Assurance Argument
New Mexico State University - NM

10/16/2017
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 broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.

1. The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.
2. The institution’s academic programs, student support services, and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
3. The institution’s planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission. (This sub-component may be addressed by reference to the response to Criterion 5.C.1.)

Argument

1.A.1. NMSU’s mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.

New Mexico State University (NMSU) was founded as Las Cruces College in 1888, and by 1889 the territory legislature designated Las Cruces as the site for a land-grant agricultural college and experiment station. Assuming this role, Las Cruces College became New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, the first degree-granting institution in the territory. A 1960 amendment to the New Mexico Constitution, recognizing the subsequent growth and maturity of the college, redesignated the institution as New Mexico State University.

The special mission of land-grant institutions has always been to provide a liberal and practical education for students and to sustain programs of research, extension education and public service. Still guided by provisions of the Morrill Act of 1862, NMSU provides both a liberal and practical education for students from all walks of life. In addition, NMSU maintains active programs of research, extension education and public service. Various iterations of the mission statement have emerged over time, but the nature and scope has remained largely unchanged. NMSU’s mission statement is closely linked to our strategic plan, Vision 2020, which is a living document that is under constant review by the public and the university community. The most current version was approved by the Board of Regents in December 2016. Revised language to include reference to the NMSU-system was adopted Oct. 5, 2017, and will appear in subsequent publications of the mission statement. Always aligned with our land-grant mission, the strategic plan (Vision 2020) nevertheless changes over time, reflecting the rapidly shifting landscape of higher education in which NMSU operates.

- **Mission:** New Mexico State University is the state’s land-grant university, serving the educational needs of New Mexico’s diverse population through comprehensive programs of education, research, extension education, and public service.
- **Vision:** New Mexico State University will be a premier university as evidenced by demonstrated and quantifiable excellence in teaching, research, extension, outreach, service,
economic development, and community engagement relative to its peer institutions.

- **Values:** New Mexico State University is committed to the values of Diversity and Inclusion, Accountability, Excellence, Discovery and Engagement.
- **Position:** New Mexico State University is uniquely positioned through its geography, demographics, and mission to draw together diverse peoples, thoughts, cultures, knowledge, and curriculum in reimagining the land-grant research institution of the 21st century. Its stature as a Hispanic-Serving, Carnegie higher research activity, community-engaged, land-grant institution with an international border provides the institution with opportunities to redefine the traditional instruction, research, and service mission in new ways, capitalizing on the ideas, energy and collaborative spirit of faculty, staff, and students.

The synthesized realization of NMSU’s collective mission, vision and values is perhaps best stated (and best known) as, "NMSU is a caring community, transforming lives through discovery."

The NMSU-Grants campus opened in 1968. Each NMSU-system community college, including NMSU-Grants, articulates a distinct college mission, appropriate to its role in the community yet consistent with NMSU's overarching land-grant mission.

- **Mission:** NMSU-Grants provides an accessible quality education through innovative teaching and learning that promotes respect and service for our diverse students and community.
- **Vision:** NMSU-Grants seeks to embrace innovation in teaching and learning to promote a sustainable prosperous community.
- **Values:** NMSU-Grants is committed to the values of Personal Success, Growth, Respect, Healthy Lifestyles, Teamwork, Community partnerships, Stewardship, Excellence, Integrity, Positive Attitude, Employability, Empowerment, Intellectual Inquiry, Social Justice, Creativity and Safe Environment.

1.A.2 *NMSU’s academic programs, enrollment profile, and student support services, are consistent with its stated mission.*

**Academic Programs**

Consistent with NMSU's land-grant mission, academic program offerings include both liberal and practical education and degrees. Majors across the NMSU-LC campus span six colleges, representing graduate certificates, and associate's, bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees in Fine and Performing Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences, Sciences, Health Sciences, Agricultural Sciences, Education, Engineering, and Business. NMSU-Grants offers Career Tech Education certificates and associate's degrees that prepare students for the work force (often aligned with the needs of the local community), and for matriculation into bachelor-degree programs.

**Enrollment Profile**

The student population of NMSU-LC reflects the population of the local community and our minority-majority state. Fifty-four percent (54%) of our students are Hispanic, 28.7% are White, 2.8% are African American, 1.9% are Native American, 2% are Mixed Race, 1.4% are Asian, 0.2% are Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 1.3% are unknown. Seven percent (7%) of our students are international, a reflection of NMSU’s efforts to attract international students and build a multicultural global community. The NMSU-Grants student population also closely reflects the demographics of the local population it serves.

Both campuses serve large first-generation college populations, as well as a significant number of
economically challenged students. The Brookings report noted below, as well as other rankings and recognitions, demonstrate that we transform the lives by providing a high-quality, accessible education to students from all walks of life.

In July 2017, NMSU was ranked first in the nation by NSF in science and engineering funding for minority-serving institutions. Also in July 2017, in a study that assessed the 342 public research universities in the United States with regard to the quality of their research and the social mobility they provide to their students, the Brookings Institution identified NMSU as one of only 70 institutions that can be considered a "Leader," performing high quality research and providing significant upward social mobility to its students.

Student Support Services

NMSU service units are organized across three offices - Student Affairs and Enrollment Management (SAEM), Administration and Finance (A&F) and the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost (EVPP). Service units within SAEM include Admissions, Financial Aid, Registrar, Student Life, Health and Wellness and Student Success. A&F includes all auxiliary services, such as Housing and Residential Life, Campus Dining and the Barnes and Noble Bookstore. Units under the EVPP include Academic Advising, Diversity Programs and International and Border Programs. Services provided by these offices meet the general and specific needs of our diverse student populations. For example, most NMSU students are financial aid eligible and therefore use financial aid services. American Indian Programs, Military Veteran Services and Student Accessibility Services offices provide quality services and programs to more unique and much smaller percentages of the student population. The Office of Student Life connects students with co-curricular and leadership opportunities in student organizations and provides support to students facing barriers to attendance and completion of their educational goals. Programs such as the federally-funded TRIO Student Support Services provide individual services to student populations that face completion challenges associated with disabilities, being low-income and/or being first-generation.

1.A.3  NMSU’s planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission.

Vision 2020, and the Six Pillars identified by the Board of Regents, are the guiding force behind planning and budgeting at NMSU. For example, most new investments for the 2018 fiscal year were guided by the objectives of the Six Pillars (i.e. programs supporting increased enrollment, retention, and on-time graduation).

In addition to new investments, NMSU has reduced its budget in response to declining enrollment and declining state support. Significant efforts have been made to increase efficiencies and reduce redundancies, including investments in energy efficiency (ongoing), transforming administrative and service units (2015–2017), and transforming academic administrative structures (beginning Spring 2017) - always with the primary goal of preserving excellence in education, research and service.

NMSU has also focused on revenue generation. Enhanced and strategic marketing to out-of-state students - particularly from the El Paso, Texas area - has proved successful. First year enrollment increased by more than 11% in Fall 2017. An increased focus on philanthropy has resulted in the development of Giving Tuesday and a $125 million capital campaign. As of August 14, 2017, the campaign has raised $78,087,163. Moreover, the Aggie Development Corporation was established to develop the university's vast resources in real estate and water rights.

Additional information about the alignment of NMSU's planning, budgeting and mission is provided in 5.C.1.
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1.B - Core Component 1.B

The mission is articulated publicly.

1. The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.
2. The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of 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 document or documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.

Argument

1.B.1 NMSU clearly articulates its mission through public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans, or institutional priorities.

NMSU proudly and publicly articulates our mission. It is found on our institutional website, in the Regents Policy Manual, in the Academic Catalog, and on our strategic planning and performance website. NMSU-Grants prominently and publicly states its mission on the NMSU-Grant's website, in the Faculty Handbook, and in its Academic Catalog.

To improve accessibility, NMSU redesigned the home webpage to focus on our external audience, including students, parents, the community, alumni and donors. During 2015–16 the redesigned website received three awards: A Gold Award in the MarCom International Awards; a Merit Award in the Educational Marketing Awards; and Honorable Mention in the CASE Accolades.

Dedicated pages of the website provide information about the university, its heritage, and points of pride, such as our Carnegie Foundation Community Engagement Classification and Association of Public and Land-grant Universities Innovation and Economic Prosperity Designation.

1.B.2 NMSU documents are current and explain the extent of 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.

The constant attention paid to the strategic plan, Vision 2020, is a testament to the central role it plays in guiding investments and the efforts of the university in teaching, research and service. Other documents and websites are regularly updated to provide current information about the university. Examples include QuickFacts; the NMSU, University Registrar, and Vice President for Research websites; and college websites, such as Arts and Sciences, Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, and Engineering. NMSU-Grants' strategic plan highlights its focus on student learning through quality education and services.

1.B.3 NMSU documents identify the nature, scope, and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.
NMSU's mission is declarative in specifying, at its core, service to educate the diverse population of the state of New Mexico. Both NMSU-LC and NMSU-Grants are positioned - through geography, demographics and mission - to provide a high quality education to diverse students, including from many underserved populations. That fact that we serve our constituents well has received national recognition from the Brookings Institution and the National Science Foundation. Our commitment to this constituency is documented in our mission statements and through the programs of study we offer.

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1.C - Core Component 1.C

The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.

1. The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.
2. The institution’s processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

Argument

1.C.1 NMSU addresses its role in a multicultural society.

Fostering opportunity for the diverse population of New Mexico and the region is at the heart of NMSU’s mission and history. Diversity and inclusion are not just abstract concepts, but are part of a long tradition at NMSU. Fabian Garcia was a member of NMSU’s first graduating class (1894). He later became a professor of Horticulture (1906–1945) and in 1913 was named the first Hispanic Director, in the nation, of a State Agricultural Experiment Station. Famous for producing the first reliable chile pod (the beginning of the hot "Sandia" pepper) during his professorship at NMSU, Garcia provided rooms in what is now the Fabian Garcia Research Center to house poor Mexican-American students. In 1928 NMSU admitted Clara Belle Williams, the first African-American woman to study at and graduate from NMSU. The NMSU-LC campus has a street and a building named in her honor. Part of embracing diversity and promoting the equitable valuation of all persons includes acknowledging past wrongdoing and addressing the residual consequences of such. Thus, in 1980 Ms. Williams not only received an honorary doctorate from NMSU, but a public apology for the mistreatment she was subjected to as a student.

NMSU continues to build on our long tradition of cultivating a multicultural society through programs such as the recently launched Descubre Program that discounts out-of-state tuition for Mexican nationals to 1.5 times that of in-state tuition, and other, more long-standing minority-serving programs (also see 3.D):

- Maximizing Access to Research Careers (MARC)
- New Mexico Alliance for Minority Participation (NM AMP)
- College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP)
- Research Initiative for Scientific Enhancement (RISE)
- Southern New Mexico ENLACE collaborative
- Bridges to the Baccalaureate

Our diverse student population demonstrates our commitment to access. NMSU provides support services for first-generation and economically challenged students, as well as programs and services for diverse student groups. National recognition for strengths in diversity include from the National Science Foundation, INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine, Diverse: Issues in Higher Education, Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education magazine, and membership in the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU).

NMSU’s value of diversity and inclusion is reflected in Goal 2 of Vision 2020 - Diversity and Internationalization. These statements collectively extend NMSU's commitment to multiculturalism from a local and national level to an international scale. Our own state is a minority-majority state,
and our current students come from 49 of the 50 United States, and 89 countries around the world. New Mexico General Education Common Core competencies embrace multiculturalism, particularly in Areas IV and V (Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Humanities and Fine Arts). At NMSU, undergraduate general education requires an additional 6 credit hours (2 courses) of upper division Viewing a Wider World ("V") courses. Among other things, "V" courses emphasize the international character and multicultural influences present in various fields of study. Many program-specific courses focus on the multicultural aspects of human life, including those offered in the colleges of Education, Health and Social Services, Arts and Sciences, and Business. Students can also fulfill 3 credits of "V" requirements by completing a for-credit, minimum of four-week duration, international study abroad program.

NMSU’s Baccalaureate Experience (BE) learning outcomes include Diversity, defined as "actively and consistently [seeking] out new, diverse experiences and relationships with people who have different backgrounds, life experiences, cultures, beliefs and/or values." Complementary BE learning outcomes include Citizenship (defined as having "a personal commitment to, and actively and frequently [engaging] in activities that advance societal needs for social justice, sustainability and global perspective") and Self-Awareness (defined as being "keenly aware of biases of both myself and others, and... regularly [taking] into account biases when processing information and forming judgments").

Co-curricular programs also introduce students to, and engage students in, multicultural experiences. On-campus opportunities include guest speakers, cultural awareness events and cultural events. The University Art Gallery displays works from various artists, such as the New Acquisitions/Nuevas Adquisiciones; an MFA Thesis Exhibition, Life As It Is: Yolanda Cooper; and Fugitive Fibers by a collection of artists. Off-campus opportunities to expand multicultural understanding include international experiences through study abroad, Faculty Led International Programs (FLIP), and Aggies Go Global.

While faculty and staff at NMSU represent many diverse cultures and experiences, we understand that multiculturalism must be continuously cultivated. Opportunities for faculty and staff to consider multicultural perspectives, particularly related to teaching and learning, are frequent. The Teaching Academy (TA) is intentional in recruiting diversity speakers to facilitate discussions and workshops. In Summer 2016 NMSU sponsored three speakers to engage faculty and administrators in discussions about the multicultural experiences and perspectives of our students and the local community. Our Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Sciences College brought Temple Grandin to campus in August 2016, to meet with faculty and students about her book, Thinking In Pictures: My Life With Autism. In Spring 2017 the Honors College hosted Margot Lee Shetterly, author of Hidden Figures, as the keynote speaker for the annual University Speaker Series.

Students and faculty across NMSU engage in global efforts to advocate for and address the needs of various cultural groups. For example, NMSU students and faculty have contributed to initiatives intended to benefit people around the world, including projects in Nicaragua, Columbia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Mexico, India and the island of Borneo. The recent hire of the NMSU Gerald Thomas Chair for Global Agricultural Initiatives is another demonstration of NMSU's ongoing commitment to play an important role in a global multicultural society.

1.C.2 NMSU’s processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

NMSU operates with a constant eye on diversity. At the request of NMSU’s Diversity Council, Chancellor Carruthers examined and reported on diversity issues at NMSU. One item
reviewed was a survey completed by over 1300 faculty and staff that, among other things, measured satisfaction on diversity issues. The "gap" identified between the importance faculty and staff place on diversity and the job they feel the university is doing in the area of diversity was the smallest of any area measured, and the statement that “NMSU places a high emphasis on having a diverse faculty and staff" had the fourth highest satisfaction score of the 40 survey items. The third highest satisfaction score was for the statement, “NMSU has a clear policy and a process for reporting discrimination.”

Practices and activities that likely contribute to these results are inclusive hiring practices, non-discriminatory practices, academic requirements that emphasize cultural diversity, and co-curricular programs and services that foster diversity and support diverse populations. These programs and offices provide programming for the entire university, as well as ensure a safe, supportive and tolerant environment for all students.

Because of its commitment to serving the local community, in 2011 NMSU-Grants was awarded a Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institutions (NASNTI) grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The goals of the grant were to provide outreach to Native American, low-income, and at-risk clients in the county and help them gain access to higher education, while simultaneously honoring their background and respective communities.

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1.D - Core Component 1.D

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

1. Actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.
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 identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

Argument

1.D.1 NMSU actions and decisions reflect an understanding that in its educational role, NMSU serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.

NMSU’s commitment to serve the public good is inherent in our land-grant mission to provide the general public with access to quality higher education. The declaration that "NMSU is a caring community, transforming lives through discovery" also encompasses a broader aspiration - to change lives beyond the university. Accordingly, NMSU provides ongoing education and service to the local and state communities not solely through our academic programs on campus, but also through extension, outreach and community engagement. In addition, the global community benefits from the multifaceted research carried out by our faculty and staff. NMSU takes pride in the contributions it makes to the public good.

NMSU faculty and staff understand that as a land-grant university we have a unique opportunity to enact positive change in our communities. Cooperative Extension services, 4-H Youth Development, the Public Health Department and the Young Women in Computing programs offer examples of how the university performs community outreach. Research and Public Service reports provide additional examples of public service projects undertaken by NMSU to improve the lives of New Mexico residents. Still more examples include NMSU's STEM outreach programs and the New Mexico EDGE (Education Designed to Generate Excellence in the Public Sector), which operates through the NM Cooperative Extension Service and provides management training to public sector officials.

