used to establish the institutional budget align with the mission, vision, and values of Minnesota West; and that allocation requests are required to identify how any additional resources support the mission and the College strategic initiatives.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities, including, as applicable, its comprehensive research enterprise, associated institutes and affiliated centers.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity, including fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue and enrollment.
5. Institutional planning anticipates evolving external factors, such as technology advancements, demographic shifts, globalization, the economy and state support.
6. The institution implements its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.

Rating

Met

Rationale

As a part of the Minnesota State system, the College's expenditures must align with the system's priorities (closing the educational equity gap, enhancing access to higher education, and delivering high value, affordable education). Annual budget requests from departments at Minnesota West must be linked to the College's Strategic Plan.

Since the last site visit, the College has instituted a zero-based budgeting process that triggers a review of all budget lines. Staff and faculty were trained on the key components of the new model and a Financial Advisory Committee was formed within the shared governance system on campus. The process enabled departments and college leaders to question the purpose of certain expenditures and identify areas that warranted greater investment.

Student assessment and program review data are used to determine if student learning outcomes can be improved. In addition, CCSSE, IPEDS, student evaluations and surveys are used to monitor enrollment and related trends and, to the extent possible, forecast future activities. The College has been working toward greater consistency between its various campus locations. Using input and data from the various locations, the College made the decision to move from a campus dean structure to a structure in which deans support district-wide curricular or co-curricular functions.

The budget process incorporates recommendations received from external groups such as the President's Advisory Council (PAC) throughout the year; the operating and strategic initiative requests of deans and departments; and the recommendations of student governments. The Comprehensive Facility Planning process enabled the College to prioritize its facility projects and develop the proposal for 2022 capital bonding project with input from faculty, staff, students, and community members.

As a part of the Minnesota State system, Minnesota West has a well-defined role in the educational landscape, as the College covers a very large and diverse service region. Its five campuses provide unique programs and services to meet specific community needs. State funding is appropriated based on legislative budget priorities. The College recognizes the challenge of expanding needs for technology across its 19 county region and has been investing in resources to expand access while building in data security.

The College monitors factors that influence its revenue sources, and has identified alternative revenue streams by building new programs such as the Minnesota West REACH program, a collaboration with area high schools. The YMCA land lease and that at Blue Jay Villas are examples of other revenue streams that can support both the College and the community.

The president of Minnesota West reaches out to members of the campus community, including students, on a regular basis. The president's involvement in a variety of external groups provides an avenue for input from beyond the campus boundaries. This information is funneled into the budgeting process. The move to zero-based budgeting and the creation of strategic initiative grants are two examples of systematic adjustments that have been made to improve budget processes.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

The institution's resources, structures, processes and planning are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Rationale

Minnesota West demonstrates its commitment to shared governance through both formal and informal processes. As a member of the Minnesota State system, Minnesota West is governed by a Board of Trustees, and abides by the policies and procedures set forth by the Board. The Minnesota State College Faculty Master Agreement articulates the role of faculty in shared governance. Employees at Minnesota West are represented by a variety of employee unions, and specific rights and responsibilities for representation in decision-making are set forth in the union contracts. Locally, the College has provides several formal and informal opportunities for shared governance: the Academic Affairs and Standards Committee, the Faculty Shared Governance Council, and other councils and committees that engage in decision-making processes at the College.

Courses, programs, and student services are delivered through face-to-face instruction, hybrid courses, online courses, and through the ITV system. Minnesota West includes five campuses and three centers, and employ sufficient faculty and staff at each campus to meet the needs of students.

Minnesota State's Biennial and Annual Operating Budget process requires Minnesota West to prepare balanced budgets consistent with Minnesota State policies, including the Composite Financial Index, primary reserve ration, return on net assets, viability ratio, and operating margins ratio. A review of this process by the evaluation team confirmed that Minnesota West complies with all state and federal financial policies and laws.

Minnesota West aligns its resources with its mission, vision, and values, and with the Minnesota State system priorities. A review of the College Strategic Plan, assessment plans, Financial Advisory Committee, Master Academic Plan, and the Comprehensive Facility Plan confirm that resource allocation decisions are guided by the mission of the College.

FC - Federal Compliance

Rating

Does not require monitoring

Federal Compliance Filing Form

- HLC_Federal_Compliance_Report_(1)

Rationale

Federal Compliance Rationale Template

Instructions: When an evaluation that includes a Federal Compliance Review is released to the peer review team in the Assurance System, copy and paste the text below into the Rationale section of the Federal Compliance tab.

1. ASSIGNMENT OF CREDITS, PROGRAM LENGTH AND TUITION

Conclusion (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other two.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

The institution offers Associate of Arts (AA), Associates of Science (AS), and Associates of Applied Science (AAS) degrees as well as a number of certificate programs. Each of these degrees and certificates is of appropriate length and appropriate number of credits.

The institution clearly indicates the cost of tuition and various fees. For programs with a higher credit hour charge or a higher fee (e.g., welding), these costs are clearly laid out in a spreadsheet linked on the website.

There are programs (senior citizen, neighboring state's reciprocity) that are clearly laid out with the qualifications listed on the website. The differences in tuition costs for online are also clearly indicated on the website.

2. INSTITUTIONAL RECORDS OF STUDENT COMPLAINTS

Conclusion (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other two.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

The institution clearly explains on its website the policies and procedure for student complaints. The steps for filing various types of grievances are laid out in a systematic manner with links to the appropriate forms at each stage.

3. PUBLICATION OF TRANSFER POLICIES

Conclusion (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other two.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

The institution is part of the Minnesota State System of public two and four year institutions. As such, the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC) guides much of the transfer process. The MnTC is a collaborative system of general education course transfer. Students who complete the MnTC and then transfer to any other public institution will have completed their lower level general education courses in their entirety.

Minnesota West works to keep the MnTC up to date on courses, content and learning outcomes. There are 10 learning outcome goals within the MnTC.

For students who have not completed the MnTC, there are transfer experts who evaluate courses for transfer. In addition, there are other means of obtaining credits upon transfer (e.g., military training, CLEP, etc.) and the institution works with students on ensuring credit transfers.