The NMSU-Grants mission specifically commits to providing quality programs to a culturally diverse community. Campus planning and budgeting processes include the Grants Cibola County Schools Advisory Board, which brings awareness of the educational and business needs of the local community into the budget plan. NMSU-Grants further meets its obligation to serve the public good by carefully considering the needs of the surrounding Native American community. Specific programs like the Dual Credit Summer Academies and those offered through the Adult Basic Education Outreach Centers and the NMSU Small Business Development Center support and strengthen the local community.

1.D.2 NMSU’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.
NMSU does not have external investors. It does not contribute to a related or parent organization, nor does it engage in supporting external interests. NMSU views its educational purpose as its primary responsibility, which is clearly reflected in our mission statement, resource allocations and budgeting processes (see 5.A; 5.C). Even entities designed to generate revenue for the university, such as the Arrowhead Center and the NMSU Foundation, see their role as supporting the educational, research and service mission of NMSU.

1.D.3 NMSU engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

As a land-grant research institution, NMSU strives to meet the needs of its various constituencies as they are consistent with our mission and purpose. Evidence of our interaction and engagement with external constituencies is included in 1.B and 1.C, and above in 1.D.1. Additional interaction occurs between various advisory boards and specific disciplinary areas, and through listening sessions with constituents, such as a recent meeting with agricultural producers in the northern part of the state. Even more comprehensive engagement takes place at the university level, for example through the Town-Gown Commission.

NMSU’s success in outreach and engagement has received national recognition. In 2015, NMSU was awarded Carnegie Community Engagement Classification and was recognized by the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities as an Innovation and Economic Prosperity University. NMSU also meets community needs through individual and small group acts of service. In a 2016 application to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, NMSU recorded that 4105 students were engaged in 186,884 hours of community service during the 2014-15 academic year.

NMSU-Grants specifically engages with unique constituencies to understand and address their needs through the Acoma and To'hajiilee Outreach Centers and the Grants Cibola County School Board.

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1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

Summary

NMSU’s mission statement is prominently posted on the NMSU website, in various locations across campus, and appears in a variety of published materials. The mission is directly linked to and associated with our strategic plan, which guides institutional planning and aligns budgeting and resource allocation to key institutional goals.

NMSU’s mission stems from its land-grant roots, and remains consistent with the nature and culture of the institution. The mission exemplifies NMSU’s commitment to the public good, and to serve the state's population through education, research, and extension education. NMSU's presence across the state through agricultural extension offices in every one of New Mexico's 33 counties and through service centers in some of the state's most rural areas, including the tribal lands of our Native American constituency, demonstrate clarity about the relationship of our mission and the diversity of society. Our student demographic reflects our minority-majority state population, and includes a sizable proportion of economically challenged and first-generation students. NMSU has received national recognition by the Brookings Institute for the access and social mobility it provides to students, as well as for its high quality research.

Consistent with our land-grant mission, NMSU’s academic program offerings provide an array of liberal and practical educational options that span a variety of disciplines (e.g. from performing arts and humanity studies to sciences, engineering and business studies) and range from associate to doctoral degrees.

Sources

There are no sources.
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 operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

Argument

2.A. NMSU operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel, and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff.

Prior to 2015 the primary document providing for the ethical governance of NMSU was the NMSU Policy Manual. In Fall 2015 NMSU began the process of separating governance and policy from administrative rules and procedures. The result is two governing documents - the Regents Policy Manual (RPM) and the Administrative Rules and Procedures of NMSU (ARP). Reorganization of both documents is currently underway, as is their transition into electronic format. Policies and Rules referenced and extracted as evidence for the Assurance Argument are numbered according to their availability as of September 2017. Cover sheets list prior and current policy numbers when applicable. Both archived and new versions are available on the Office of General Counsel website.

Regents Policy 1.10 provides authority for NMSU's governing body, the Board of Regents (BOR), to govern NMSU and the New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA) through the adoption of policies, and authorizes the development of enforceable administrative rules and procedures necessary to achieve the goals and directives established by the BOR. Appendix 1-A contains highlights from New Mexico law that authorize and define NMSU and NMDA; Appendix 1-B provides bylaws of the BOR. Rule 1.10 provides the protocol for adopting and amending both the RPM and the ARP. NMSU strives for complete integrity in carrying out its policies, all of which are designed to ensure the fair, ethical and transparent operation of the institution.

Governing Board

Authority is bestowed upon the BOR by the State of New Mexico Constitution. The BOR holds a minimum of five regular meetings each year, with additional special meetings as needed. All meetings are conducted in compliance with the New Mexico Open Meetings Act and the BOR Annual Resolution Establishing Notice. All records of the BOR are open to inspection by the public in accordance with the New Mexico Inspection of Public Records Act. Agendas for public meetings are available at Zuhl Library and on the Regents website no less than 72 hours prior to the meeting. Live-stream meeting webcasts, meeting notices, minutes and recorded webcasts are also available on the website. Accessibility accommodations are available upon request, and any member of the institution or the community may sign up for public comments at open meetings.

All BOR members are required to behave ethically and avoid conflicts of interest. Specific statutory
requirements include the following:

- **3.7 Financial Disclosures**: Pursuant to the New Mexico Financial Disclosures Act, each Regent is required to file, with the New Mexico Secretary of State, a financial disclosure statement within thirty days of appointment and during the month of January every year thereafter in which the Regent holds office. [NMSA §10-16A-3] The Financial Disclosure Statements are public records.

- **3.8 Conflict of Interest**: Regents shall not have a direct or indirect financial interest in any contract for building or improving or for the furnishing of supplies or services to the University. [NMSA §21-1-17] Regents will not engage in any act prohibited by the Governmental Conduct Act as it applies to Board members. [NMSA §§10-16-1 et seq.]

- **3.8 Gifts**: Regents shall not accept any gift which would result in a violation of the New Mexico Gift Act [NMSA §§10-16B-1 et seq.]

### Administration, Faculty and Staff

NMSU administration, faculty and staff operate within the guidelines of the RPM and the ARP. The **ARP** provides direction on operationalizing NMSU’s policies and procedures. Additional regulations, procedures and guidelines are provided in documents such as the Business Procedures Manual, Business Ethics Handbook, Signature Authority Table, NMSU's Written Information Security Plan and Safeguarding Guidelines.

The [Faculty Senate Constitution and By-Laws](#) provide guidance and regulation over faculty governance.

Websites for the Offices of Institutional Equity, Human Resources and General Counsel provide public access to information about sexual harassment and misconduct, discrimination, ADA, HIPAA, FERPA, FMLA, employee benefit rights, compliance, conflict of interest, computer and data security, employee safety/loss prevention and drug-free workplace.

ARP Rules 5.86 and 5.87 (faculty) and 8.50 (staff) require annual evaluation of job performance, achievement of goals and objectives, areas for professional development and determination of future goals and objectives. Disciplinary procedures encourage early, low-level and informal resolution when possible, and provide for formal and progressively stronger action as needed. Grievance Review and Resolution procedures do the same. For example, from 2011–2017, 40 cases were referred to the Faculty Grievance Review Board for resolution. Eleven went through the hearing process, and 29 were resolved through mediation or other means. The Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) handles all discrimination grievance procedures.

A **44% drop** in OSHA recordable claims from 2003–2016 is attributed to efforts to cultivate a culture of safety, increased safety training, and funded facility safety repairs. In 2009 NMSU began using Training Central to promote prevention education and training on these and other potential risk-related issues. Beginning April 2015, NMSU instituted mandatory compliance training, which initially occurred through a combination of live and online interactions. All training is now provided online for all employees, including faculty, staff, administrators, students, temporary and part-time workers. Current online training modules include ADA-The Americans with Disabilities Act (What You Should Know); Drug and Alcohol Testing Supervisor Training; FERPA; HIPAA-Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act; NMSU Respects (Title IX and Campus SaVE Act on Campus); Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards Compliance Training; Preventing Harassment in the Academic and Workplace Setting and Preventing Harassment in the Academic and Workplace Setting - Supervisor focus. Academic administrators are also required to attend annual...
training that includes some of these topics as well as other issues administrators may encounter. Research related compliance training and records retention is supported by the Office of Research Compliance and is discussed in 2.E.

Ethicspoint® allows anonymous and confidential reporting by NMSU faculty, staff and students about observed or perceived misconduct, without the threat of retaliation. The most frequent areas of reported misconduct include employee misconduct, discrimination, harassment, threats and inappropriate supervisor directives.

Faculty and staff at NMSU are required to complete a Conflict of Interest (COI) form annually. Over the past 4 years an average of two COI per year have required intervention and included consequences for the NMSU employee.

Finance

NMSU’s financial operations are discussed in detail in 5.A and 5.C, and follow all federal, state and university policies and regulations.

- Oversight by the Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance includes preparation of the annual budget and financial monitoring processes.
- Budget reports, guidelines, tuition and fees are publicly available on the Budget Office website.
- Regular external audits ensure ethical and transparent financial practices and provide accountability for allocation of resources (expenditures and investments), generation of revenue and overall fiscal health.
- The NMSU Central Purchasing and Risk Management Department has adopted the Universal Public Procurement Certification Council Code of Ethics. Procurement Services provides information, forms and guidance to internal and external constituencies regarding purchasing, contracting, property, travel, accounts payable, risk management, etc.

Foundation

The NMSU Foundation, Inc. is a charitable, tax-exempt organization that is registered with the New Mexico State Corporation Commission and strives to foster personal and corporate philanthropy, excel in fundraising, be a prudent and productive steward of its endowments, and honor its fiduciary responsibility to its donors. An investment committee is responsible for investing and managing both the NMSU and NMSU Foundation endowment funds. The Foundation is audited annually by an external accounting firm.

Auxiliary Functions

Auxiliary functions provide services to students, faculty and staff, and charge a fee that is directly related to, but not necessarily equal to, the cost of the service. NMSU’s Business Procedures Manual outlines ethical and responsible conduct for auxiliary units. Auxiliary Services includes multiple self-supporting operations, and is housed under Administration and Finance. It includes the Barnes and Noble Bookstore, Conference Services, Student Union, Food Services, Golf Course, Housing and Residential Life, ID Card Services, Special Events and Transportation and Parking. Services housed under the Chancellor and the Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, respectively, are Intercollegiate Athletics and the Health and Wellness Center.
Athletics

NMSU Athletics operates within the scope of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and the Western Athletic Conference (WAC) rules and guidelines that govern Division I competition. The NMSU Compliance Manual for athletics complements the NCAA Manual and the WAC Handbook and outlines procedures for recruiting, eligibility, financial aid, play and practice seasons, competition, camps and clinics, personnel, complimentary admissions and representatives of athletics interests. NMSU football follows rules and guidelines set by the SunBelt conference.

Sources

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2.B - Core Component 2.B

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

Argument

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

NMSU strives to present itself accurately and transparently to all constituents. NMSU’s home webpage provides quick access to information, including about NMSU, admission requirements, undergraduate and graduate majors and student life and experiences (including student services, organizations and academic resources), all of which is pertinent information to future, first-time and transfer students. NMSU's home webpage also provides information about research, institutional extension and outreach and NMSU's activities in economic development. The News tab spotlights recent faculty and student accomplishments, keeping the public and members of the university community informed about the university. Current students are also served by webpages that provide information on campus resources, programs and events.

Our About NMSU webpage includes the HLC Mark of Affiliation, as does our Accreditation homepage. The Specialized Accreditation webpage lists all specialized/professional accreditations within the NMSU-system, additional information about each accreditation, and links to each accrediting body's webpage. Information about accreditation is also included in the Academic Catalog.

NMSU's Financial Aid Office uses True Cost Calculator to aid current and prospective students in determining true costs for attending NMSU. Costs of books and other required course materials are available through the Barnes and Noble Bookstore.

The Academic Catalog and supporting websites provide information about admissions, transfer, programs, program requirements, program accreditations, and tuition, fees and other expenses. The Office of International and Border Programs provides information on international student admissions. Course information, including semester offerings, available sections, time, location and instructor are provided via the Course Schedule.

The NMSU Library provides access to electronic databases, full text articles, Rapid Interlibrary Loans, digitized collections and other library sources.

The Academics website is a portal into all academic programs and majors. Colleges and departments provide additional information about programs, degrees, and faculty and staff.

Sources

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2.C - Core Component 2.C

The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.

1. The governing board’s deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
2. The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution’s internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
3. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.
4. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

Argument

2.C.1. NMSU’s governing board’s deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.

NMSU’s Board of Regents (BOR) conducts regular deliberations on institutional issues throughout the year during regular and special meetings. Four standing sub-committees of the BOR address various aspects of the institution. Subcommittees are: Regents’ Financial Strategies, Performance and Budget Committee; Regents’ Audit Committee; Regents’ Real Estate Committee; and Regents’ Student Success Committee. Deliberations in these meetings exemplify the BOR intentions to preserve and enhance the institution through the five goals identified in NMSU's strategic plan:

- Goal 1 – Academics & Graduation: Provide stellar programs, instruction and services to achieve timely graduation.
- Goal 2 – Diversity & Internationalization: Provide a diverse academic environment supportive of a global society.
- Goal 3 – Research & Creative Activity: Promote discovery, encourage innovation, and inspire creative achievement.
- Goal 4 – Economic Development & Community Engagement: Drive economic, social, educational, and community development.
- Goal 5 – Resource Stewardship: Optimize resources to effectively support teaching, research, and service.

2.C.2. NMSU’s governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution’s internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.

NMSU’s BOR understands the unique aspects of the institution: The BOR embraces our land-grant mission; they are proud of our diverse, minority-majority community; they appreciate the mission and service NMSU faculty provide through their research and teaching; and they appreciate the service provided through the extension offices of the Cooperative Extension Service. All aspects of the institution are taken into account during decision-making processes.

NMSU staff, faculty and students are represented through ex-officio members on the BOR by the
respective chairs from NMSU’s Employee Council, Faculty Senate and the student governing body (ASNMSU). With the exception of dealing with limited personnel issues and active legal actions, all meetings are open to the public. Regular and special meetings of the BOR include an allotted time for public comment. Comments can be from NMSU's internal community or from external constituencies. In addition, individual members of the BOR convene with various constituent bodies, including staff, faculty, administrators and local community members through the standing Regents sub-committees.

2.C.3. **NMSU’s governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests, or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.**

The BOR preserves its independence from undue influence from external parties through adherence to state laws (see 2.A, Governing Board) pertaining to open public meetings and records and established bylaws. For example, members are appointed by the governor but must be affirmed by the state Senate; the student member (appointed for a two-year term) is selected from a list provided by the chancellor; no more than three board members may be of the same political party; and appointments are for staggered six-year terms. In addition, BOR members must abstain from any pecuniary interest that may be either directly or indirectly related with NMSU.

2.C.4. **The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.**

**Regents Policy** stipulates that the BOR exercises its control over the institution through its policies as administered by the university administration. Specifically, Regents **Policy 1.30** delegates authority for internal management of the university to the chancellor, with the exception of those authorities reserved, by policy, to the BOR. Delegation of the day-to-day management of the institution to administration are exemplified by the recent separation of policies from administrative operational rules and procedures, resulting in two documents - the **Regents Policy Manual and the Administrative Rules and Procedures of NMSU** (see 2.A).

**Regents Policy 1.70** sets forth the expectation and responsibilities for shared governance of the institution. **Article II, Section A** of the Faculty Senate Constitution confirm that the Faculty Senate has legislative jurisdiction over policies affecting the university’s academic mission with regard to education, research and service. Evidence of faculty control over curriculum, degree requirements and other academic matters is recorded on the **Faculty Senate website**. Examples include the engagement of Faculty Senate in crafting and approving policies for changes to 1) admission requirements, 2) more clearly defined faculty qualifications, 3) adoption of more stringent distance education requirements, and 4) reduction in the minimum number of credit hours required for undergraduate degree programs.

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2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

Argument

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

NMSU is committed to the free and open exchange of ideas. Many aspects of NMSU's operations exemplify this commitment. Examples include the exercise of shared governance, including through student and faculty government; university boards and committees; opportunities for public comment at meetings of the BOR; transparency and exchange of ideas for dealing with institutional challenges through open forums and town hall meetings; and invitation for public comment on revisions to the strategic plan. An explicit commitment to freedom of expression is made manifest in NMSU's recently revised Freedom of Expression policy; this commitment is evident even more so in how this policy revision occurred.