4. PRACTICES FOR VERIFICATION OF STUDENT IDENTITY

Conclusion (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other two.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements

Rationale:

The Minnesota State College system uses Eduroam across its campuses. Students can use their StarID to access computer resources at their home or other campus, and use a unique password, not known to anyone else. Minnesota West follows the verification of student identity policies set forth for all Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. The Minnesota State System offices manages all processes regarding protection of student identity, and supports each institution's IT departments in application of the policy.

5. PUBLICATION OF STUDENT OUTCOME DATA

Conclusion (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other two.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements

Rationale:

All retention, persistence, and graduation data for Minnesota West are available to the public through a yearly report, published on the website, and distributed to community stakeholders. For programs with outside accreditation (e.g. Nursing), licensure exam pass rates, or other certification exam rates are also published on the website. While all programs publish student learning outcomes, results of the assessment of those outcomes are shared internally, although not published for public consumption.

6. STANDING WITH STATE AND OTHER ACCREDITING AGENCIES

Conclusion (Choose one of the following statements and delete the other two.):

The institution meets HLC's requirements.

Rationale:

The institution clearly shows its HLC accreditation as well as the accreditations of outside agencies. The institution has sought and achieved a wide number of accreditations for its degrees and certificates. <https://www.mnwest.edu/about/accreditations?highlight=WyJhY2NyZWVpdGF0aW9uIl0=>

APPENDIX A: TITLE IV PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES

Complete this section only if the institution has submitted an Appendix A. Review any negative actions taken against the institution and identify any implications for the institution's compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation or other HLC requirements. Provide a detailed rationale for any Core Components identified as Met with Concerns or Not Met.

Rationale:

NA

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

. Websites visited

<https://www.mnwest.edu/programs-courses/degrees-awards/#aa>

<https://www.mnwest.edu/paying-for-college/financial-aid/costs?highlight=WyJjb3N0IiwY29zdHMiLCJvZiIsImF0dGVuZGFuY2UiLCJjb3N0IG9mIiwY29zdCBvZiBhdHRlbnRhbmlwib2YgYXR0ZW5kYW5jZSJd>

<https://www.mnwest.edu/paying-for-college/tuition-fees>

<https://www.mnwest.edu/paying-for-college/tuition-fees>

<https://www.mnwest.edu/student-services/complaint-grievance?highlight=WyJzdHVKZW50Iiwic3R1ZGVudHMlLCJzdHVKZW50J3MiLCJzdHVKZW50cyiLCJjb21wbGFpbnRzIl0=>

<https://www.mnwest.edu/index.php/search?q=student+complaints#:~:text=policies/38,West%20Policies%20Chapter%203>

<https://www.mnwest.edu/programs-courses/academic-standards?highlight=WyJ0cmFuc2ZlciIsInRyYW5zZmVycmluZyIsInRyYW5zZmVycyIsInRyYW5zZmVycmVkiwidHJhbnNmZXJhYmlsaXR5Il0=>

<https://www.mnwest.edu/programs-courses/academic-standards#transfer>

<https://www.mnwest.edu/advisory-services/transfer-services>

<https://www.mnwest.edu/advisory-services/transfer-services>

<https://www.mnwest.edu/it/eduroam?highlight=WyJzdHVkZW50Iiwic3R1ZGVudHMlLCJzdHVkZW50J3MiLCJzdHVkZW50cyiLCJpZGVudGl0eSjd>

<https://www.mnwest.edu/programs-courses/minnesota-west-online/facts/faqs?highlight=WyJvbmtpbmUiXQ==>

<https://www.mnwest.edu/index.php/search?q=student+learning>

<https://www.mnwest.edu/index.php/search?q=student+learning+outcomes>

<https://www.mnwest.edu/faculty-webpages/medical-assistant>

https://www.mnwest.edu/images/faculty-program-webpages/nursing/student_learning_outcomes_pn.pdf

https://www.mnwest.edu/images/faculty-program-webpages/nursing/student_achievement_data_2020.pdf

<https://www.mnwest.edu/faculty-webpages/cosmetology-jackson>

<https://www.mnwest.edu/programs-courses/list/cosmetology-diploma>

<https://www.mnwest.edu/about/accreditations?highlight=WyJhY2NyZWRpdGF0aW9uIl0=>

Review Dashboard

Number	Title	Rating
1	Mission	
1.A	Core Component 1.A	Met
1.B	Core Component 1.B	Met
1.C	Core Component 1.C	Met
1.S	Criterion 1 - Summary	
2	Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct	
2.A	Core Component 2.A	Met
2.B	Core Component 2.B	Met
2.C	Core Component 2.C	Met
2.D	Core Component 2.D	Met
2.E	Core Component 2.E	Met
2.S	Criterion 2 - Summary	
3	Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support	
3.A	Core Component 3.A	Met
3.B	Core Component 3.B	Met
3.C	Core Component 3.C	Met
3.D	Core Component 3.D	Met
3.S	Criterion 3 - Summary	
4	Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement	
4.A	Core Component 4.A	Met
4.B	Core Component 4.B	Met
4.C	Core Component 4.C	Met
4.S	Criterion 4 - Summary	
5	Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning	
5.A	Core Component 5.A	Met
5.B	Core Component 5.B	Met
5.C	Core Component 5.C	Met
5.S	Criterion 5 - Summary	
FC	Federal Compliance	Does not require monitoring

Review Summary

Conclusion

Minnesota West, one of 37 colleges and universities in the Minnesota State system, provides educational and student services to a large region in Southwest Minnesota. Its five campuses and three centers support the unique needs of the communities in which they are located, as evidenced by the variety of programs and services offered at each location. The evaluation team, through a review of the Assurance Argument, evidence files, and meetings with a variety of College stakeholders, found that the College has established effective policies and procedures to ensure quality academic programs and student services, and a resource allocation process to support those programs and services. The College uses a shared governance model, both formal and informal, to engage all of its stakeholders in decisions that impact the College. Faculty, staff, and students reported to the review team a strong sense of collegiality and adherence to the College mission, vision, and goals.