In Fall 2014, controversy surrounding the arrest of a student who felt he was exercising his First Amendment rights led NMSU to form a Free Speech Task Force (FSTF). The FSTF - comprised of representatives from student government, faculty at large, Faculty Senate, NMSU Police Department, NMSU Office of the General Counsel, members from the Las Cruces community, and student and attorney representatives for the exercise of First Amendment rights on campus - was charged with drafting a revised Freedom of Expression policy. In a true spirit of collaboration, the FSTF met regularly, gathered campus and local community feedback through an open forum, and ultimately revised the policy to maximize freedom of expression while prohibiting activities that interfere with the educational, research, public service and outreach missions of NMSU.

The pursuit of truth in teaching and learning entails a clear understanding and respect for honesty and responsibility in scholarly work. The NMSU Value of Accountability encompasses honesty and integrity. University policy on academic freedom ensures protection for the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning, specifically stating, "Scholars are entitled to full freedom in the conduct of their research and publication of the results, and full freedom in the classroom to discuss those topics in which they are professionally experts as determined by their credentials." However, it also goes on to recognize that with these rights comes certain responsibilities, stating that the faculty's "special position in the community imposes special obligations" and that faculty "should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, should show respect for the opinions of others, and should make every effort to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution."

Additional evidence of NMSU's commitment to truth in teaching and learning is presented in 2.E.

Sources
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2.E - Core Component 2.E

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

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

Argument

2.E.1. NMSU provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.

NMSU is committed to maintaining the highest standards of ethics and integrity in all manner of research and scholarly activity undertaken by faculty, staff and students. The Associate Vice President for Research Integrity is the institutional official responsible for ensuring that NMSU remains in compliance with federal, state and institutional regulations and policies.

Chapter 11 of the Academic Rules and Procedures of NMSU addresses research integrity. NMSU's Institutional Review Board (IRB) is comprised of faculty members from across the NMSU-system and is responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of individuals recruited to participate in research activities conducted under the auspices of NMSU. University policy requires the IRB review, approve and monitor all research conducted by faculty, staff and students that involves human subjects. Applications for IRB review are submitted via an online system, MAESTRO. MAESTRO was created by the Compliance Office and applies an educational approach to the research application process. Tutorials, a comprehensive website and the IRB Handbook support MAESTRO users.

NMSU's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) oversees regulatory compliance for the use and humane treatment of animals. All personnel involved in animal use for teaching or research purposes must be certified by the IACUC and must complete the Occupational Health and Safety program for animal workers. NMSU’s Office of Research Compliance provides training to undergraduate and graduate students and postdoctoral scientists on responsible conduct in research through the online Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative program.

2.E.2. NMSU students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.

Many of NMSU’s colleges offer ethics courses in their disciplines. Ethics education is further enhanced through the Daniels Fund Ethics Initiative, a twice-awarded $1.25 million initiative aimed at strengthening principle-based ethics education and fostering high standards of business ethics in young people.

The NMSU Library plays a critical role in providing resources and supporting student awareness and understanding about the ethical use of information. The "Help and Guides" tab on the Library homepage provides immediate access to information about copyright, plagiarism and citing sources. Drill-down links provide detailed information about ethical use of resources, as well as direct information about related NMSU policies. For example, specific resources for both faculty and students are available by selecting "Plagiarism" on the drop-down menu; U.S. Copyright Law and
NMSU policies on copyright are available by selecting "Copyright Essentials" on the drop-down menu. Faculty can also schedule Library instruction sessions for their courses, with topics ranging from how to locate information, appropriate use of information, how to evaluate resources and how to cite resources. To better inform students about ethical practices and help them avoid engaging in academic misconduct related to the fair use of resources, faculty are encouraged to add the Library URL to their syllabi.

Faculty are instructed to inform students, using institutionally approved language, about academic misconduct on their course syllabi, including links to relevant sections of the Student Handbook. In past years, approved language was provided to faculty by their respective associate dean for academics. More recently, NMSU provides approved language (including relevant links to the Student Handbook) on our Syllabus Development website.

2.E.3. The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

Students are introduced to NMSU's Social Code of Conduct and Academic Code of Conduct/Academic Misconduct during new student orientations. The Office of the Dean of Students oversees, interprets and implements the policies and procedures related to the Social Code of Conduct. College Academic Associate Deans have jurisdiction over issues involving Academic Misconduct. For example, the Engineering College sanctioned 128 students over the past 3 years for academic misconduct, with consequences ranging from a 1st Strike warning letter to a 2nd Strike immediate suspension for one year. Proposed changes to move to centralized jurisdiction over academic misconduct are currently underway.

Sources

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2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Summary

Consistent with our mission to serve the public, our vision to be a premier university that provides excellence in every venue, and our values of inclusion and accountability, NMSU acts with integrity in all facets of operation. A caring community that transforms lives is established through an ethical environment that takes responsibility for all of its actions, including those made by the organization and by individual members of the organization, including regents, faculty, staff and students.

Committed to acting with integrity in all operations - from financial to academics - NMSU has clear policies and practices that ensure accountability and transparency. The BOR makes its important decisions in public; BOR members do not materially benefit from their role on the board; faculty and staff file conflict of interest forms annually; external and internal financial audits are completed annually; all members of the NMSU community are held to ethical standards of behavior; and students are expected to abide by a Social Code of Conduct, and behave with academic integrity. An Ethicspoint® system allows anonymous and confidential reporting by any NMSU faculty, staff or student, of observed or perceived misconduct.

Clear and accurate information about the university is consistently provided through our home webpage and in our communications with the general public, students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

NMSU’s commitment to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning is evident in our Freedom of Expression Policy and our policy on academic freedom. Integrity of research and scholarly practices is supported and monitored through IRB review, ethics courses, and training programs on responsible conduct in research.

Sources

There are no sources.
3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

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

3.A - Core Component 3.A

The institution’s degree programs are appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for 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).

Argument

3.A.1. NMSU courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.

Combined, NMSU-LC and NMSU-Grants offer over 200 degree and certificate programs, including undergraduate and graduate certificate programs and associate, bachelor, master’s, doctoral and Education Specialist degree programs. Faculty in each certificate and degree program develop and maintain appropriate academic standards to ensure the quality and currency of the certificate or degree. NMSU Academic Rule 4.81 requires that proposed new degree and certificate programs be reviewed and approved through relevant academic bodies, as are substantive changes to existing programs. Appropriate academic rigor and relevance of the program are key considerations in the review process. Once approved through the NMSU-system, programs must be approved by the New Mexico Higher Education Department and in some cases by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Recent examples include a new PhD in Kinesiology, a new BS in Educational Leadership, and a change to the MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. Less comprehensive changes - e.g. in the number of credit hours required or a change to required courses - go through less extensive approval processes. To ensure strong alignment between programs across the NMSU-system, the Community College Vice President Council reviews and approves all changes to community college programs.

The NMSU-system maintains 53 specialized accreditations, and NMSU-LC maintains 39 of those. NMSU-Grants does not maintain any specialized accreditations. Each accredited program undergoes systematic review that ensures it continues to meet rigorous performance criteria. Some accredited programs are accountable for students meeting minimum pass rates on national and/or professional licensure exams. All NMSU specialized accreditations are currently in good standing. Academic Departmental Program Review processes (see 4.A) also utilize rigorous standards to ensure programs are current and student performance is appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.

Annual assessment cycles document student performance with regard to identified program learning
outcomes, and currency and rigor of programs is monitored through student placement upon graduation. Historically, student placement data have been maintained at the college and department level. NMSU is now centrally tracking student placement through a variety of mechanisms, as displayed on the [Student Outcomes webpage](#), which includes data on employment and continuing education.

Programs and colleges engage Advisory Boards/Councils that include various stakeholders such as local and state employers and industry professionals. Advisory Boards provide input about the ability of programs to meet the current and future needs of industry and the competency of recent NMSU graduates that are hired by these stakeholders.

### 3.A.2. NMSU articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate, and certificate programs.

NMSU identifies student learning outcomes at multiple levels. Learning goals are articulated in annual assessment reports and in [Program Review](#) documents. Learning goals for each degree and certificate program vary by degree/certificate level.

At the undergraduate level, NMSU articulates general education student learning outcomes consistent with the lower-division State of [New Mexico General Education Common Core](#) (NM GECC). In addition, NMSU-Grants has adopted unique associate degree-level learning goals that align with NMSU-LC's [Baccalaureate Experience (BE) learning objectives](#).

### 3.A.3. 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) at NMSU.

NMSU offers courses and programs through multiple delivery methods, including traditional face-to-face instruction, Interactive Television (ITV), offsite, hybrid, online and dual credit options. The majority of NMSU courses are taught in the traditional face-to-face format. Distance education (DE) courses at NMSU-LC and NMSU-Grants respectively account for approximately 20% and 52% of the total student credit hours generated. NMSU does not currently maintain any contractual or consortial arrangements.

All academic colleges at NMSU-LC offer online courses and at least one [DE degree program or credential](#), totaling 38 distance education programs that result in a credential. NMSU-LC also offers bachelor-completion programs that are available to NMSU-Grants' students.

NMSU does not differentiate between course outcomes based on delivery mode or dual credit options; all courses, regardless of delivery format and dual credit option maintain consistent learning goals and are subject to the same [NMSU-system policies](#) that ensure appropriate review and consistent academic rigor. Syllabi guidelines are available on the [Syllabus Development webpage](#). Although syllabi for courses might be customized based on the delivery format, (e.g. exam proctoring information for online courses), learning goals, grading, assignments and assessments are expected to be comparable.

Academic departments are responsible for monitoring the quality of programs and course offerings, regardless of delivery format. All programs are expected to be equivalent in terms of rigor, learning goals, alignment to professional standards or college requirements and program-based assessments. The report from our HLC multi-location site visit in November 2015 verified that NMSU's [DE programs demonstrated equivalent quality and outcomes](#) to face-to-face options.
The quality and consistency of DE programs are reviewed as part of specialized accreditation and the NMSU program review processes. For example, the on-campus and distance offerings of the Master’s in Public Health (MPH) are accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health. The fully accredited online MPH is the only one of its kind in the nation.

Professional development resources supporting quality instruction are provided for face-to-face and distance education instructors. The NMSU Teaching Academy (see 3.C) provides support for quality face-to-face teaching through workshops, short courses, resources and services (classroom visits with feedback, syllabus reviews, etc.).

Faculty developing and teaching blended and online courses receive targeted professional development through the Online Course Improvement Program (OCIP) offered by Instructional Innovation and Quality (IIQ). OCIP uses Quality Matters (QM) standards to frame their offerings. IIQ provides general support for distance education to departments, faculty and students, including informational resources and exam proctoring services. The Academic Technology unit provides Canvas (NMSU’s learning management system) workshops and support for a variety of learning technologies. The Instructional Media Services unit supports use of a wide variety of communication options. In all, the goal of these services is to foster a culture of quality for online courses and encourage best practices for online learning.

NMSU identified QM standards as the goal for online course design in 2009, with the initial offering of the OCIP program. With the intent of making "every course a quality course," NMSU subscribed to QM in 2013 to increase access to QM resources. Completion of the QM Implementation Plan (2013-16) had positive results: 183 individuals participated in professional development activities; 30 became peer reviewers; 7 became master reviewers; and 2 became facilitators. In all, 156 courses were reviewed by internal reviewers, including 52 self-reviews. The 2016-2019 QM implementation goals identify continued improvements, and progress is reviewed quarterly.

Beginning Spring 2016, all online courses are screened using the Basic Online Course Check (BOCC), a checklist of eight criteria used to verify that distance education courses are not correspondence courses. In the initial check, 78% of courses had missing components for online courses, most of which were easily and quickly rectified. Subsequent reviews have resulted in fewer required corrections. In the Fall 2017 initial check, just under 19% of courses were notified to take corrective action. NMSU-Grants began applying the same checklist to its online courses in Spring 2017, with plans for future reviews to address content delivery.

In Spring 2017 NMSU passed substantial revisions to Administrative Rule 4.69. It requires that all NMSU-system campuses have a DE committee to review and coordinate DE activities at both the campus and system levels. Rule 4.69 outlines minimum requirements in terms of experience and professional development for faculty teaching DE courses, provides review and approval processes for new and transitioned (from face-to-face) programs to an online environment, and implements quality metrics for online course offerings.

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

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

Argument

3.B.1. NMSU’s general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.

Under the provisions of the Morrill Act of 1862, part of the special mission of land-grant institutions is to provide a liberal and practical education for students. Thus, NMSU’s role in introducing students to a broad liberal arts education is imperative. NMSU’s General Education Common Core (NM GECC) is designed to provide "all students with a broad foundation and common framework upon which to develop knowledge and skills, social consciousness and respect for self and others, thus enabling them to function responsibly and effectively now and in the future." Exposing students to an array of disciplines at NMSU broadens each student's experience and introduces them to new and diverse ways of thinking.

NMSU’s lower-division general education (GE) program is grounded in New Mexico's General Education Common Core (NM GECC). The NM GECC requires a minimum of 35 credit hours of lower-division GE courses, dispersed across five content areas: Communication, Mathematics, Laboratory Sciences, Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Humanities and Fine Arts. Competencies of the GECC are largely discipline-oriented. In 2016, the NM Higher Education Department (HED) commissioned a state-level task force to reform GECC. Continuing conversations include strengthening the emphasis on essential skills, such as: communication, critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, information and digital literacy, and personal and social responsibility.

All GECC courses at NMSU are designated as "G" courses and articulate across the state. All "G" courses must undergo an internal approval process that includes a standard application and approvals by the following: the college curriculum committee, the General Education Course Certification Committee (GECCC), and the University Curriculum Council (UCC). Approved applications are submitted to the appropriate statewide discipline-area committee. Currently, NMSU maintains 118 active G courses.
In addition to GECC courses, NMSU requires 6 credits of upper-division GE courses, known as "Viewing a Wider World" (designated "V") courses. Unique to NMSU, these courses must meet specified criteria and are designed to enhance critical thinking and help students develop an understanding of multicultural issues and the broader world in which we live. Currently, NMSU maintains 113 active V courses.

To challenge NMSU's strongest academic learners, the Honors College offers 20 Honors G courses and 38 Honors V courses. Taught in rotation, honors courses limit enrollment to 18-20 students; emphasize writing, discussion and active learning; and are available to any student with a minimum GPA of 3.5. While many institutions require separate admission and limited eligibility for honors education, NMSU invites all high-achieving students to participate in honors studies. The Honors College strives to be inclusive and provide all eligible students with access to our best teachers through small class settings.

3.B.2. NMSU articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.

NMSU’s lower-division GE program is grounded in a framework established by the NM GECC. As described above, the model is centered around five content areas with competencies identified for each area. Competencies (outcomes) provided on course syllabi may be stated as they appear in the GECC, or re-written, but consistent with the GECC. Additional competencies may also be included as determined by the faculty member. NMSU's GECC website provides links to articulated competencies for each area as found on the NM HED website, and NMSU's General Education Assessment webpage provides similar information.

NMSU’s Committee for the Assessment of Student Learning in General Education (CASL-GE) re-envisioned this content-area approach by identifying common and transferable learning objectives (e.g. critical thinking, culture and diversity, etc.) that span the five content areas. A crosswalk between NM GECC competencies and NMSU's more comprehensive GE outcomes clarifies the relationship between the two. This approach aligns more closely with recommended practices of the Association of American Colleges and Universities Liberal Education and America’s Promise initiative and the Western Interstate Council on Higher Education Interstate Passport. This also aligns more readily with goals for NMSU's upper-division GE courses ("V" courses), designed to foster inquiry, abstract thinking, critical analysis, integration and synthesis of knowledge, and awareness of international character and multicultural influences in the fields of study. Learning outcomes for V courses are required in the course proposal process and appear on course syllabi.

Course descriptions for G and V courses are found by clicking on the listed course in the online catalog, or in the printed version of the catalog (available prior to 2017-18).

Ultimately, NMSU's Baccalaureate Experience (BE) is the synthesis of the GECC, NMSU's upper-division GE requirements (V courses), and baccalaureate program outcomes. Comprehensively, the BE epitomizes NMSU's commitment to provide a liberal and practical education to our students that fosters broad knowledge, intellectual development, and skills and attitudes that the faculty of NMSU believe every college-educated person should possess.