Minnesota West continues to refine its processes for program evaluation and assessment of student learning, as confirmed by recently adding co-curricular assessment and Institutional Learning Outcomes assessment. The College is encouraged to continue to institutionalize the assessment process, and to consistently share data across all disciplines and campuses to improve student learning.

Students, community members, and Board of Trustees members stressed the value of Minnesota West in supporting rural Minnesota by offering programs and services to strengthen communities in partnership with local businesses and organizations. The College is commended for maintaining a strong presence in small communities, and for responding to the needs of all stakeholders.

Overall Recommendations

Criteria For Accreditation

Met

Sanctions Recommendation

No Sanction

Pathways Recommendation

Eligible to choose

Federal Compliance

Does not require monitoring

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.



Multi-Campus Reviewer Form

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After the visit, the team chair should submit all Multi-campus Reviewer Forms as PDFs at hlcommission.org/upload. Select “Final Reports” from the list of submission options to ensure the institution’s materials are delivered to the correct HLC staff member. (Note: The submission webpage can be accessed through the Assurance System by clicking the Submit Final Form button on the Forms tab.) The Multi-campus Report from the institution and the reviewer forms become part of the institution’s permanent file and are shared as appropriate with future evaluation teams.

Instructions

A Multi-campus Reviewer Form should be no more than five pages. The form begins with a brief description of the campus and its operations to provide the context for the on-site team’s deliberations.

For each review category, provide 2–3 evidence statements that make clear the team’s findings in relationship to the Criteria and Core Components. Check one of the following for each category:

- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the review category. (The reviewer may cite ways to improve.)
- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the review category.

This form does not request a recommendation from the reviewer. Instead, the full evaluation team is expected to include a discussion of the evidence related to the multi-campus visit in its deliberations about the oversight, management, and educational quality of extended operations of the institution. The team will incorporate evidence on extended operations into the final team report. Further, the full team may determine that a pattern of concern exists across multiple categories of a single campus or more than one campus and may result in a recommendation for additional monitoring or sanction.

Report Template

Name of Institution: Minnesota West Community and Technical College

Name and Address of Branch Campus: Cranby Campus: 1011 1st St. W. Canby, MN 56220

Date and Duration of Visit: Wednesday Nov. 10th 10:00 am - 12:15 pm

Reviewer: Erik Kornkven

1. Campus Overview

Provide a brief description of the scope and operations of the campus. Include information about consortial or contractual arrangements, if applicable.

The Canby campus serves as a campus of Minnesota West Community and Technical College. It houses primarily technical programs such as Electrical, Wind Energy, Diesel Mechanic, and Dental Assisting. Programs at the Canby campus may share students with sister programs at other campus, for example, there is a cohort of the Dental Assistant program at the Luverne Center.

2. History, Planning, and Oversight

Provide 2–3 evidentiary statements on the effectiveness of the institution’s planning, governance and oversight processes at the campus and in relationship to the broader systems of the institution, particularly as they relate to enrollment, budgeting and resource allocation at the institution.

Judgment of reviewer (check one):

- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the category.
- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the category.

Evidentiary Statements:

The Canby campus takes part in all of the campus-wide initiatives at Minnesota West from planning, governance, and oversight. Resource allocation at the institution follows a Request for Proposals system in which internal stakeholders may submit requests for specific budgetary allocations necessary for their programs and areas. Part of the RFP process is the college-wide faculty-led funding committee that oversees the purchasing of equipment and technology. Faculty, staff, and students at the campus expressed confidence in the budget allocation process and indicated they felt engaged and supported within the college-wide budgeting and resource allocation process.

3. Facilities and Technology

Provide 2–3 evidentiary statements on the institution’s facilities and technology at the campus and their suitability to the needs of the students, staff and faculty, as well as the educational offerings. Consider, in particular, classrooms and laboratories (size, maintenance, temperature, etc.); faculty and administrative offices (site, visibility, privacy for meetings, etc.); parking or access to public transit; bookstore or text purchasing services; security; access for people with disabilities; and other services or facilities (food or snack services, study and meeting areas, etc.).

Judgment of reviewer (check one):

- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the category.
- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the category.

Evidentiary Statements:

Canby contains multiple well-appointed laboratory and classroom spaces for its various programs. The three main programs, electrical/wind energy, diesel mechanic, and dental assistant all boast ample space, equipment, and classroom facilities to conduct their programs. The electrical program, for example, recently renovated and added on additional hands-on work spaces in their shop to accommodate Covid-19 guidelines and social distancing practices.

The Canby campus also has amenities for the students and the community through its bookstore as well as its privately managed cafeteria. The cafeteria is open to the public throughout the day and it is not unusual for community members to frequent the college for lunch and breakfast throughout the week. The food service at the Canby campus is one of the only active food service options across the Minnesota West campuses.

4. Human Resources

Provide 2–3 evidentiary statements on appropriateness of faculty and staff qualifications, sufficiency of staff and faculty for the campus, and the processes for supporting and evaluating personnel at the campus. Consider the processes in place for selecting, training and orienting faculty at the location, as well as the credentials of faculty dedicated to the campus and other faculty.

Judgment of reviewer (check one):

- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the category.
- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the category.

Evidentiary Statements:

The Canby campus houses the Human Resources department of the Minnesota West College. After reviewing faculty files, it is clear that the campus and the college as a whole practice appropriate measures related to faculty qualifications and credentials. Faculty at the Canby

campus must adhere to the same qualification requirements as all other Minnesota West faculty as outlined in Criterion 3.

During the stakeholder visits some students expressed a desire to see more faculty appointed to the different programs at the college, although faculty expressed they were happy with the staffing levels of their programs.

5. Student and Faculty Resources and Support

Provide 2–3 evidentiary statements on the student and faculty services and academic resources at the campus, as well as the processes to evaluate, improve and manage them. Consider, in particular, the level of student access (in person, by computer, by phone, etc.) to academic advising/placement, remedial/tutorial services, and library materials/services. Also, consider the level of access to admissions, registration/student records, financial aid, and job placement services, as well as attention to student concerns. Finally, consider the resources needed by faculty to provide the educational offerings.

Judgment of reviewer (check one):

- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the category.
- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the category.

Evidentiary Statements:

While the Canby campus houses the office of the director of student success, there are no actual tutoring options available for in-person use at the campus. Instead, students are encouraged to meet with their instructors, use tutor.com, or remotely connect with tutors and learning assistants at other campuses. This seems at odd with the hands-on nature of the rest of the educational offerings at the campus and may be an area that the campus wants to explore in the future.

Academic advising, placement, and library services are present at the campus through the on-site staff and the existence of the Library and Academic Resources Center (LARC). This is a space where students have access to technology and resource to help them succeed in their programs.

6. Educational Programs and Instructional Oversight

Provide 2–3 evidentiary statements on the institution’s capacity to oversee educational offerings and instruction at the campus. Identify whether the institution has adequate controls in place to ensure that information presented to students is ample and accurate. Consider consistency of curricular expectations and policies, availability of courses needed for program and graduation requirements, performance of instructional duties, availability of faculty to students, orientation of faculty/professional development, attention to student concerns.

Judgment of reviewer (check one):

- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the category.

- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the category.

Evidentiary Statements:

The courses and academic expectations at the Canby Campus follow the same procedures as the college at large. Namely, faculty are required to complete course outlines that identify course learning objectives, pre-requisites, materials and resources necessary for the course etc. Students have access to all policies and expectations through the campus website and online access to the policy manual and program information.

The one area that the Canby campus does not provide educational offerings for the students is in the area of in-person general education courses. All students enrolled at the Canby campus must take their general education courses online. Some students mentioned they had difficulty learning in an online environment, while others expressed they preferred the flexibility of an online course schedule to work around their work and family lives. More options for on-site general education courses may provide students with the ability to choose the type of education that serves them best in the area of general education courses.

7. Evaluation and Assessment

Provide 2–3 evidentiary statements on the institution's processes to evaluate and improve the educational offerings of the campus and to assess and improve student learning, persistence and completion sufficiently in order to maintain and improve academic quality at the campus. Consider, in particular, the setting of outcomes, the actual measurement of performance, and the analysis and use of data to maintain/improve quality. Identify how the processes at the branch campus are equivalent to those for assessment and evaluation on the main campus.

Judgment of reviewer (check one):

- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the category.
- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the category.

Evidentiary Statements:

As with all programs across the college, programs at the Canby campus participate in the assessment and review process. Individual courses participate in course-level review through the course assessment tool and the course outline reports required annually. These outlines identify how each courses connects to course, program, and institutional learning outcomes. Faculty conduct assessment of the courses and programs on an annual basis and that information is stored in the D2L database system.

Program review is also conducted according to the program review policies outlined in policy 3.10 of the Minnesota West policy manual. The review process analyzes the health of a program using a system of numerical scores representing areas such as enrollment figures, budget considerations, faculty-student ratios etc.

8. Continuous Improvement

Provide 2–3 evidentiary statements that demonstrate that the institution encourages and ensures continuous quality improvement at the campus. Consider in particular the institution’s planning and evaluation processes that ensure regular review and improvement of the campus, as well as alignment of the branch campus with the mission and goals of the institution as a whole.

Judgment of reviewer (check one):

- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the category.
- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the category.

Evidentiary Statements:

Through meetings with the stakeholders at the Canby campus it was evident that they strongly felt connected to the overall culture and identify of Minnesota West’s institutional environment. Mentioned were regular visits from senior leadership including regular visits from the president and from deans. These regular visits constitute the main way that continuous improvement happens at the Canby campus with faculty and staff able to share ideas and ask questions of their supervisors while participating with the governance structures in place across the institution.

The connection between all the campuses at Minnesota West is evident in the way that entire departments are housed throughout the variety of campuses. For example, Canby houses the human resources offices for the college and many of the staff perform duties at the college-wide level. There is strong and intentional integration between all the campuses at Minnesota West.



Multi-Campus Reviewer Form

After conducting the electronic and on-site portions of the multi-campus visit, the assigned peer reviewer completes a separate Multi-campus Reviewer Form for each campus that was reviewed. The reviewer then emails completed forms to the rest of the comprehensive evaluation team members. The team discusses and integrates the findings into its final comprehensive evaluation report in the Assurance System, including any concerns or recommended follow-up.

After the visit, the team chair should submit all Multi-campus Reviewer Forms as PDFs at hlcommission.org/upload. Select “Final Reports” from the list of submission options to ensure the institution’s materials are delivered to the correct HLC staff member. (Note: The submission webpage can be accessed through the Assurance System by clicking the Submit Final Form button on the Forms tab.) The Multi-campus Report from the institution and the reviewer forms become part of the institution’s permanent file and are shared as appropriate with future evaluation teams.

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- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the review category. (The reviewer may cite ways to improve.)
- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the review category.

This form does not request a recommendation from the reviewer. Instead, the full evaluation team is expected to include a discussion of the evidence related to the multi-campus visit in its deliberations about the oversight, management, and educational quality of extended operations of the institution. The team will incorporate evidence on extended operations into the final team report. Further, the full team may determine that a pattern of concern exists across multiple categories of a single campus or more than one campus and may result in a recommendation for additional monitoring or sanction.

Report Template

Name of Institution: Minnesota West Community and Technical College

Name and Address of Branch Campus: Pipestone campus: 1314 North Hiawatha Avenue, Pipestone, MN. 56164

Date and Duration of Visit: November 10, 2021, 1/2 day

Reviewer: Kim Linduska

1. Campus Overview

Provide a brief description of the scope and operations of the campus. Include information about consortial or contractual arrangements, if applicable.

The Pipestone Campus was built on the site of the former Pipestone Indian Vocation School; 2 of the buildings were converted to the Pipestone Area Vocational-Technical Institution and are now used by Minnesota West. The Pipestone Campus programs include Accounting, Administrative Assistant, Carpentry, Cosmetology, Computerized Small Business Management, Farm Business Management, Lamb and Wool Management, HVAC, Plumbing, and Allied Health programs. The Pipestone campus employs 6 unlimited full-time faculty and 13 unlimited part-time and adjunct faculty, as well as 6 full-time and 7 part-time staff.

2. History, Planning, and Oversight

Provide 2–3 evidentiary statements on the effectiveness of the institution’s planning, governance and oversight processes at the campus and in relationship to the broader systems of the institution, particularly as they relate to enrollment, budgeting and resource allocation at the institution.