3.B.3. Every degree program offered by NMSU engages students in collecting, analyzing, and
communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

NMSU students are engaged in collecting, analyzing and communicating information, mastering modes of inquiry and creative work and developing adaptable skills in a variety of ways within and across NMSU’s degree programs. Undergraduate students gain skills in collecting, analyzing and communicating information, and explore various modes of inquiry and creative work first through the GECC, and later through V courses that further develop intelligent inquiry, abstract logical thinking, critical analysis, and the integration and synthesis of knowledge - all of which are adaptable to changing environments. Mastery of these skills is emphasized within each degree program, where application is specifically aligned to the traditions of the discipline. Combined, these all contribute to attainment of NMSU's BE objectives.

For example: NMSU's HLC Quality Initiative project focused on improving undergraduate student writing. Effective Communication is one of NMSU's BE outcomes. Written communication is a particular aspect of communication. Students are introduced to written communication through the GECC Area 1 courses (English and Communication), and written communication is embedded in V course requirements. Each degree program addresses effective communication in the discipline. Combined, NMSU engages students in these skills (in this case writing) through the GECC, V courses, and discipline specific courses across the duration of their university education. This is true for each aspect of learning included in 3.B.3, all of which are included in our BE objectives.

Examples of how NMSU students engage in various intellectual activities range from course assignments and activities to culminating capstone projects that incorporate multiple skills. Exceptional examples are provided by our Truly Innovative Teaching Award winners:

- Collecting, analyzing and communicating information
- Modes of inquiry and creative work
- Skills adaptable to changing environments

In addition, NMSU offers co-curricular opportunities wherein students develop and apply these skills. Approximately 70% of our majors require some form of experiential learning (e.g. practicums, internships, service projects, etc.). In other cases students may acquire these experiences by working with faculty members in a lab or other discipline-appropriate setting, through non-required internships and co-op placements, or through clubs and organizations. At NMSU-LC, students can participate in programs such as the Model UN and Archaeology Field Schools. NMSU-LC students also gain real world experience through 100 West Cafe, Sam Steel Cafe, Intercollegiate Floral Team, Student Jewelry Sale and other activities directly related to their major. At NMSU-Grants, students participate in co-curricular activities such as Tax Help NM and Animal Shelter Advocates, where they have the opportunity to develop and hone skills outside of a strictly academic setting.

Study Abroad, National Student Exchange, and Faculty Led International Programs (FLIP) provide broader opportunities for experiencing and adapting to different environments (see 3.B.4). Additional opportunities for students to engage in advanced degree-related research and scholarship are discussed in 3.B.5.

Graduate students also collect and analyze data, master modes of inquiry and creativity, and develop adaptable skills. Graduate coursework reflects an appropriate level of rigor and frequently entails practicums, internships and like-experiences. Scholarly activity is closely associated with comprehensive oral and written exams, theses and dissertations. As with undergraduate programs, graduate degree programs articulate learning outcomes that reflect these skills, and subsequently
engage students in activities that develop proficiency and expertise. For example, music students perform recitals, art students show their work, and Museum Studies students intern in local and regional museums. Because New Mexico has the second largest acreage of public lands per capita, students in disciplines such as anthropology, range management, animal science, engineering, geography and ecology complete internships in public land management agencies (e.g. National Forest or Parks Services, Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife). Graduate student opportunities in scholarly research are discussed in 3.B.5.

3.B.4. The education offered by NMSU recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.

NMSU-LC is uniquely situated in a tri-state area on the border of southern New Mexico, Texas, and Chihuahua, Mexico. The state, county and city in which we are located are all minority-majority populations. NMSU-Grants is located approximately 275 miles north of the NMSU-LC campus, and it is a Native American Serving Institution with enrollment that includes students from the Navajo Nation and the Acoma, Laguna and Zuni Pueblos. Both NMSU campuses are designated Hispanic Serving Institutions. In essence, the very nature of our geographic locations and student populations speak to the human and cultural diversity of the world in which our students live and work. Moreover, we recognize that the world in which we exist is ever-changing and that human and cultural diversity will continue to be an important aspect of an increasingly global society.

Diversity is a long-held value at NMSU. NMSU's Vision 2020 Goal #2 is "Diversity and Internationalization: Provide a diverse academic environment supportive of a global society." One of NMSU’s institutional values is Diversity and Inclusion. NMSU's Vision for the BE identifies diversity as a necessary outcome for a college education, describing diversity as engagement in new and diverse thinking and experiences, including relationships with people who have different backgrounds, life experiences, cultures, beliefs and/or values. Likewise, V courses are intended to broaden students' cultural experiences, and must address at least one of the following:

- An international experience or examination of international issues
- Examination and analysis of multicultural issues
- Investigation of interdisciplinary approaches to the subject matter
- Analysis of ethical issues

NMSU’s diversity offices offer unique educational opportunities and increase awareness about the diversity of the world in which students live and work. The Accessibility Office, Black Programs, LGBT+ Programs (also provides training through The Safe Zone), American Indian Programs, Military Programs and Chicano Programs all contribute to developing cultural awareness among our students. The International and Border Programs’ Office of Education Abroad (IBP OEA) directly connects students with international educational opportunities across the globe. Approximately 470 undergraduate, graduate and PhD students each year participate in officially supported for-credit (over 350) and non-credit (over 100) mobility experiences. IBP OEA also offers Faculty-Led International Programs (FLIP) in which faculty take a group of students abroad for intensive cross-cultural experiences.

Many departments sponsor events and activities that bring unique cultural perspectives onto campus: the Languages and Linguistics department regularly hosts viewing of foreign films; the Music department offers free and ticketed concerts and recitals each semester; many departments offer colloquia on a variety of topics related to diversity. NMSU-Grants engages the various cultural perspectives of their students through events such as Feast Day during Native American Month, a Native American exhibit in the library, exhibits in celebration of Black History month, a training
event with the current poet laureate of Albuquerque, and a spring community event at the To'Hajiilee Outreach Site that features activities such as learning the clan/kinship system, traditional food demonstrations, and traditional teachings and storytelling from elders.

NMSU also strives to foster diversity and inclusion by recruiting and retaining a diverse body of faculty and staff, and increasing faculty awareness and acuity in working with the human and cultural diversity of our student population. Our Teaching Academy (TA) sponsors numerous events related to diversity issues; other venues do the same.

3.B.5. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and NMSU’s mission.

The amount of research funding at NMSU ensures that undergraduate and graduate students have ample opportunities to engage in cutting edge research. Federal funding for research at NMSU typically exceeds $100 million each year, and the National Science Foundation ranks NMSU #1 among minority-serving institutions for science and engineering funding. NMSU was the home of the first Water Resource Research Institute in the United States and is a Space Grant Institution. Most of the chile varieties grown commercially around the world were developed at NMSU, and important onion and alfalfa cultivars were also developed at NMSU. Past research rallies further highlight the variety and scope of faculty research. Areas in which NMSU has significant research strength include Animal and Range Science, Biochemistry, Molecular Biology & Genetics, Computer Science and Electrical & Computer Engineering, Energy & Biofuels, Environment & Ecology, Medical & Health Sciences, Plant & Soil Sciences, Space & Aerospace and Water.

Faculty across NMSU are engaged in scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge in their fields. In many cases faculty include students in their research, evidenced by the number of publications and scholarly presentations that include student authors. The Arts and Sciences College Three-Minute Thesis competition is another way that faculty mentor students in research and discovery. The Graduate School encourages and supports graduate-level development and application of research skills through the annual Graduate Research and Arts Symposium. Sponsored by the Graduate Student Council, the symposium allows graduate students to present their research to the NMSU community.

Undergraduate research opportunities also abound at NMSU.

- The Arts and Sciences College Discovery Scholars Program provides undergraduate students in the college a paid and mentored year-long research experience.
- The Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Sciences College provides opportunities for students and faculty to work together in the Student Research and Education Gardens, a two-acre certified organic farm for conducting research on organic and sustainable agricultural systems.
- The Honors College invites seniors from all undergraduate majors to participate in the Honors Capstone Experience. Students are partnered with a professor in their field so that they can develop the type of professional interaction associated with graduate-level work. All participants are encouraged to present their work at the annual Undergraduate Research and Creative Arts Symposium, a forum for research and creative work by students. The Honors College also supports a competitive Honors College Scholar award that supports international research and travel by one or more undergraduate students each summer.
- The Howard Hughes Medical Institute Program has been grant-funded for over a decade and strives to increase persistence in science by incorporating a research-based component in courses and offering undergraduate research opportunities.
NMSU is particularly proud of our sustained role in creating pipelines for underrepresented populations to enter STEM and research fields.

- Students in STEM fields can showcase their research at the New Mexico Alliance for Minority Participation (NM AMP) Undergraduate Student Research Conference. At the conference students present their research and participate in workshops that further prepare them for their future careers.
- The Maximizing Access to Research Careers (MARC) program has been externally funded for 40 years and strives to increase the number of biomedical researchers from underrepresented groups. By increasing student research opportunities at minority-serving institutions, the program strives to improve students' preparation for graduate training.
- The NMSU Research Initiative for Scientific Enhancement (RISE) program has been funded by the National Institutes of Health since 2000 and is now in its fourth grant cycle. Its long-term goal is to increase the number of underrepresented students who achieve a doctoral (PhD) degree in a biomedical or biobehavioral discipline.

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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 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; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning.

2. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.

3. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.

4. 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.

5. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.

6. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and co-curricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.

Argument

3.C.1. NMSU 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; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning.

In Fall 2016 NMSU-LC employed 663 tenured/tenure-track (1% Instructor, 30% Assistant Professor, 36% Associate Professor, 33% Full Professor), 163 college-rank and 25 term/visiting faculty (842 total FTE), and 238 temporary faculty (78 FTE). NMSU-Grants employed 10 tenured/tenure-track and 3 college-rank faculty (13 FTE), and 55 temporary faculty (18 FTE). Collectively, these individuals oversee curriculum, determine standards for student performance, evaluate student performance, assess student learning and establish and maintain standards for academic credentialing of instructional staff. Student:faculty ratios are 16:1 at NMSU-LC and 14:1 at NMSU-Grants, and they compare favorably to peer institutions. Specially accredited or licensed programs maintain specific faculty-student ratios as required (e.g. the Nursing BS and DNP programs require an 8:1 ratio in clinical settings).

Faculty allocation of effort is monitored at the college and department level and must address, at a minimum, three areas: 1) Teaching and advising or its equivalent, 2) scholarship and creative activity, and 3) service and outreach. Colleges and departments may include additional areas, and all allocation of effort must total 100%. Full-time faculty work with their department head to determine an allocation of effort that respects the individual faculty's strengths and interests while simultaneously balancing the needs of the department and college. Temporary and term faculty are hired based on specific needs, e.g. to teach or to do research. Faculty are evaluated based on their assigned allocation of effort.

Service components include faculty appointments to department, college and university committees.
or participation in Faculty Senate and/or sponsoring of student organizations. It is often through service on curriculum, assessment and other committees that faculty contribute to curricular oversight, articulate expectations for and assess student learning, and establish standards for academic credentialing and other matters that relate to the academic mission of the institution.

3.C.2. **All instructors at NMSU are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.**

Faculty at NMSU are appropriately credentialed for teaching in their discipline. The recently adopted Administrative Rule 5.14 ensures all instructors of record (including temporary and term faculty and faculty teaching dual credit) meet minimum credentialing requirements as described by the HLC revised Assumed Practice 3.B. The Human Resource Services (HRS) office maintains official transcripts and other official documentation related to faculty credentials. NMSU does not have any contractual or consortial programs.

The process for ensuring faculty are appropriately credentialed begins with the hiring process. HRS provides guidance for each step in the search and hiring process. Faculty searches are conducted by department-level search committees, typically composed of faculty members from the department and an outside representative. Hires must be approved through the college and the Office of the Provost. To monitor ongoing faculty teaching assignments by semester, in Fall 2016 NMSU developed a Banner report that provides faculty credentials and teaching assignments in one table. Continued enhancements on the Banner Degree Management System include electronic records of official credentials and approved exceptions based on equivalent tested experience.

At NMSU-LC, all dual credit instruction is embedded in courses that serve the NMSU student population; instructor qualifications are consistent across NMSU courses. At NMSU-Grants most dual credit courses are taught on-campus, via online delivery or through the dual credit Summer Academy Program. A small number of dual credit courses are taught at area high schools. All faculty, including dual credit instructors, meet minimum credentialing requirements for the courses they teach.

3.C.3. **Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established NMSU policies and procedures.**

NMSU requires annual evaluation of all full-time employees. NMSU’s Administrative Rules and Procedures (ARP) outlines requirements and practices related to faculty employment at the university. Rule 5.86 states guidelines and requirements for annual review and allows for colleges to determine procedures and timelines. Each college develops its own format, process and timeline for annual review; departments may articulate more specific requirements, but all include annual evaluation by the department head, review of reports by the respective dean, and once approved by the Dean, individual meetings between the faculty member and the department head to discuss the evaluation.

In 2016 we recognized inconsistencies in evaluating part-time and temporary instructors and graduate assistants who were serving as instructors of record. As a result, we developed standard materials for Annual Teaching Performance Review (ATPR) of Part-time and Temporary Faculty and Graduate Teaching Assistants. Beginning Fall 2017, departments are required to complete annual evaluations of all instructors of record with the option of using the standard materials or similar materials developed within the college.

Rule 5.90.4.1.1 specifies that materials to be considered in the evaluation of teaching for promotion and tenure should include evidence 1) from the instructor, 2) from other professionals, 3) from students, and 4) of student learning.
3.C.4. **NMSU has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.**

**Processes**

NMSU's annual review processes ensure instructors remain current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles. **ARP 5.86.B.** instructs department heads to provide "specific evaluative comments about each of the three broad areas of performance required" (teaching/advising, scholarship/creative activity, service/outreach), requires faculty to cite accomplishment in these categories during each review period, and requires department heads to prepare written evaluations of faculty in each category.

**Post-tenure review procedures** ensure that all tenured faculty receive an annual review that recognizes both exceptional performance and serious deficiencies; recognition is rewarded as determined by the college, whereas consistent serious deficiencies require a remedial program for correction. This Rule "is particularly concerned with the quality of teaching."

- Rule 5.87.2 states that "Tenured faculty members annually participate in and receive an extensive examination of their teaching, their research and scholarly output..." and ensures that department heads with tenured faculty rank are reviewed on the performance of their faculty duties (teaching, research, and service).
- Rule 5.87.3. is implemented when serious deficiencies continue for 2 years or more and requires (among other things) student evaluations to be considered in evaluating teaching.
- Rule 5.87.3.C.5 specifies actions for improvement of teaching, research and publication.
- Rule 5.87.6 describes conditions where persistent and unresolved deficiencies may result in recommendation for loss of tenure.

Rules specific to **tenure-track and non-tenure track** (college) faculty are consistent with the descriptions provided above, and specifically reference the four types of scholarship defined by Boyer (1990): the scholarships of discovery, teaching, integration and engagement. NMSU's broadening of the **definition of scholarship** is intended to reflect "the changing roles of faculty in teaching, advising, scholarship and creative activity, extension, outreach and service."

- Rule 5.90.4.1.1 indicates that documentation of teaching effectiveness "must demonstrate command of the subject matter, continuous growth, and development in the subject field, the ability to organize material and convey it effectively to students, assessment of student learning, revision and updates of curricula, and the integration of scholarship...and service with teaching."
- Rule 5.90.4.2.1 addresses the evaluation of scholarship and creative activity, stating, "The scholar brings to the activity a high level of relevant knowledge, skill, artistry, and reflective understanding"; "activity... and... outcomes have significant impact"; "activity and outcomes are judged meritorious and significant by one's peers"; and "the scholar... has assessed the impact and implications on the greater community, the community of scholars and on one's own work."
- Rule 5.90.4.3 identifies extension and outreach as essential to our mission to promote "economic development through the dissemination of new technologies and best practices."

**Resources & Support**

Resources specific to professional development are available to NMSU faculty through college and departmental funding and other resources. Faculty summarize professional development activities in annual performance reports. Many colleges and departments use Digital Measures (DM) software for
annual reports, and a summary of those reports for 2016 show that of the 333 faculty reporting in DM (roughly half of all tenured/tenure-track faculty), 1548 professional development activities were listed (for an average of 4.6 per faculty member).

Sabbaticals allow faculty to engage in extended professional development. Once every seven years, tenured/tenure-track faculty may take a one-semester sabbatical (with full salary), or a two-semester sabbatical (at half-salary).