Judgment of reviewer (check one):

- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the category.
- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the category.

Evidentiary Statements:

Pipestone is one of five campuses of the Minnesota West Community and Technical College and serves the needs of the communities in its west-central service area, primarily through strong career and technical programs. Minnesota West is a part of the Minnesota State system, governed by a 15 member board of directors. A chancellor services as the CEO of the system, and provides direction to the president of Minnesota West. Budgeting and resource allocation at Minnesota West are guided by clear policies and procedures set forth by the Minnesota State system. All Minnesota West budgeting and resource allocation decisions are made with the input of faculty and staff at all campuses, and vetted by Deans and Directors, with final approval of all decisions made by the President’s Cabinet.

3. Facilities and Technology

Provide 2–3 evidentiary statements on the institution’s facilities and technology at the campus and their suitability to the needs of the students, staff and faculty, as well as the educational offerings. Consider, in particular, classrooms and laboratories (size, maintenance, temperature, etc.); faculty and administrative offices (site, visibility, privacy for meetings, etc.); parking or access to public transit; bookstore or text purchasing services; security; access for people with disabilities; and other services or facilities (food or snack services, study and meeting areas, etc.).

Judgment of reviewer (check one):

- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the category.
- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the category.

Evidentiary Statements:

A tour of the facilities confirmed that classroom and lab space is plentiful, spacious, and well equipped to meet the needs of the programs. A Nursing simulation lab serves the specific needs of the Allied Health programs and is the only one in the Minnesota West system.

Student computer labs and an ITV room provides ample opportunities for student work. While there is no food service on campus, there are several snack areas and an inviting student lounge as well as a spacious faculty lounge. Ample parking available for students and the campus is accessible. Students receive books through a textbook fulfillment center.

4. Human Resources

Provide 2–3 evidentiary statements on appropriateness of faculty and staff qualifications, sufficiency of staff and faculty for the campus, and the processes for supporting and evaluating personnel at the campus. Consider the processes in place for selecting, training and orienting faculty at the location, as well as the credentials of faculty dedicated to the campus and other faculty.

Judgment of reviewer (check one):

- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the category.
- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the category.

Evidentiary Statements:

All Human Resources functions are provided district-wide under the direction of the Senior Human Resources Officer, located on the Canby Campus. The hiring processes for faculty and staff are clearly articulated through the Minnesota State system, as are the processes for performance evaluations. Minnesota West faculty and staff at the Pipestone campus confirmed that all hiring processes are clearly articulated and followed.

Faculty/student ratios are set by the language in the Minnesota State College Faculty Master Agreement, which states that at least 70% of all faculty must be fulltime unlimited. A review of HR documents confirms that Minnesota West- Pipestone consistently exceeds those guidelines.

5. Student and Faculty Resources and Support

Provide 2–3 evidentiary statements on the student and faculty services and academic resources at the campus, as well as the processes to evaluate, improve and manage them. Consider, in particular, the level of student access (in person, by computer, by phone, etc.) to academic advising/placement, remedial/tutorial services, and library materials/services. Also, consider the level of access to admissions, registration/student records, financial aid, and job placement services, as well as attention to student concerns. Finally, consider the resources needed by faculty to provide the educational offerings.

Judgment of reviewer (check one):

- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the category.
- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the category.

Evidentiary Statements:

The Pipestone campus employs a full-time advisor to work with all students to support their needs. All student services are also available virtually, including registration, financial aid services, and degree completion planning. The Library and Academic Resources Center offers tutoring services in an inviting environment for students to conduct research or to study.

In 2013, Minnesota West implemented a One Stop student services model that allows all general student services requests to be addressed through one phone call or one point of contact on campus. Students at the Pipestone Campus reported satisfaction with this model of service.

Faculty members have access to large and modern classroom spaces, equipment to support programs, and administrative support through the dean structure. The dean of Allied Health is located on the Pipestone Campus.

6. Educational Programs and Instructional Oversight

Provide 2–3 evidentiary statements on the institution's capacity to oversee educational offerings and instruction at the campus. Identify whether the institution has adequate controls in place to ensure that information presented to students is ample and accurate. Consider consistency of curricular expectations and policies, availability of courses needed for program and graduation requirements, performance of instructional duties, availability of faculty to students, orientation of faculty/professional development, attention to student concerns.

Judgment of reviewer (check one):

- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the category.

- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the category.

Evidentiary Statements:

All information for students, including cost of attendance, program information, program outcomes, and course information is provided on the Minnesota West website that is regularly monitored and updated for accuracy.

Minnesota West provides support and oversight for academic programs through a structure of deans and division chairs who work with program faculty to support the learning needs of students. Pipestone faculty reported strong and collaborative communication with the Minnesota West leadership team and colleagues in programmatic decisions.

7. Evaluation and Assessment

Provide 2–3 evidentiary statements on the institution’s processes to evaluate and improve the educational offerings of the campus and to assess and improve student learning, persistence and completion sufficiently in order to maintain and improve academic quality at the campus. Consider, in particular, the setting of outcomes, the actual measurement of performance, and the analysis and use of data to maintain/improve quality. Identify how the processes at the branch campus are equivalent to those for assessment and evaluation on the main campus.

Judgment of reviewer (check one):

- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the category.
- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the category.

Evidentiary Statements:

Persistence, retention, and completion data are collected and disseminated district-wide; program-specific data is also available for planning purposes. Data is also available through annual reports to all stakeholders, and shared during professional development days at the College. Data is also shared through a variety of reports, including the Strategic Plan, CCSSE data, and the measures identified in the Master Academic and Student Services Work Plan.

Minnesota West’s assessment plan is developed with input from faculty across the institution, and all faculty participate, regardless of campus affiliation. Assessment is conducted at the course, program, and institutional outcomes levels, and data is analyzed and distributed by program. Faculty work together across the College to identify outcomes and measure student performance.

8. Continuous Improvement

Provide 2–3 evidentiary statements that demonstrate that the institution encourages and ensures continuous quality improvement at the campus. Consider in particular the institution’s planning and

evaluation processes that ensure regular review and improvement of the campus, as well as alignment of the branch campus with the mission and goals of the institution as a whole.