Centrally, NMSU provides two primary resources for faculty development related to teaching and learning: The Office of Distance Education is devoted to distance education and online teaching, and the Teaching Academy (TA) focuses on face-to-face teaching, leadership and mentoring. Both offer one-time workshops as well as extended development programs and are resourced primarily by professional staff. Distance education training and events are almost exclusively presented by staff associated with the Office of Instructional Innovation and Quality, whereas TA training and events are delivered by faculty, staff and external guest experts. Typically, faculty and external experts present one-time workshops, and professional staff also lead programs that meet repeatedly across a semester or year. In a 2012 survey, 92% of respondents reported that participation in the TA resulted in positive changes in their teaching; 80% observed positive changes in their students’ learning. From 2013 - 2016 the TA averaged 100 training events per year, corresponding to about 10,000 hours of professional development annually. An average of over 800 individuals participated each year. NMSU-Grants also supports local professional development activities for faculty through its Teaching Excellence committee.

3.C.5. NMSU instructors are accessible for student inquiry.

Rule 5.84 of NMSU’s ARP requires that faculty are present and available to students "during the entire official dates of every academic semester." Additional statements address class absences and maintenance of regular office hours. In addition to face-time with students during and outside of regular class time, faculty are accessible to students via email, Canvas, and by phone. Course-related field trips and study abroad experiences provide students unique access to faculty. Faculty also interact with students as sponsors to over 250 student organizations, and through student employee positions, research projects, and other student-faculty activities (also see 3.B).

On the 2014 National Survey of Student Engagement, student-faculty interaction was measured based on how frequently students report that they 1) talk with faculty about career plans, 2) work with faculty on activities other than coursework, 3) discuss course topics with faculty outside of class, and 4) discuss their academic performance with faculty. NMSU students report that they interact with faculty with the same frequency as do their peers at comparable institutions.

3.C.6. NMSU staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and co-curricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.

Qualifications

NMSU employees that provide support services to students possess appropriate credentials and experience relevant to their positions. ARP Rule 4.30.05 regulates hiring practices across the institution and stipulates that employees must be "qualified to perform the duties and responsibilities of the positions they hold," and it delegates responsibility for obtaining and verifying educational credentials, employment references and professional licenses or certifications to the hiring department.
Defining minimum position requirements begins with the hiring process: HRS provides guidance through recruiting and hiring Toolkits and individually as needed. Position announcements include minimum and preferred qualifications, and new staff serve a one-year probationary period.

Exempt staff that provide student services hold a minimum of a bachelor’s degree; many hold master's and doctoral degrees. Currently, all Academic and Financial Aid Advisors hold bachelor degrees. Thirty-four percent of employees in Student Affairs and Enrollment Management (including Student Activity Center, Campus Activities, Career Services, Aggie Health and Wellness Center, Dean of Students, Financial Aid, Undergraduate Admissions, Registrar's Office, Student Life, Student Success Center, Student Information Management) hold master's degrees, and 10% hold doctoral degrees.

HRS provides a Toolkit on hiring graduate assistants (GAs) who fill positions in academic, research and service departments as teaching and research assistants or who provide administrative support. The Graduate School provides specific Guidelines on Employment of Graduate Assistants.

Undergraduate student employees also serve a vital role in supporting student success programs, and they must demonstrate appropriate qualifications, dependent on the position. The Student Employment Toolkit provides information on hiring student employees, including a Student Employment Handbook. Hiring departments determine minimum qualifications for student positions. Typical positions include New Student Orientation Leaders, Associated Students of NMSU Staff Positions, Recreational Sports Assistants, Peer Mentors, Peer Tutors and Library Student Aides. Students hired for tutoring-type positions must demonstrate success in the academic field for which they are providing assistance. For example, tutors in NMSU’s Campus Tutoring Services must have earned a grade of B or better in the coursework in which they are tutoring.

Training, professional development and support

Continuing education and professional development for staff is highly valued and supported. Comprehensive on-boarding by HRS highlights professional training opportunities. The Center for Learning and Professional Development provides training in administrative systems and processes, career development, computer and web, compliance, leadership and management, and policies and procedures.

Annual Performance Evaluations require staff to identify professional development goals each academic year. Progress is monitored and is considered in annual performance ratings. To assist staff in meeting professional development goals, NMSU maintains professional memberships that provide professional development opportunities through webinars, research databases and conference events. Examples include the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, Council for Opportunity in Education, American Council on Education, and Association of American Colleges and Universities.

Student support units maintain institutional memberships with professional organizations in their respective fields, such as:

- Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
- American College Personnel Association
- National College Reading and Learning Association
- Council of College and Military Educators
- National Association of Colleges and Employers
- National Greek Life Organizations
- National Association of Academic Advisors for Athletics
NMSU allocates resources to support staff attendance at campus, state, regional and national seminars and conferences that further their ongoing professional development.

In the past, professional academic advisors participated in workshops and training events sponsored by the Academic Advising Council. With the centralization of advising, funding for professional development is budgeted within the Center for Academic Advising and Student Support (CAASS). All CAASS advisors are members of the New Mexico Academic Advising Association and the National Academic Advising Association.

Financial aid advisors maintain membership in three professional organizations: the New Mexico Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, the Southwest Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators and the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. Due to the federal, state and university compliance responsibilities of financial aid advisors, their professional development is regulated and tracked by the Director of University Financial Aid and Scholarship Services.

All new GAs attend a mandatory orientation program and receive additional training pertaining to their role through the departments that employ them. For example, GAs employed by the Student Success Center (SSC) work as learning skills facilitators: They attend training at the start of each semester, and meet weekly with their supervisor throughout the semester.

NMSU’s internal training program for student employees in the Campus Tutoring Services program meets the tutoring certification requirements of the College and Reading Learning Association. Other student positions have training appropriate for the position.

NMSU also supports continuing education of its employees by offering up to six credits of tuition assistance each fall and spring semester and by increasing salary levels upon completion of a degree.

NMSU publicly acknowledges both faculty and staff who excel. At each fall and spring convocation faculty and staff are recognized for their excellence in teaching, advising, scholarship and service. Colleges recognize faculty at their respective college award ceremonies.

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3.D - Core Component 3.D

The institution provides support for student learning and 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 programs 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, museum collections, as appropriate to the institution’s offerings).
5. The institution provides to students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.

Argument

3.D.1. NMSU provides student support services suited to the needs of our student populations.

NMSU provides services that support our students in their efforts to attain an academic credential. Student demographics at NMSU-LC reflect the economic and educational conditions of our community and state.

- Overall median student age is 22; median graduate student age is 30.
- 77% of students are enrolled full time.
- 54% of all students identify as Hispanic; approximately 26% identify as White; and approximately 20% identify as Other Minority and International.
- 70% of students are New Mexico residents, with the remaining 30% having representation from 49 of the United States and 89 foreign countries.
- Average composite ACT score for first-time freshmen is 20.9, with less than 15% of the entering students scoring 26 or better.
- Roughly half of all first-time freshmen are first-generation.
- Over half of first-time freshmen who complete a FAFSA are low-income (90% complete a FAFSA).
- Approximately 85% of students live off-campus.

NMSU supports our most at-risk students through specific programs such as:

- College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP)
- Maximizing Access to Research Careers (MARC) program
- Engaging Latino Communities for Education (ENLACE)
- New Mexico Alliance for Minority Participation (NM AMP)
- American Indian Programs (AIP)
- Chicano Programs
- Black Programs
- TRIO Student Support Services
- Natural Resource Career Tracks
NMSU also offers an array of comprehensive services that support all students. The Admissions and Financial Aid offices provide support throughout each student's educational journey. Students are introduced to these services prior to their enrollment at NMSU and again through Aggie Welcome and Orientation (AWO). AWO provides information about on-campus housing (including living-learning communities), campus dining for on- and off-campus students, and academic advising. During AWO students also receive initial awareness training related to sexual violence, including prevention, consent, reporting, bystander intervention, and risk reduction. The Pistol Pete’s Academic Success Online Workshop provides all incoming students ongoing access to transitional academic and non-academic resources critical for student success. Family orientation programs are offered at the same time as AWOs.

Adequate financial support is fundamental to academic success. NMSU offers FAFSA workshops to potential and returning students. To optimize distribution of scholarships and other financial awards, applications are handled through a single scholarship application system, Scholar Dollar$. In 2016–17, over 50,000 individual scholarship and financial aid awards were received by NMSU students. To further assist students in meeting their financial needs, NMSU typically employs over 2,500 students (not including graduate assistants) each year, and the Red to Green Financial Wellness program supports increased financial savvy among our students. The Graduate School provides funding opportunities to graduate students through a number of resources and encourages students to contact their respective departments for information about discipline awards, assistantships and fellowships. NMSU employs over 1000 graduate research and teaching assistants each year.

Physical and mental wellness are also essential for students to thrive academically. The newly integrated Aggie Health and Wellness Center offers a holistic approach to meeting students' medical and mental health needs. NMSU's Health and Wellness unit provides spaces, programs and services to promote healthy and active lifestyles, and includes the Activity Center, Aquatic Center, Intramural Sports, Recreational Fitness, Outdoor Recreation, AggieFit and Personal Fitness. An on-campus Spiritual Center is available to students and student organizations of all faiths. NMSU's active Wellness, Alcohol and Violence Education (WAVE) program espouses a harm-reduction approach to substance abuse. Aggie Cupboard helps supply food to students in need.

Other resources such as Career Services and Student Legal Aid meet short- and long-term needs of individual students. NMSU Diversity Programs (see 3.E) provide added community and support for diverse populations. The Campus Activities office directs students to numerous engagement opportunities that speak to varied interests, including the Aggies Activity Council, Associated Students of NMSU, Greek Life, Student Accessibility Services and information about over 250 student organizations.

Students enrolled at NMSU-Grants include degree seeking, non-degree seeking, dual credit, and students admitted to another NMSU-system campus and taking one or more NMSU-Grants courses online. Still, demographics reflect the local service area of Cibola County. NMSU-Grants is an open admission institution and students are not required to provide ACT or SAT scores.

- Median student age is 25; 30% of students are 17 or younger; 22% are between 18 and 20 years old.
- Ninety percent (90%) of incoming students require some level of developmental math and/or English.
• Average High School GPA for entering freshmen is 2.47; only 23% are above a 3.0.
• Almost 75% of students identify as either Hispanic or Native American (41% Hispanic; 33% Native American); 21% identify as White; 7% identify as Other Minority.
• 95% of students are New Mexico residents; 80% are from Cibola County (service area) and 10% from McKinley County (commuting distance).

NMSU-Grants Student Services is a one-stop-shop for student support, and includes:

• Admissions
• Academic Advising
• Assistance with Financial Aid, Scholarships and Default Prevention education
• Work-Study Employment
• Student Life, including Associated Student Government and student clubs
• College, Career, Transfer and Employment Services
• Recreation/Personal Fitness
• Wellness, Alcohol and Violence Education
• Student Success Center

3.D.2. NMSU provides learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of our students. NMSU has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which they are adequately prepared.

Academic Preparedness

In addition to completion of select high school requirements, eligibility for regular admission to NMSU-LC is based on the following:

• A cumulative high school GPA of 2.75 or above (2.50 prior to Fall 2016)
• ACT composite score of 21 or above or SAT score of 990 (SAT score of 1060 for new format)
• Ranked in the top 20% of high school graduating class

Students who do not meet admission requirements may participate in the Aggie Pathway to the Baccalaureate program (see 4.C). In the Aggie Pathway, students attend an NMSU-system community college and receive mentoring support that prepares them for matriculation to the NMSU-LC campus.

Requirements for transfer students are outlined in the Academic Catalog; transfer policy and practices are discussed in 4.A.2.

International undergraduate students are admitted through the Office of International Student and Scholar Services. In addition to meeting general admission requirements, international students must provide an official secondary school transcript and graduation or school leaving document. Students from non-English speaking countries must provide official Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or International English Language Testing System (IELTS) scores. International students with English deficiencies are required to successfully complete Center for English Language Programs courses.

NMSU students are placed into appropriate math and English courses based on ACT/SAT scores and high school GPA. Students with English or math deficiencies are required to take developmental courses at one of the NMSU-system community colleges, or for math, enroll in the Math Emporium course at NMSU-LC. Students may challenge their math placement through an exam that will
determine their eligibility to enroll in a higher-level course.

On average, 45% of first-time freshman enroll in our Freshman Year Experience course (UNIV150) or their college or department's equivalent. These courses aim to support academic success by helping students transition to college living by introducing students to campus life, career options, academic resources and co-curricular opportunities.

Required course prerequisites are articulated in course descriptions in the course catalog and are sequenced accordingly in academic degree plans. Admission into some programs is limited and/or requires students to meet specific requirements (e.g. PGA Golf Management Program, Teacher Education Program, and Creative Media Institute).

NMSU-Grants is an open enrollment campus. Admission to NMSU-Grants requires students to be graduates of any high school or academy in the United States that is accredited by a regional accrediting association or approved by a state department of education. Students can also be admitted by obtaining satisfactory scores on the English language General Education Development (GED) or HiSET® exams.

**Academic Support**

Academic support is provided in a number of ways. NMSU-LC maintains a Writing Center, a Math Success Center, a Student Success Center and Campus Tutoring Services that provide face-to-face and online tutoring formats. Support programs for targeted populations are listed in 3.D.1.

College-specific resources include:

- Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Sciences College Mentor Program
- Crimson Scholar Program/Honors Capstone Experience
- Engineering Learning Communities

Students meeting specific criteria are automatically designated as Crimson Scholars and members of the Honors College. Honors courses and programs allow students with strong academic skills to enroll in highly rigorous and challenging courses and to participate in advanced research and scholarly activity.

To support academic success among its students, NMSU-Grants maintains a Writing Center, Math Center, and Student Success Center. Collectively these centers are staffed with a writing specialist, a math specialist, and a team of professional tutors.

**Graduate Admissions and Academic Preparedness**

Admission requirements for graduate students are outlined in the Academic Catalog and vary by degree-level, discipline and student designation. In addition to general and departmental requirements, international applicants must provide official TOEFL/IELTS scores.

Graduate programs include milestones through which students demonstrate their knowledge, ability and capacity to progress through a program - e.g. GPA requirements, entrance exams, comprehensive qualifying exams, final written and oral exams and thesis and dissertation proposals.

**3.D.3. NMSU provides academic advising suited to its programs and to the needs of its students.**

Undergraduate Advising
One of the most frequently cited categories for improvement from the last several years' Graduating Students’ Survey has been advising. As such, NMSU-LC has taken comprehensive actions to improve advising practices. Prior to Fall 2017, NMSU practiced decentralized advising; depending on their academic discipline and year in college, students were advised by professional advisors, faculty, or a combination of both. Beginning Fall 2017, NMSU moved to centralized advising, with 39 academic advisors (30 FTE), 5 support staff and 6 student employees housed in one location to serve all undergraduate students from across the institution. Centralized advising frees faculty to focus primarily on mentoring students in their disciplines. To ensure ongoing communication between departments and discipline-assigned advising teams, a departmentally-appointed Faculty Advising Liaison meets regularly with their discipline's advising team.

As of Fall 2017, freshmen and transfer students are assigned an academic advisor based on the meta-major that encompasses the student's interest or desired field of study. Meta-majors are groups of majors that share a common early pathway toward a degree and diverge as progress is made toward the major.

In addition to guidance provided in the catalog, graduate students are advised by departmental faculty and guided by departmental handbooks.

At the NMSU-Grants campus, academic advising is done through the Student Services Center. The center is staffed with one professional advisor and the Vice President for Student Services. Both are available to assist with advising and registration. NMSU-Grants participates in the CRM Advise project to identify at-risk students and provide early intervention. NMSU-Grants also utilizes the QuickConnect system to intervene with students who exhibit at-risk behaviors. The NMSU-Grants advisor is included in the cross-campus advising listserv and attend advising conferences.

Historically, the NMSU Academic Advising Council met monthly to set guidelines and develop recommendations on advising policies across the system. With the move on the NMSU-LC campus to centralized advising, the function of the Council is now under review, with consideration being given to the inclusion of Faculty Advising Liaisons.

3.D.4. NMSU provides students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites, museum collections, as appropriate to the institution’s offerings).