Judgment of reviewer (check one):

- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the category.
- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the category.

Evidentiary Statements:

The mission statement, vision, and goals for the Minnesota



Multi-Campus Reviewer Form

After conducting the electronic and on-site portions of the multi-campus visit, the assigned peer reviewer completes a separate Multi-campus Reviewer Form for each campus that was reviewed. The reviewer then emails completed forms to the rest of the comprehensive evaluation team members. The team discusses and integrates the findings into its final comprehensive evaluation report in the Assurance System, including any concerns or recommended follow-up.

After the visit, the team chair should submit all Multi-campus Reviewer Forms as PDFs at hlcommission.org/upload. Select “Final Reports” from the list of submission options to ensure the institution’s materials are delivered to the correct HLC staff member. (Note: The submission webpage can be accessed through the Assurance System by clicking the Submit Final Form button on the Forms tab.) The Multi-campus Report from the institution and the reviewer forms become part of the institution’s permanent file and are shared as appropriate with future evaluation teams.

Instructions

A Multi-campus Reviewer Form should be no more than five pages. The form begins with a brief description of the campus and its operations to provide the context for the on-site team’s deliberations.

For each review category, provide 2–3 evidence statements that make clear the team’s findings in relationship to the Criteria and Core Components. Check one of the following for each category:

- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the review category. (The reviewer may cite ways to improve.)
- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the review category.

This form does not request a recommendation from the reviewer. Instead, the full evaluation team is expected to include a discussion of the evidence related to the multi-campus visit in its deliberations about the oversight, management, and educational quality of extended operations of the institution. The team will incorporate evidence on extended operations into the final team report. Further, the full team may determine that a pattern of concern exists across multiple categories of a single campus or more than one campus and may result in a recommendation for additional monitoring or sanction.

Report Template

Name of Institution: Minnesota West Community and Technical College

Name and Address of Branch Campus: 1450 Collegeway, Worthington, MN 56187

Date and Duration of Visit: 11/10/21 Duration: 2 days (added on to the comprehensive visit)

Reviewer: Kim Linduska

1. Campus Overview

Provide a brief description of the scope and operations of the campus. Include information about consortial or contractual arrangements, if applicable.

The Worthington campus is one of 5 campuses of Minnesota West Community and Technical College. The Worthington campus offers AA, AS and AAS degrees, as well as diplomas and certificates. The largest career preparation programs are Nursing/Allied Health and Criminal Justice, for which the College is well-known. The campus is a full-service campus, including student services, library services, a theater, work-out facilities, and a wide range of classrooms, science labs, and computer labs. The Worthington campus also houses the Minnesota West athletic teams and offers a variety of clubs and organizations for students. The Worthington campus also houses several of the College administrative offices, and employs 32 unlimited full-time faculty, 42 unlimited part-time faculty and adjuncts, 20 full-time staff and 12 part-time staff. The College contracts with a company to provide housing for students; it is full and there is a waiting list. The College also has a long-time agreement with the City of Worthington to house the City YMCA on campus.

2. History, Planning, and Oversight

Provide 2–3 evidentiary statements on the effectiveness of the institution’s planning, governance and oversight processes at the campus and in relationship to the broader systems of the institution, particularly as they relate to enrollment, budgeting and resource allocation at the institution.

Judgment of reviewer (check one):

- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the category.
- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the category.

Evidentiary Statements:

Minnesota West was founded in 1936 as Worthington Junior College, became part of the state-wide system of 2-year colleges in 1974, and as a campus of Minnesota West Community and Technical College in 1995. Minnesota West is a part of the Minnesota State System, governed by a 15-member board of directors. A chancellor serves as the CEO of the System and provides direction to the president of Minnesota West. The College provided evidence of the policies and procedures of the Minnesota State System that guide budgeting decisions and academic programs, including the guidelines for the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum.

Funding for Minnesota West is split between state allocations determined by the Minnesota State System, and tuition revenue, with some support through grants, federal programs such as Carl Perkins, and other unique funding sources. The System provides support for infrastructure maintenance, and colleges submit bids to the System for new capital projects.

Minnesota West introduced a zero-based budgeting process a year ago. Reports from administration, faculty, and staff support this new process, as it has led to efficiencies in the system, and the ability to direct funds to those programs/services that best meet the goals of the College mission, vision, and strategic plan.

3. Facilities and Technology

Provide 2–3 evidentiary statements on the institution’s facilities and technology at the campus and their suitability to the needs of the students, staff and faculty, as well as the educational offerings. Consider, in particular, classrooms and laboratories (size, maintenance, temperature, etc.); faculty and administrative offices (site, visibility, privacy for meetings, etc.); parking or access to public transit; bookstore or text purchasing services; security; access for people with disabilities; and other services or facilities (food or snack services, study and meeting areas, etc.).

Judgment of reviewer (check one):

- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the category.
- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the category.

Evidentiary Statements:

A tour of the campus provided evidence that the facilities are well maintained and provide both academic, student support, and student gathering spaces. The student services spaces have recently been remodeled to provide a more friendly and open space. Faculty and administrative offices provide privacy for meetings, and clearly marked signage directs students to classrooms and buildings. Parking is plentiful and the campus is accessible.

The College uses a textbook fulfillment center for students, and students report that they are satisfied with the service. The library has recently been remodeled and is very inviting and student friendly. Vending machines are located in several locations on campus, and the College offers food pantry cabinets in a variety of locations.

Several computer labs are provided for students, and the campus offers a variety of courses via ITV. Technology is updated on a regular cycle, generally every 3 years.

4. Human Resources

Provide 2–3 evidentiary statements on appropriateness of faculty and staff qualifications, sufficiency of staff and faculty for the campus, and the processes for supporting and evaluating personnel at the campus. Consider the processes in place for selecting, training and orienting faculty at the location, as well as the credentials of faculty dedicated to the campus and other faculty.

Judgment of reviewer (check one):

- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the category.
- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the category.

Evidentiary Statements:

The HR Director is housed at the Canby campus, and faculty and staff credentials are held in that office, although all hiring, evaluation, orientation, and other human resource related functions are available on the Worthington campus. The hiring processes for faculty and staff are clearly articulated through the Minnesota State system, as are the processes for performance evaluations.

Faculty/student ratios are set by the language in the Minnesota State College Faculty Master Agreement, which states that at least 70% of all faculty must be full time unlimited. A review of HR documents confirms that Minnesota West consistently exceeds those guidelines.

Qualifications of all faculty are set by the Minnesota State system, including faculty who teach in the transfer curriculum, career and technical programs, and concurrent enrollment.

5. Student and Faculty Resources and Support

Provide 2–3 evidentiary statements on the student and faculty services and academic resources at the campus, as well as the processes to evaluate, improve and manage them. Consider, in particular, the level of student access (in person, by computer, by phone, etc.) to academic advising/placement, remedial/tutorial services, and library materials/services. Also, consider the level of access to admissions, registration/student records, financial aid, and job placement services, as well as attention to student concerns. Finally, consider the resources needed by faculty to provide the educational offerings.

Judgment of reviewer (check one):

- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the category.
- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the category.

Evidentiary Statements:

Academic and student support services are offered in person by dedicated staff on the Worthington campus. All advising, financial aid and registration services are also accessible online. Tutoring services are offered through the Library and Academic Resources Center.

In 2013, Minnesota West implemented a 'One Stop' student services model that allows all general student services requests to be addressed through one phone call or one point of contact

on campus. Students reported that this service is helpful in navigating questions about enrollment, registration, and other support services.

Faculty have access to necessary classroom space, equipment to offer courses and programs, and administrative support through the dean and director structure provides opportunities to update course curriculum and program outcomes to meet industry needs. Faculty may request funds for additional equipment/supplies through an RFP process, and report that it is an efficient and fair method of distributing funds to keep equipment current to meet student needs.

6. Educational Programs and Instructional Oversight

Provide 2–3 evidentiary statements on the institution’s capacity to oversee educational offerings and instruction at the campus. Identify whether the institution has adequate controls in place to ensure that information presented to students is ample and accurate. Consider consistency of curricular expectations and policies, availability of courses needed for program and graduation requirements, performance of instructional duties, availability of faculty to students, orientation of faculty/professional development, attention to student concerns.

Judgment of reviewer (check one):

- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the category.
- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the category.

Evidentiary Statements:

Minnesota West provides support and oversight for academic programs through a structure of deans and division chairs who work with departmental faculty to support the learning needs of students.

All information for students, including cost of attendance, program information, program outcomes, and course information is provided on the College website that is monitored and updated for accuracy on a regular basis.

Program and degree requirements are set by the Minnesota State System and are clearly articulated through the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum, Minnesota State Transfer Pathways, and other Minnesota State curriculum guidelines. The Minnesota West Academic Affairs and Standards committee provides local oversight for all curriculum matters.

7. Evaluation and Assessment

Provide 2–3 evidentiary statements on the institution’s processes to evaluate and improve the educational offerings of the campus and to assess and improve student learning, persistence and completion sufficiently in order to maintain and improve academic quality at the campus. Consider, in particular, the setting of outcomes, the actual measurement of performance, and the analysis and use of data to maintain/improve quality. Identify how the processes at the branch campus are equivalent to those for assessment and evaluation on the main campus.

Judgment of reviewer (check one):

- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the category.
- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the category.

Evidentiary Statements:

Minnesota West's assessment plan is an institution-wide plan and all faculty participate regardless of campus. Assessments are conducted at the course, program, and institutional outcome levels, and data is analyzed and distributed by program, not by campus. Faculty work together across the College to set outcomes and measure student performance.

Persistence, retention, and completion data are collected and disseminated district-wide and are reported through the IPEDS system. Data is available through annual reports to all stakeholders and shared during professional development days at the College. Data is also shared through a variety of reports, including the Strategic Plan, CCSSE data, and the measures identified in the Master Academic and Student Services Work Plan.

8. Continuous Improvement

Provide 2–3 evidentiary statements that demonstrate that the institution encourages and ensures continuous quality improvement at the campus. Consider in particular the institution's planning and evaluation processes that ensure regular review and improvement of the campus, as well as alignment of the branch campus with the mission and goals of the institution as a whole.

Judgment of reviewer (check one):

- The evidence indicates that the institution fulfills the expectations of the category.
- The evidence indicates that there are concerns related to the expectations of the category.

Evidentiary Statements:

Minnesota West sets institutional improvement goals through the College-wide Strategic Plan, the Master Academic and Student Services Work Plan, and the President's Advisory Council. The College also sets goals in conjunction with The Minnesota State strategic initiative: Reimagining Minnesota State. Specific program goals are set by each program, and measured through course and program assessment tools, and through the annual program review documents.

All campuses in the Minnesota West System align with the mission and goals of the institution. While each campus provides educational programs and services that meet the unique needs of the community, all program curriculum development and deployment of services are guided by the institutional mission, vision, and values.

Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

INSTITUTION and STATE:	Minnesota West Community and Technical College, MN
TYPE OF REVIEW:	Open Pathway Comprehensive Evaluation
DESCRIPTION OF REVIEW:	<p>The institution was granted an extension to comply with HLC's faculty qualification requirement (Assumed Practice B.2.a) solely as applied to its dual credit faculty until September 1, 2023. HLC will suspend review of the institution's compliance with its faculty qualification requirement solely as applied to dual credit faculty until the first evaluation occurring on or after September 1, 2023, at which time the institution's compliance will be specifically examined.</p> <p>A multi-campus visit will take place in conjunction with the comprehensive visit. The following campuses will be visited:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Canby Campus, 1011 1st St., W Canby, MN 56220-9494 2. Pipestone Campus, 1314 N. Hiawatha Ave., Pipestone, MN 56164 3. Worthington Campus, 1450 Collegeway, Worthington, MN 56187 <p>Federal Compliance Reviewer: Kathy Parkison</p> <p>This visit will be conducted with a hybrid team structure. The chair, Kim Linduska, and one other team member, Erik Kornkven, will visit in person, with the rest of the team participating virtually.</p>
DATES OF REVIEW:	11/8/2021 - 11/9/2021
<input type="checkbox"/>	No Change in Institutional Status and Requirements

Accreditation Status

Nature of Institution

Control: Public

Recommended Change: nc

Degrees Awarded: Associates

Recommended Change: nc

Reaffirmation of Accreditation:

Year of Last Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2011 - 2012

Year of Next Reaffirmation of Accreditation: 2021 - 2022



Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

Recommended Change: 2031-2032

Accreditation Stipulations

General:

The institution is approved at the following program level(s): Associate's

The institution is not approved at the following program level(s): Bachelor's, Master's, Specialist, Doctoral

Recommended Change: nc

Additional Location:

The institution has been approved for the Notification Program, allowing the institution to open new additional locations within the United States.