Technological Infrastructure

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) supports the Banner System, Canvas learning management system (LMS), Cognos report-generating system and the MyNMSU user portal. As of December 2016, ICT also supports 6 computer labs and 7 general lab stations located in non-traditional lab areas (e.g. food court areas), providing 304 computer stations with availability ranging daily from 7am-12am. Laptops are available for rent through ICT, as are no-cost, low-cost and reduced-expense software packages. Many departments maintain local computer labs equipped with software and applications relevant to their disciplines (e.g. Journalism, Music, Creative Media Institute, Biology, Geography, etc.). Housing & Residential Life provides wired (Rhodes Garret Hamiel) and wireless access (Garcia and Piñon) in residence halls. Students also have access to a computer lab and printing station at Pete’s Place in the student union building. Classroom technology is provided by ICT and includes support for smart classrooms (i.e. contain a console that houses a computer, desktop monitor, DVD-VCR or BluRay player, document camera, laptop
connections and an A/V control system connected to a projector or large screen TV), webcasting, videoconferencing, cable TV, digital signage, satellite uplinks/downlinks and audio visual events. At NMSU-Grants, the Information Technology department supports and maintains all computer and related technology. NMSU-Grants is equipped with 3 computer labs with a total of 44 computer stations. Availability ranges from 8am-8pm throughout the week with slightly reduced hours on Fridays.

Instructional Innovation and Quality (IIQ) administers and supports Academic Technology, Distance Education, Instructional Media Services and the Online Course Improvement Program. Each area specializes in services and support related to various instructional delivery options.

Teaching Laboratories and Clinical Practice Spaces

NMSU has 481 distinct spaces dedicated for teaching laboratories and support thereof. Spaces range from art studio ceramics labs, to clinical practice sites, to meat cutting and wool judging spaces for agricultural students, to traditional science teaching labs found in most of NMSU’s science buildings. In many cases teaching labs are in close proximity to research laboratories, allowing, in some cases, students to observe and/or participate in the operation of full research laboratories. NMSU-Grants has 34 similarly designated spaces.

Library

The NMSU-LC Library has two physical locations (Zuhl and Branson) and provides on- and off-campus access to a variety of resources, including a print and electronic reference collection, over 200 online databases and indexes, nearly two million books and a growing collection of e-books. Access to primary documents and other unique collections is provided via the Digital Collections projects, the University Archives and Special Collections. In total, the Library maintains 2 instructional computer labs, 7 group study rooms, 7 PhD carrels, 100 computers and 4 designated quiet study areas. Students and faculty can check out specialized equipment including calculators, headphones, charging cables and DVD/Blu-ray players.

The NMSU-Grants Library provides various pathways for accessing information on and off campus. The Library has a dedicated media room for students and faculty, as well as a multipurpose media room for campus use. Agreements with local Native American tribal communities allow distance education students access to Library resources through 4 outreach centers.

Classrooms, Study Space and Other

NMSU-LC has 449 centrally-designated classrooms; NMSU-Grants has 31. Of those, more than 200 (21 at NMSU-Grants) are smart classrooms. Additional classroom, lab and instructional spaces are managed by academic colleges and departments. Samples of classroom and study spaces include The Hardman and Jacobs Undergraduate Learning Center, a Technology-Enhanced Active Learning (TEAL) classroom, Pete V. Domenici Hall, Corbett Center Student Union Building, and James B. Delamater Activity Center.

NMSU provides multiple venues for exploration, discovery and scientific research. Performance spaces include the ASNMSU Center for the Arts, Atkinson Recital Hall, Digital Media Theater, Rentfrow Hall, and the Martinez Hall Theater on the NMSU-Grants campus. NMSU Museums include the Arthropod Museum, Klipsch Museum, University Art Gallery, University Museum, Zuhl Museum and the Herbarium. All are open to the public with free admission. Our significant research structure embraces more than 50 research facilities located on campus and
around the state. Specific venues include the Chile Pepper Institute which includes a teaching garden, the Student Research and Education Gardens, Tombaugh Observatory, Apache Point Observatory, Core University Research Resources Laboratory, and Arrowhead Center. Specialized facilities and equipment such as 100 West Café, ACES in the Hole Foods, Sam Steel Café, the Speech and Hearing Center, the Nursing Simulation and Skills Center and News 22 (KRWG) further enrich student learning experiences.

3.D.5. NMSU provides guidance to students about the effective use of research and information resources.

NMSU’s Mission and Vision for the Baccalaureate Experience identifies information and technological literacy as essential skills for a college graduate. Specifically, it states that graduates should be able to locate, evaluate and use information and technology effectively and ethically. Each discipline provides guidance and training to students specifically related and applicable to their respective fields. GOVT300 (Political Research Skills) and WS455 (Feminist Research Methods) are examples of courses (often designated as introduction to research methods) that address effective use of information and resources in specific disciplines. The NMSU Library provides service to all students regarding the effective use of research and information resources.

- Approximately 25 Library tours and orientations (including graduate student and new faculty) are provided each year.
- An array of services are dedicated to developing students’ information literacy, including face-to-face and virtual reference services 70 hours per week during the academic year. Reference questions are answered asynchronously via email and text. Popular library resources are embedded in all Canvas courses. Research guides instruct students how to avoid plagiarism; others provide guidance to instructors on designing assignments to prevent plagiarism.
- In-depth research consultations are designed around a discipline expertise liaison model so that librarians who specialize in information resources in particular fields are available to assist students with their research needs.
- The Library offers two credit-bearing courses on the effective use of research and information resources. LIB101 (Introduction to Research) is offered as an online mini-semester course every semester and provides an overview of research and information resources in the field or discipline of the individual student's choice. LIB311V (Information Literacy) provides students with an in-depth understanding of the organization of information, accessing information, the ethical use of information and other contemporary information issues.
- Librarians teach 200-300 instructional sessions per year, reaching 5,000-6,000 students annually. Generally sessions are aligned with a specific assignment or project, and librarians teach students how to access and search relevant information resources. An online research guide routinely supplements these sessions.
- Particular courses regularly include Library instruction. For example, all UNIV150 (Freshman Year Experience) sections visit the Library and complete an activity that introduces students to the major types of published information. All ENGL111G (Freshman Composition) sections participate in research instruction sessions as described above. A set of assignments is available to ENGL111 instructors for use throughout the semester. All BUSA111 students complete an assignment that requires the use of many business information resources.

At NMSU-Grants, information literacy is a stated Institutional Learning Outcome and is addressed through classes, the Library, and the Student Success Center. College Success courses (ENGL111G; COL101) include information and research topics, addressed directly by faculty and/or through a formal library orientation. Development of virtual library tours for online courses is underway. Other courses (History, Chemistry, Biology, Statistics) include formal library instruction, as do
summer dual credit academies.

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3.E - Core Component 3.E

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

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

Argument

3.E.1. NMSU’s Co-curricular programs are suited to its mission and contribute to the educational experience of its students.

Co-curricular programs at NMSU support our land-grant mission and contribute to our students' educational experience. Co-curricular activities are coordinated by academic departments, student clubs and various departments and programs across the university. Interests range from academics and service to cultural interests, athletics and student governance. More than 250 student organizations round out opportunities for inquiry and discovery, personal and professional development, creativity and expression, and social responsibility.

Co-curricular experiences related to students' academic interests enhance learning and promote engagement with peers, faculty and staff. Examples include:

- **New Mexico Alliance for Minority Participation** (NM AMP). Established in 1993, NM AMP has impacted NM students through retention in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) degree programs, and their progression to graduate school and the STEM workforce. The **Undergraduate Research Scholars (URS)** program engages students in faculty-mentored research projects and provides training for research presentation and preparation for internships, graduate school and/or the workforce.
- Independent student-run media outlets include **The Round Up** student newspaper and the **KRUX** radio station. Full-time staff members serve in advisory roles. **The Round Up** covers news stories related to the university, city, state, nation and the world. **KRUX** is on the air 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Students serve as operation staff and disc jockeys for the station, ensure compliance with FCC regulations, set program lineup and operate the equipment necessary to maintain the station on-air.
- Students who have successfully completed historically high-risk courses (high D,F,W grades) in Physics and Chemistry are eligible to become **Supplemental Instruction (SI) Facilitators**. Facilitators attend course lectures and lead small group SI sessions that include lecture review, group collaboration, test preparation and practice tests opportunities.
- **BioCats**, a peer-assistance program, was first implemented in 2007 to address low retention/success rates in introductory biology courses. Upper-class peer instructors (BioCats) lead freshman and sophomores in small workshop sessions (BIOL111) and lecture breakout sessions (BIOL211) through case studies and other activities designed to foster general learning skills.
- **Freshman Year Experience Peer Educators** are junior and senior level students that co-teach sections of UNIV150 (Freshman Year Experience) with faculty. Topics include critical
thinking, learning strategies, diversity, career exploration and library research skills. Feedback indicates peer interaction exerts a positive impact on UNIV150 students; Peer Educators consider it a valuable service learning opportunity, and report that they develop important leadership skills from the experience.

Leadership development is an intentional focus of some co-curricular programs. Examples include:

- **Student Leadership Programs (SLP)** plans, coordinates and evaluates programs geared toward developing leadership skills. SLP participants gain awareness of their own personal values, skills, strengths and abilities, and develop a deep appreciation for civic engagement, social justice and philanthropy. Programming includes a Fall Leadership Retreat, a Student Leadership Conference, and opportunity to become a Trailblazer.
- **The Associated Students of New Mexico State University (ASNMSU)** is the student governing body. Elected representatives serve as the voice of the students to university administrators and other governing bodies on student related issues. In 2016-17 ASNMSU oversaw a $1,024,032 annual budget. ASNMSU annually allocates funding to departments, student organizations, and students for programs, events, travel and research. Student senators also participate in community service projects.
- Membership in the **Aggies Activities Council** is open to all NMSU students, and is the programming organization for the NMSU community; members aspire to make the NMSU-LC campus the central hub for school spirit by building community and developing leaders.
- **Wellness, Alcohol, and Violence Education** is a harm reduction program that educates the campus community on issues of personal safety and well-being. Students are selected and trained to serve as peer educators on topics related to alcohol and drug use, sexual assault and other interpersonal violence. Peer Educators provide educational “NMSU Respects” presentations for students on topics related to Title IX and the Campus Violence Elimination Act.
- Ten national fraternities and five national sororities have established chapters at NMSU-LC. Two governing councils (Inter-Fraternity Council, Panhellenic Council) provide leadership and oversight of the Greek community. Over 700 students are affiliated with NMSU's Greek community, which provides leadership opportunities through both the chapters and the governing councils.
- Each academic college and the Honors College appoint **Student Ambassadors**, elite groups of students who serve as liaisons to the NMSU campus and the Las Cruces and New Mexico communities.

Additional leadership opportunities for undergraduate student leadership are realized through K-12 outreach. Examples include the **Society of Physics Students** and **Young Women in Computing**.

Prominent student organizations not already mentioned in 3.D or above include:

- **Academic Honor Societies**
- **Black Student Organizations**
- **College Student Councils**
- **Collegiate Future Farmers of America (FFA)**
- **Graduate Student Council**
- **Residence Hall Association**
- **American Indian Student Organizations**
- **Hispanic Council**

Student organizations that have achieved national recognition include:
Model United Nations: In April 2017 the NMSU Model U.N. Team took home, for the 11th year in a row, the Distinguished Delegation Award.

DanceSport Company: The NMSU team of 21 ballroom, Latin and swing partner dancers won two first-place national championship titles at the 2016 USA Dance National DanceSport Championships.

National Science Foundation Epicenter’s University Innovation Fellows Program: From 2014–2015, 11 NMSU students were selected to become University Innovation Fellows by the National Center for Engineering Pathways to Innovation.

Criminal Justice Student Society: The NMSU criminal justice honor society, Alpha Chi Alpha, won 12 highly competitive awards at the 2016 Alpha Phi Sigma National Conference.

In addition, NMSU hosts 16 competitive collegiate athletic teams that involve 400 student-athletes. NMSU cheerleaders number 35. Student athletes may participate in the A+ Aggie Program which teaches and promotes lifelong educational and personal skills for the student-athlete. The Athletic Department placed 75 student-athletes on the 2016 Academic All-Western Athletic Conference (WAC) and 2015-16 Academic All-WAC Freshman/Transfer team, winning the WAC commissioner's cup for the second consecutive year in 2016. As part of the CHAMPS Life Skills program, in 2015–16 student athletes from all sports combined completed over 6,500 hours of community service.

3. E. 2. NMSU demonstrates its claims about contributions to our students’ educational experience by virtue of aspects of its mission (e.g. research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose, and economic development).

Under the leadership of Chancellor Garrey Carruthers, NMSU has branded itself as “a caring community, transforming lives through discovery.” This statement makes three claims about NMSU:

1. NMSU is a caring community
2. NMSU transforms lives
3. NMSU is a place of discovery

A Caring Community

NMSU creates a caring community in a number of ways - one is by helping students achieve academic success. Goal one of Vision 2020 is to provide "stellar programs, instruction and services to achieve timely graduation.” Criteria 3 and 4 of this Assurance Argument speak repeatedly to how NMSU strives to serve our students and ensure their academic and life success. Examples include the Student Success Navigator program implemented in 2015, which has now evolved into centralized advising; the QuickConnect Early Alert and Intervention program which in Fall 2016 included 470 referrals, approximately 58% of whom were retained for Spring 2017; implementation of early grade reports for all lower division courses; and the Calling All Aggies Campaign.

Various co-curricular programs also offer support and mentorship. The American Indian Program’s (AIP) Peer Mentor Program assists incoming freshmen and transfer students with time management skills, information regarding scholarships, orientation to university resources and an introduction to AIP social activities. Similarly, TRIO Student Support Services provides formal peer mentoring to first-generation college students, disabled students and low-income students who participate in the TRIO program. TRIO’s mentoring program requires participants to meet with their mentors weekly. Black Programs offers informal mentorship for entering freshmen. Chicano Programs makes ombudsman services available to all students, and focuses on the needs of first-
generation students by providing assistance with developing time-management skills, selecting a major, locating information on scholarships/internships, and navigating the campus environment.

NMSU cares about all of its students, and respect and appreciation for diversity is evidenced through our active Diversity Programs (Chicano, American Indian, Black, LGBT+, Military and Veterans), and Student Accessibility Services. Events such as Latino Week, American Indian Week, Black History Month and Pride Season offer visible and tangible affirmation of the support these programs and organizations provide.

Chancellor Carruthers further asserts that NMSU is a ‘caring community’ through periodic public sharing of special efforts by faculty and staff that have been brought to his attention by appreciative parents, students or the local community. One way NMSU-Grants demonstrates care for its students is through “Grit” awards, which recognize students who have overcome extremely challenging situations to complete their degree.

Transforming Lives

Implicit in the claim that NMSU transforms lives is the idea that a college education can and does transform a life. As an Hispanic Serving land-grant institution, NMSU offers a high quality, low-cost education to a diverse and economically challenged population. In addition, NMSU-Grants is a designated Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institution. NMSU transforms lives by awarding more than 3,000 degrees each year. During the 2016–2017 academic year, NMSU awarded 3,551 certificates, associate’s, bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees. In the 2015–16 Graduating Student Survey, 90% of students indicated they were satisfied or highly satisfied that NMSU had prepared them for a professional career. An Alumni Survey provides information about alumni cohorts one, five, 10, 15 and 20 years after graduation. Moreover, in July 2017, the Brookings Institution ranked NMSU as #2 in the nation for providing equal access to higher education and subsequent social mobility for low-income students. The professional career that follows a college degree is equally transforming. Data indicate that graduates of NMSU do well on the economic scale.

Statistics from many of NMSU’s support programs for minority and underrepresented students also support our claim that we transform lives.

- TRIO Student Support Services
- College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP)
- Maximizing Access to Research Careers Program (MARC)
- Natural Resources Career Tracks (NRCT)
- New Mexico Alliance for Minority Participation (NM AMP)
- Daniels Fund Boundless Opportunity Scholars
- Upward Bound

A Place for Discovery

Also expressed as “All about discovery!” NMSU holds fast to its claim as a place for discovery. As defined by its Carnegie Classification, NMSU is an institution with higher research activity, and ranks eighth (FY16) in research expenditures by Hispanic Serving Institutions ($110 million in FY16). According to the National Science Foundation, NMSU ranks #1 for science and engineering funding among minority-serving institutions.

NMSU supports discovery through the many research programs already discussed, and through additional programs.
• **Aggie Innovation Space**, a makerspace workshop established “to offer students access to state-of-the-art resources to foster innovation and entrepreneurship and serve as a gathering point where students can connect to work on projects.” Tools available for student use include robotics equipment, 3D printers and development boards.

• **Building Research Achievement in Neuroscience** sponsors a student scholars program for independent student research as well as professional development and support for students who wish to pursue a PhD in neuroscience.