Recommended Change: nc

Distance and Correspondence Courses and Programs:

Approved for distance education courses and programs. The institution has not been approved for correspondence education.

Recommended Change: nc

Accreditation:

* Note on date of accreditation: Accredited as a single entity on August 6, 1997. The result of a merger of Worthington Community College, first accredited in 1973, and Southwestern Technical College, first accredited in 1991.

Recommended Change: nc

Accreditation Events

Accreditation Pathway

Open Pathway

Recommended Change: Eligible to choose

Upcoming Events

Monitoring

Upcoming Events

None

Recommended Change: nc

Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

Institutional Data

Educational Programs		Recommended Change:
Undergraduate		
Certificate	85	_____
Associate Degrees	53	_____
Baccalaureate Degrees	0	_____
Graduate		
Master's Degrees	0	_____
Specialist Degrees	0	_____
Doctoral Degrees	0	_____

Extended Operations

Branch Campuses

- Canby Campus, 1011 1st St. W, Canby, MN, 56220-9494
- Granite Falls campus, 1593 11th Ave., Granite Falls, MN, 56241
- Jackson campus, 401 West St., Jackson, MN, 56143
- Pipestone campus, 1314 N. Hiawatha Ave., Pipestone, MN, 56164
- Worthington campus, 1450 Collegeway, Worthington, MN, 56187

Recommended Change: nc

Additional Locations

- Fairmont High School, 900 Johnson Street, Fairmont, MN, 56031 - Active
- Luverne Educational Center for Health Careers , 305 E. Luverne Street , Luverne , MN, 56156 - Active
- Marshall Area Technical & Educational Center, 1001 W Erie Rd, Marshall, MN, 56258 - Active

Recommended Change: nc

Correspondence Education

None

Recommended Change: nc

Distance Delivery

01.0401 - Agricultural and Food Products Processing, Certificate, Biofuels Technology Biodiesel Certificate



Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

- 01.0401 - Agricultural and Food Products Processing, Certificate, Biofuels Technology Ethanol Certificate
- 11.0201 - Computer Programming/Programmer, General, Certificate, Programmer Specialist Certificate
- 11.0601 - Data Entry/Microcomputer Applications, General, Certificate, Data Entry Specialist Certificate
- 11.0601 - Data Entry/Microcomputer Applications, General, Certificate, IT Workplace Assistant Certificate
- 11.0901 - Computer Systems Networking and Telecommunications, Certificate, Cisco Networking
- 11.0901 - Computer Systems Networking and Telecommunications, Certificate, IT Workplace Specialist Certificate
- 11.1003 - Computer and Information Systems Security/Information Assurance, Associate, Information Security Assurance A.A.S.
- 11.1003 - Computer and Information Systems Security/Information Assurance, Certificate, Information Security Management Certificate
- 13.1501 - Teacher Assistant/Aide, Certificate, Education Paraprofessional Certificate
- 15.0503 - Energy Management and Systems Technology/Technician, Associate, Energy Technical Specialist
- 15.1202 - Computer Technology/Computer Systems Technology, Certificate, Computer Specialist Certificate
- 24.0101 - Liberal Arts and Sciences/Liberal Studies, Associate, Associate of Arts
- 30.9999 - Multi-/Interdisciplinary Studies, Other, Associate, Individualized Studies A.S.
- 46.0399 - Electrical and Power Transmission Installers, Other, Certificate, Windsmith Certificate
- 51.0701 - Health/Health Care Administration/Management, Associate, Management and Supervision in Healthcare
- 51.0701 - Health/Health Care Administration/Management, Certificate, Healthcare Supervision & Leadership Certificate
- 51.0707 - Health Information/Medical Records Technology/Technician, Associate, Health Information Technology A.A.S.
- 51.0707 - Health Information/Medical Records Technology/Technician, Associate, Health Information Technology A.A.S.
- 51.0713 - Medical Insurance Coding Specialist/Coder, Certificate, Medical Coding Specialist Certificate
- 51.0716 - Medical Administrative/Executive Assistant and Medical Secretary, Associate, Medical Administrative Secretary A.A.S.
- 51.0716 - Medical Administrative/Executive Assistant and Medical Secretary, Certificate, Medical Secretary Diploma
- 51.0810 - Emergency Care Attendant (EMT Ambulance), Certificate, Emergency Medical Technician Certificate
- 51.3801 - Registered Nursing/Registered Nurse, Associate, Nursing A.S.
- 51.3901 - Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse Training, Certificate, Practical Nursing
- 52.0201 - Business Administration and Management, General, Associate, Business Management A.S.
- 52.0201 - Business Administration and Management, General, Certificate, Management Certificate
- 52.0204 - Office Management and Supervision, Certificate, Supervisory Leadership Certificate

Institutional Status and Requirements Worksheet

52.0301 - Accounting, Associate, Accounting A.A.S.

52.0301 - Accounting, Certificate, Accounting Certificate/Diploma

52.0302 - Accounting Technology/Technician and Bookkeeping, Certificate, Accounting Clerk Diploma

52.0401 - Administrative Assistant and Secretarial Science, General, Associate, Administrative Assistant A.A.S.

52.0401 - Administrative Assistant and Secretarial Science, General, Certificate, Administrative Assistant Diploma

52.0406 - Receptionist, Certificate, Receptionist Certificate

52.0407 - Business/Office Automation/Technology/Data Entry, Certificate, Applications Specialist Certificate

Contractual Arrangements

None

Recommended Change: nc

Consortial Arrangements

None

Recommended Change: nc