• The NMSU **Howard Hughes Medical Institute Program** supports undergraduate research scholars (HHMI Research Scholars) who carry out mentored research and complete an honors thesis.

• The Arts and Sciences **Discovery Scholars** program supports mentored student research and creative activity.

• The **University Research Council** fosters research and discovery, including through the annual Research and Creative Activities Fair which provides opportunities for students, faculty and staff to present their research.

• The **Honors College** provides research and discovery opportunities through undergraduate thesis projects, an annual **Honors College Scholarship** award that funds an international, undergraduate summer research project and the **Undergraduate Research and Creative Arts Symposium (URCAS)**.

Students have numerous creative outlets for discovery through the performing and fine arts. The Music Department offers **eight large performing ensembles** and a variety of smaller, chamber ensembles. Performances by these, as well as the numerous faculty and student solo recitals, provide musical enrichment experiences for many students. The Theater Arts Department offers **four to five main-stage productions** annually, in addition to student projects and guest artist presentations. The NMSU Dance program offers **performances** and **organizational opportunities** and participates in competitive events annually. The **Art Department** hosts student art shows and jewelry sales each semester. Students in the Creative Media Institute **produce films** as part of their curricular requirements for graduation.

Cultural events and performances help students discover unique and divergent life experiences and values. Colloquiums, guest lectures, foreign films and other events are frequent and are routinely announced on NMSU’s system-wide student and faculty news listservs (**Hotline**). NMSU’s Office of **International and Border Programs** promotes discovery through study abroad experiences. Studying abroad provides opportunities to learn about discipline-specific subject matter, better understand other languages, and engage with other cultures. Between 2012–17, 2,411 NMSU students participated in institution-related international experiences.

Internships provide real-world and life-discovery learning experiences. Roughly 70% of NMSU degree programs incorporate some type of internship experience. In addition, private, government and non-profit sector internships are offered through the **Cooperative Education and Internship Office**. Both internal and national data show that students who participate in internship or cooperative education experiences are more likely to have a job following graduation than students who do not participate in those experiences.

Additional programs that introduce diverse schools of thought prepare students to thrive in a global society include:

• **The Domenici Institute**
• **J. Paul Taylor Social Justice Symposium**
• **CEP Multicultural Research Symposium**
National Hispanic Heritage Month (National Hispanic-Serving Institution Week)

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3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Summary

NMSU’s program offerings represent both breadth and depth in higher education degree attainment, and high quality education is provided across all modes of delivery. Thirty-nine of NMSU's programs are accredited by external agencies, and internal program review processes ensure non-accredited programs are consistently rigorous for the degree level obtained.

Throughout its programs, NMSU students explore, apply skills and integrate knowledge. The undergraduate GE curriculum introduces and requires students to apply these skills, and disciplinary competence is achieved within the majors. Graduate studies immerse students in activities of inquiry and research. Both undergraduate and graduate students also gain skills in inquiry, application and integration through co-curricular experiences. Over 250 student organizations provide a rich learning environment and leadership opportunities, as do peer education and peer mentoring experiences. Research opportunities are provided through a variety of venues; and student employment opportunities further hone professional skills.

NMSU faculty and staff are highly qualified. Hiring processes ensure employees posses the skills, knowledge and experience appropriate to the positions they hold, and the institution offers multiple opportunities for professional development through the NMSU Teaching Academy, Instructional Innovation and Quality, and the Center for Learning and Professional Development. Faculty and staff also experience professional development through local, national and international conferences.

NMSU provides ample support for student learning. Special programs (e.g. MARC, NM AMP, TRIO, etc.) provide support for specific student populations; diversity offices provide support for student learning; and the Student Success Center offers a variety of services, including tutoring and academic success workshops. Colleges and departments provide well-equipped teaching and research laboratories that provide students with hands-on experiences that are essential for developing a deep understanding of discipline practices.

Sources

There are no sources.
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 demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.
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 assure 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 assures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
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 assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and Americorps).

Argument

4.A.1. NMSU maintains a practice of regular program review.

NMSU requires all academic departments to participate in either external accreditation by a professional organization or in NMSU's internal program review process, and in some cases a combination of both. The purpose of program review is to ensure programs remain relevant, are fiscally and academically sound, and are operating under a model of regular review and continuous improvement.

At NMSU-LC, program review occurs at the department level. All programs within a department - including baccalaureate, master and doctoral degree programs - undergo simultaneous review on a five-year cycle. Several programs participated in a pilot program (2013–14) and three programs (Applied Statistics, Anthropology and Geology) participated in the 2014–15 full review cycle. Experience and feedback from pilot programs and the subsequent full implementation resulted in substantial changes to both the process and criteria. Six programs participated in the 2015–16 cycle, and five in the 2016-17 cycle. Six programs will begin the program review cycle in 2017–18. Every
program without specialized accreditation will have participated in one cycle of program review by the close of the 2019–20 academic year.

Guidelines, information, timeline and sample documents are available in the Academic Program Review Handbook. The process begins with departments preparing a self-study report. Data supporting the report are provided by the Office of Institutional Analysis. The NMSU Library also provides a report assessing relevant collections and services and how they are utilized. A review team - including three external members and one member from another NMSU-LC department - reviews the self-study, completes a site visit and submits a final report on the program. Departments respond to the report with an action plan detailing specific short-term and five-year objectives. The action plan must be approved by the respective Dean and the Executive Vice President and Provost. Progress reports are submitted and reviewed annually until the next review.

Recent actions identified include creation of a climate change interdisciplinary research group (Geological Sciences), development of an undergraduate recruitment plan and potential revision of the departmental Strategic Plan (Anthropology) and development of a Center for Quantitative Excellence (Applied Statistics).

Because specialized accreditation processes also focus on systematic review and continuous improvement, externally accredited programs may be exempted from the program review process. For example, programs in the Business College that are accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) International also undergo comprehensive external review every five years. Annual reports detail applications, enrollment, graduation, faculty qualifications and finances. A Continuous Improvement Review report precedes each five-year site visit and addresses (among other things) student learning assessment, curriculum improvement and impact of faculty, staff and student innovation and engagement on the broader community. Reports also detail the college’s actions to respond to feedback from the previous site visit. Since the last visit, the Business College adopted and assesses business-specific learning objectives (in addition to general skills and knowledge) and differentiates performance standards for the bachelor’s and master’s degrees in business administration. Similarly, programs in the Engineering College are accredited by the Engineering and Engineering Technology Accreditation Commissions of ABET and undergo comprehensive review every six years, addressing comprehensive criteria that include learning outcomes and policy and procedure requirements.

Because of the unique characteristics and constituency of the NMSU-Grants campus, it has developed a unique but parallel process for academic program review. NMSU-Grants uses a four-year cycle: Years 1-3 include brief annual summary reports, followed by a full program review in the fourth year. The Assessment Committee monitors program review and notifies program managers about scheduled reviews. The Institutional Research Office provides program data to program managers, who then work with assigned mentors from the Assessment Committee to develop a self-study report. The self-study is evaluated by an internal review team and an action plan is developed through collaboration between the program manager and the review team. The full program review and action plan must be approved by the NMSU-Grants President and action plan status reports are included in annual summary reports. At least two programs engage in the full review each academic year. Pilot participation (2015–16) in the revised process included the Mathematics, Computer Technology and Criminal Justice programs. In 2016–17 Social Services completed full review and Communications began review. By 2019–20 all programs will have participated in the revised academic program review process.

NMSU demonstrates an intentional practice of self-study and external review for continuous improvement in other areas as well: The NMSU Library underwent external review in 2011 and has
documented progress accordingly. Since 2011 the Library has, among other things, launched an internal professional development program, a Library cafe and a Budget Committee. A review of graduate education in 2012 resulted in improvement actions; A review of distance education resulted in revised policy and practices. Both stimulated much discussion, including in Associate Deans Academic Council meetings. More recently (2016) the Teaching Academy completed a self study and review and will make improvements accordingly.

4.A.2. NMSU 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.

The University Registrar's Office (URO) is responsible for oversight and production of all NMSU-system academic transcripts. Transcripts contain credits completed at all NMSU campuses as well as those transferred from other institutions of higher education.

Transfer Credit

Administrative Rule 4.61 stipulates conditions for awarding transfer credit. Students must submit official transcripts directly from the other institution's registrar's office to the NMSU URO and meet all criteria for award of credit as described in the Academic Catalog. The Academic Catalog includes comprehensive regulatory statements about the transfer of credit from other regionally accredited institutions, with detailed information about academic requirements for transfer, evaluation of transfer credit and NMSU's three levels of credit transfer. Transfer credit from institutions that do not have regional accreditation are not evaluated until the student has successfully completed two semesters of full-time enrollment at NMSU. Additional information about transfer of religious center courses, national student exchange, currently enrolled students and transfer credit appeals process is also available in the Academic Catalog.

Process for Evaluating and Awarding Transfer Credit

The URO records transfer credit on students' academic transcripts. Decisions regarding award of academic transfer credit is ultimately made by faculty through designated and authorized departmental and college faculty representatives, individually (for specific courses) or by serving on designated committees.

Initial evaluation of transfer credit for undergraduate students is conducted by the URO. Level 1 transfer honors established statewide course articulations created through statewide higher education faculty collaborations. These courses are automatically awarded equivalency credit by the URO through the Course Transfer Matrix. Level 2 transfer reflects courses that are not part of statewide articulations but may have been evaluated for equivalency by faculty in the respective department of the course prefix. Faculty approved courses are uploaded into the Course Transfer Matrix where equivalency is awarded automatically by the URO. Courses that have not been approved by faculty for NMSU equivalency are awarded elective course credit (100E; 300E) by the URO. Level 3 transfer includes articulation agreements specific to academic programs. Students wanting to receive equivalent credit for courses transcripted by the URO as elective credit may provide additional information (e.g. catalog description, syllabus, contact information for instructor) to the academic department to assist with evaluation of equivalency. Upon recommendation of the faculty, the URO will award credit for an NMSU equivalent course. Consistent with state requirements, NMSU maintains policies and procedures for students to appeal decisions about evaluation of transfer credits.

As indicated above, NMSU participates in statewide articulation of courses that satisfy New Mexico General Education Common Core (NM GECC) requirements. NMSU also participates in statewide
discipline-specific transfer modules in business, early childhood education and nursing (all NMSU Level 1 transfer). Statewide articulation involves ongoing review by state institutions. For example, a statewide task force is currently reviewing the NM GECC; the New Mexico Collegiate Business Articulation Consortium meets two times each year and maintains the business transfer module; and the New Mexico Nursing Education Consortium meets 6 time each year and maintains the nursing transfer module.

**Residency requirements** limit the amount of transfer work that may be completed in the last 36 credits of the degree program, to six. Exceptions can be made when academically appropriate. For example, students majoring in international business may be allowed to complete some major courses and/or language courses while on study abroad in the senior year. Individual programs may have additional restrictions on transfer credits (e.g. requiring that students complete at least 50% of credits in their major at NMSU).

**Other Transcribed Credit**

NMSU transcripts undergraduate credit based on Advanced Placement (AP), College Level Examination Program (CLEP) and Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES). The amount of credit associated with AP tests and the equivalent course credits is determined by the head of the department in which the course is offered. Similarly, CLEP and DANTES related credits are determined by academic departments and are periodically reviewed. NMSU also awards academic credit to US military personnel for courses and Military Occupational Specializations based on the American Council of Education guide. Credit may be transcripted based on successful completion of a challenge exam (exams created by the department to evaluate knowledge of course material), though few students attempt to gain credit this way. In the past 10 years five students have taken challenge exams, and four were awarded credit.

With the exception of credits taken under the National Student Exchange Program, transfer and other types of transcripted credit that do not include enrollment in NMSU courses are not generally accompanied by a grade and do not contribute to a student's grade point average (GPA).

To receive credit for internships and similar experiences students must enroll in a designated course prior to the experience, and generally there is an expectation that students will engage in academic activities beyond the specific assignment for the duration of the internship. For example, students may be required to keep a journal detailing how the internship allowed them to apply concepts learned in their courses or write a paper about the internship experience.

**4.A.3. NMSU has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.**

To assure the quality of credits accepted for transfer, NMSU policies provide that credits from institutions without regional accreditation may only be reviewed after a student has attended NMSU for two semesters in full-time status and earned satisfactory grades. Only credits from regionally accredited institutions are evaluated at the time of transfer.

Professionally accredited programs may have additional restrictions on the use of transfer credit to fulfill degree requirements. For example, transfer credit accepted for the MBA program must be completed at an institution with AACSB accreditation, and upper division credits in the accounting major can only be transferred from programs with AACSB accreditation in accounting.

Currently enrolled NMSU students must obtain prior approval to enroll in and receive credit for courses completed at another institution. This aspect is regulated by departments and/or colleges. For
example, the Engineering College does not approve current students to take courses at another institution unless NMSU is not offering a comparable course, although exceptions may be granted under extenuating circumstances.

International students seeking to transfer credits from foreign institutions are required to obtain an English translation of their transcripts through a third-party company that is a current member of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services. Authentication of educational credentials are verified by NMSU's internal foreign credential evaluator.

4.A.4. NMSU maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It assures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.

NMSU Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws stipulates that academic matters fall under the purview of faculty. As such, course prerequisites, the rigor of courses and expectations for student learning are established by faculty members in respective academic programs and departments.

Prerequisites

Students must meet university basic skills requirements in English and math prior to enrolling in upper division courses. Prerequisite requirements that apply to select courses are included in course descriptions in the Academic Catalog. Additional prerequisite enrollment and course sequencing is set within academic programs. For example, programs may require students to complete a set number of lower-division courses prior to enrolling in upper-division discipline courses. Faculty are encouraged to identify prerequisites in course syllabi, and NMSU's Syllabi Development website contains a field for course prerequisite(s). Courses taken for dual credit are not exempted from prerequisite requirements.

Banner registration enforces basic skills requirements. Some departments use Banner reports to ensure enrolled students meet eligibility requirements for other courses - for example, to identify students who were enrolled in the prerequisite at the time of pre-registration, but who failed to successfully complete the prerequisite course. In such cases it is incumbent upon the program or faculty member to disenroll ineligible students or to override prerequisite requirements if circumstances merit. The Languages and Linguistics Department generates a list of grades from prerequisite courses to ensure that students meet minimal grade requirements before proceeding to higher level language courses. The Engineering College uses a complementary software program to generate detailed prerequisite reports and automatic emails to students with instructions on dropping affected courses.

Academic Rigor

Rigor of courses is determined and maintained by faculty. Proposals for new courses and changes to existing courses are initiated at the department level, approved by the appropriate college-level curriculum committee, and forwarded for final approval by the University Curriculum Committee (a function of the Associate Deans Academic Council). General education (GE) courses (lower- and upper-division) must also be approved through the General Education Course Certification Committee (GECCC). Lower-division GE courses are designated as "G" courses, and upper-division courses are designated as Viewing a Wider World (VWW), or "V" courses. After approval by the GECCC, designated "G" courses must be approved through statewide faculty committees for
inclusion in the NM GECC. NMSU’s Provost has led a statewide task force to re-envision the NM GECC to focus more on transferable skills. The NMSU-system is similarly engaged in a process to review our institutional approach to GE.

NMSU-LC makes no distinction or accommodation for dual credit courses - appropriate rigor is required of all NMSU courses. NMSU-Grants also maintains the same student learning objectives and level of rigor for all dual credit classes.

Learning Outcomes

Ownership of learning outcomes resides with faculty. All academic programs at NMSU identify program-level learning outcomes. Program-level learning outcomes have been required through the annual outcomes assessment reporting process since 2009. More recently (beginning Fall 2014), evidence of learning outcomes for undergraduate and graduate programs is recorded for NMSU-LC through Weave software. Weave also provides opportunity for programs to align their learning outcomes with our Baccalaureate Experience (BE) learning objectives. Faculty at NMSU-Grants also align their learning outcomes with the NMSU-LC BE objectives.

Access to Learning Resources

Learning resources on the Las Cruces campus include the Library (with distance education resources), the Student Success Center, the Math Success Center and the Writing Center. Tutoring services (traditionally face-to-face and more recently online) are offered campus-wide and by departments. NMSU-Grants offers a comprehensive Student Success Center, a Math Lab, Library, Pearson Vue Testing Center, two computer outreach centers located in Acoma and To’hajiilee, New Mexico, and NMSU partnership programs located in Laguna, Pinehill/Ramah and Thoreau, New Mexico. NMSU-Grants serves a widespread rural geographic area, and these outreach centers and partnership programs provide Internet access, computers, and tutoring to rural and online students. NMSU-Grants students also have access to online professional tutoring via TutorMe. Additional learning resources are available through Canvas, the NMSU-system learning management system.

Roughly 45% of first-time freshmen at NMSU-LC enroll in UNIV 150, The Freshman Year Experience or a similar course offered in their college. NMSU-Grants offers COLL 101, College Life Skills, as its freshman orientation course - it is required for all first-time freshmen. These courses orient students to NMSU and provide introductions to university resources.

The Office of Career Services offers many opportunities for career planning and for students to connect with potential employers. Events include the Graduate and Professional School Fair, Career Expo, Educator’s Job Fair and Employment Extravaganza. Other services include career advising, information about cooperative education and internship programs, and skill development to prepare for the job market, including résumé preparation, mock interviews and business etiquette training. The Honors College also offers professional development workshops on topics such as applying for graduate school, preparing competitive applications, and resumes. When a student is going for a high-stakes interview (e.g. Rhodes or Truman finalists) the College facilitates mock-interviews with high powered panels, including local political leaders, judges, attorneys, etc.

Dual Credit Courses

NMSU-LC’s dual credit courses are regular university courses and are staffed accordingly. Faculty members identify appropriate courses for dual credit and the university maintains a list of such courses. Exceptions to the list for individual students are made in consultation with department heads
and associate deans. No special arrangements or exceptions are made for these courses, and dual credit students experience the same environment and rigor as university students enrolled in the course.

At NMSU-Grants, all credit-bearing courses are eligible for dual credit. In addition, a limited number of courses are offered at local high school campuses and are taught by qualified instructors. To verify instructor qualifications, academic transcripts are submitted to the NMSU-Grants Human Relations Liaison and receive approval from the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Courses that are offered within the high school setting offer the same rigor – including the same student learning outcomes and expected levels of achievement – as other sections of the same course. No special exceptions or arrangements are made for dual credit students and they must meet all the same admission and prerequisite requirements as other enrolled students.

Faculty Qualifications

Chapter 5 of the NMSU-system ARP contains descriptions of faculty ranks and qualifications as well as faculty responsibilities relating to teaching. NMSU recently updated our ARP to include a section on faculty credentials. ARP Rule 5.14 specifically outlines minimum credentialing requirements, use of tested experience as a substitute for academic credentials, and the responsibilities of department heads, deans and the provost for reviewing and evaluating the qualifications of instructors of record. Consistent with HLC Assumed Practice B.2, Rule 5.14 clarifies that all faculty, including dual credit faculty, must meet minimum qualifications to teach college-level courses. In addition, the proposed rule solidifies institutional processes for hiring and documenting faculty credentials. Colleges and departments may have additional policies regarding faculty qualifications, usually driven by specialized accreditation.

4.A.5. NMSU maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.

The NMSU-system includes 53 specially-accredited programs, 39 of which are maintained on the NMSU-LC campus. NMSU-Grants does not have any specially accredited programs.

Specialized accreditation at NMSU-LC includes all undergraduate programs in the Engineering College (ABET, Inc.), business and accounting programs in the Business College (AACSB), and all teacher education programs in the Education College (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education - NCATE; the Education College will be transitioning to the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation - CAEP - beginning Fall 2017). Additional programs across the Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences College; Arts and Sciences College; and Health and Social Services College maintain specialized accreditation. In 2012, NMSU created a position for oversight of accreditation (HLC and specialized) across all NMSU-system campuses. Currently all accreditations system-wide are in good standing.

4.A.6. NMSU evaluates the success of its graduates. NMSU assures that the degree and certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, NMSU looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs, and participation rates in fellowships, internships, and special programs (e.g., Peace Corps and Americorps).

NMSU seeks to support, evaluate and acknowledge the success of its graduates in a variety of ways. Historically, placement of graduates has been tracked within colleges and departments, as well as institutionally through the First Destination Survey. Many departments conduct exit interviews with
graduating seniors. Increasingly, NMSU has worked to gather centralized data about student success. Centralized efforts involve gathering information from multiple sources, including an alumni survey and contracted data from Equifax to document graduates' employment and salaries up to 15 years after graduation.

NMSU is proud of our alumni. Successful graduates from the past are honored annually by the university through the Distinguished Alumni awards and by the individual colleges, for example through the Arts and Sciences Starry Night; and the Business Hall of Fame, Panorama, a publication of the Alumni Association, regularly features the successes of graduates in their careers and other endeavors. Similarly, the Engineering College provides Aggie Ingeniero and the Education College offers Alumni Stories on its web page. The Honors College highlights plans of recent students graduating with University Honors or Honors with Distinction for the coming year and beyond.

Independent measures of success include two Brooking Institution studies. The first occurred in 2015 and ranked NMSU 89th of 863 institutions in value added to mid-career earnings. The second study occurred in 2017 and evaluated 342 public universities for the quality of their research programs and the social mobility they provided to their graduates. NMSU was one of only 70 universities that were considered a "Leader", meaning that NMSU performs high quality research and provides real social mobility to students. In addition, this latter study ranked NMSU second in the nation for providing low-income students with access to high quality public higher education.

Finally, the Top 100 Colleges and Universities for Hispanics list, in the August 2016 edition of The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education magazine, recognizes NMSU as one of the best institutions for Hispanics in the country.

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

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

Argument

4.B.1 NMSU has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.

NMSU clearly states intended student learning outcomes/objectives for students at multiple levels, including at the institution, department and course levels. Institutional learning objectives for the Baccalaureate Experience (BE) are stated in the Mission for the Baccalaureate Experience, are defined in the Vision for the Baccalaureate Experience and encompass outcomes across disciplines and the co-curriculum. NMSU's BE objectives emerged out of the commitment NMSU made during its last comprehensive HLC review (Spring 2008) to revitalize assessment. Outcomes were identified through extensive engagement of faculty, staff and students. To maintain momentum, NMSU began participating in the HLC Assessment Academy in Fall 2009. Through this effort the BE objectives were refined, and subsequent assessment projects were launched. Lessons learned led us to use our HLC Quality Initiative project to take assessment of the BE to the next level. Focusing on the BE learning objective effective communication (and more specifically student writing) has enabled us to sustain an in-depth investigation of, and institutional conversation around student writing that transcends disciplines, ultimately positioning NMSU to take targeted actions to improve student writing.

NMSU general education (GE) objectives are also institution wide. They encompass the New Mexico General Education Common Core (NM GECC) learning objectives for lower-division GE courses (designated "G" courses) and align with the BE objectives. NM GECC learning objectives are included on designated G course syllabi, which may also include NMSU-system or individual instructor learning objectives. NMSU maintains an annual cycle and process for assessing student learning in the GECC. The program-level assessment process was developed by a faculty team, which later became the standing Committee for the Assessment of Student Learning in General Education (CASM-GE). Each assessment cycle begins with the CASM-GE enlisting the assistance of an ad hoc working subcommittee to develop assessment tools (assignment and rubric) that encompasses broad learning in the GECC. The tools are piloted alongside the current-year assessment implementation, after which the CASM-GE makes revisions to the pilot assignment and rubric as needed. Subsequently, the revised pilot assignment and rubric become the assessment instrument for the next assessment cycle.

Because they contain large populations of students who have completed, or are near completion of the
required lower-division GECC courses, a representative sample of Viewing a Wider World (designated "V") courses are selected for implementation of the assessment (V courses are NMSU-designated upper-division GE courses, and are not part of the NM GECC). Working with V course instructors, committee members or other designees administer the assessment in the first part of the spring semester. A scoring session is held later in the spring and includes a norming session followed by evaluation of collected student work. The Office of Institutional Analysis provides statistical analyses of the results and provides findings to the CASL-GE. The CASL-GE typically shares results and solicits input on actions to be taken, through open forums. The CASL-GE chair completes a final report that is submitted to the director of assessment and the University Outcomes Assessment Council who consider further actions based on recommendations included in the report.

NMSU also has an institutional process for co-curricular assessment. The long-standing Outcomes Assessment Committee for Co-curriculum, Administration and Operations (OAC-CAO), under the guidance of the director of assessment, oversees, reviews and provides feedback on co-curricular assessment. An Assessment Handbook for co-curricular units was developed by the committee, in preparation for an Assessment 101 workshop in Spring 2017.

Since the 1990s NMSU has sustained a process for Annual Academic Departmental Assessment (AADA) of student learning. Evolving over time to include review by either a faculty committee and/or the director of assessment, the cycle requires annual reports from each department for both graduate and undergraduate programs, including identification of learning goals (objectives/outcomes). Currently, reports are submitted using Weave assessment reporting software. Reporting by departments over the last 3 years is strong, and is expected to be at 100%. For several years the report reviews were conducted (including feedback provided) by the director of assessment. Starting Fall 2016 this transitioned back to review by a faculty committee under the supervision of the director of assessment. Feedback is provided to departments via their dean in the form of a rubric. The director of assessment also completes a report for each college and an institutional report. Focus over the past two years has been on closing the loop. Recently, a Sharepoint site was created to provide a multi-year archive of assessment documents and to facilitate reporting and feedback in future assessment cycles.

The Advocates for Scholarly Teaching (AST) committee has historically supported faculty in course-level assessment and in developing scholarly teaching practices. In Fall 2016 the committee shifted its attention to developing stronger departmental assessment, and committee members served as reviewers in the AADA process described above. NMSU continues to provide faculty development resources, including stating and evaluating achievement of course-level learning goals. Additional networks that support assessment are the NMSU Teaching Academy, the Online Course Improvement Program and Quality Matters.

4.B.2 NMSU assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.

NMSU assesses achievement of learning outcomes at various levels - in the disciplines (AADA); institutionally (co-curriculum, BE, and GE); and in some cases at the course level.

Annual Academic Departmental Assessment (AADA) of student achievement has the longest history at NMSU. The essential nature of AADA is to inform departments about student learning in the discipline so that departments can make intentional and informed decisions to improve learning. Annual reporting processes document departmental engagement in reflective practice to improve learning. The number of academic departments participating annually in student learning assessment has increased from 74% in 2012-13 to **100% in 2015–16**. In 2014–15, AADA assessment
was aligned with NMSU’s Quality Initiative to improve student writing.

Co-curricular assessment also has a long history at NMSU. With strong committee support, co-curricular assessment has maintained a consistent presence in the institutional culture. Over time, units participating in co-curricular assessment have varied. Reduced participation in the 2015–16 cycle, likely reflecting a transition in assessment leadership, spurred an effort to reorganize and revitalize co-curricular assessment that included reforming an internal Student Affairs and Enrollment Management assessment committee and restructuring the OAC-CAO committee to focus primarily on co-curricular assessment. In Summer 2017 a team of three staff attended the NMHEAA Summer Retreat and developed a proposal that would clarify processes for and support greater consistency in co-curricular assessment reporting. This fall they are moving the proposal forward for university approval. As a result of these efforts, co-curricular assessment reporting for the latest cycle (due in October) is expected to improve substantially compared with reporting in the prior year.

Achievement of learning in general education (GE) has been assessed annually since 2007. Initially a course-level assessment, GE assessment was re-envisioned as program-level assessment in 2010-11 and has been approached as such since. GE assessment in Spring 2015 aligned with the Quality Initiative and focused on student writing.

BE learning assessment is not on an annual basis, but is ongoing. Assessments of the BE have been both direct and indirect. Originally facilitated by NMSU’s HLC Assessment Academy team, later assessments were accomplished through the Committee for the Assessment of Student Learning across the Baccalaureate Experience (CASL-BE). While initial direct assessments attempted to develop an annual process, a multi-year approach was instigated by our Quality Initiative Project. The multi-year approach has proved effective, particularly in integrating multiple layers of assessment (e.g. GE, BE and AADA) toward a comprehensive focus to initiate widespread institutional change. For the QI, extensive data related to student writing was gathered and triangulated to inform conversations and understanding about student writing. This new approach lays the groundwork for rotational ongoing assessment of the BE learning objectives.

Course-level assessment, by design, remains at the purview of individual faculty and sometimes of departments. Multifaceted approaches that have been taken over the last decade demonstrate sustained commitment and intentionality to this endeavor. Course-level assessment became an important part of our Quality Initiative through the Writing-to-Learn program. Past and current programs such as the ChAMPION program, Peer Review Network, NMSU Conference on Assessment 2015, Teaching with the Stars, Classroom Assessment Scholars and the Assignment Design Symposium further attest to how course-level assessment has been, and continues to be supported and encouraged at NMSU.

4.B.3. NMSU uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.

NMSU uses information from assessment to improve student learning at multiple levels. Evaluation and feedback on AADA reports is increasingly focused on the use of assessment to improve student learning (i.e. closing the loop). Well-developed practices are defined in the AADA rubric components "findings," "action plan" and "impact." Analysis of reports indicate that 65% of AADA reports provide evidence that departments have met overall definitions of "well-developed", while 57% have met definitions of "complete with deficiencies" or "demonstrating excellence" in closing the loop. AADA reports include many examples of closing the loop to improve learning. Additional examples include the Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Ecology department, that recently made several changes to their degree program, based on assessment data: They added a hands-on lab component to their introductory class (FWCE 110), a required internship, and now require nine credits of botany. In response to their 2014–15 assessment findings, the Plant and
Environmental Sciences department added guest lectures on statistics & interpretation of statistics. To address critical analysis concerns arising from the 2015–16 assessment, they developed a “common question” for all majors, designed to provide a common framework for measuring critical thinking both early and late in students’ academic careers, thus enabling value-added assessment.

Other reports identify documented changes in learning as a result of improvement initiatives. For example, the Geology Department collected longitudinal data about student ability to identify common rocks and minerals. Finding senior performance less than satisfactory, they changed curricular practices to explicitly reinforce rock and mineral identification in all upper division courses. As a result, students completing the program have demonstrated improvement in this skill. Additional outcomes are addressed as well. Similarly, the Art Department responded to unsatisfactory student performance in writing by creating and requiring a writing intensive course. The department continues to monitor writing performance of completing students to determine the impact of the course on student writing.

Institutional and college-level summary reports of assessment support meta-analysis of institutional assessment. The director of assessment responds by providing support to address systematic weaknesses in assessment practices, including focused workshops and institutional emphasis (e.g. focus on closing the loop). The new assessment Sharepoint site highlights exemplary reports.

Co-curricular areas also use assessment processes to impact learning. Sample reports from the past two years highlight activities in co-curricular areas that support continuous improvement.

Impacting student learning at the GE program level is challenging, and NMSU is increasingly targeted in its response to GE assessment findings. For example, based on two years of GE assessments, critical thinking and problem solving were targeted for improvement. In response, NMSU hosted pre-conference workshops for the NMSU Conference on Assessment 2015 by critical thinking experts Tine Reimers and Bill Roberson. Results from the Spring 2015 assessment informed institutional actions to improve student writing. The following year the Office of Assessment hosted National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment (NILOA) presenters Natasha Jankowski and David Marshall to do workshops on designing effective assignments.

In Spring 2016 the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NM HED) launched a statewide effort, led by NMSU's Executive Vice President & Provost, to strategically reform the NM GECC. Discussions for reform have focused on a GE curriculum that prioritizes development of transferable skills (e.g. communication, critical thinking, numeracy, etc.) over attainment of specific content knowledge. Because of NMSU’s program-level approach to GE assessment, we were able to provide data about the effectiveness of the current approach to GECC, and we will be able - using current and recent past findings as baseline data - to evaluate the impact of comprehensive GE reform on student learning.

NMSU’s BE assessment is currently tied to our Quality Initiative project to improve student writing. Data from both indirect and direct measures was triangulated to measure student writing in multiple contexts, and to better understand the institutional environment around writing. While collecting data, we also used best practices to support improvement efforts. For example, during the first year of the initiative we offered several writing workshops for faculty. In year two we launched competitive Writing-to-Learn (W2L) mini-grants, and the NMSU Conference on Assessment 2015 featured writing across the curriculum experts Roger and Heather Graves, and included a student writing competition. As the initiative progressed, data collected informed subsequent interventions. Faculty participants in the W2L program (representing all colleges) implemented course changes to enhance student writing and to improve learning. To
maximize impact of the W2L program, participants present their work at the NMSU Teaching Academy workshops, and the New Mexico Higher Education Assessment and Retention (NMHEAR) annual conference.

From our Quality Initiative studies, we learned that NMSU faculty members increase the amount of writing assigned in courses when 1) they know that students will benefit from the experience and 2) they develop confidence in their own ability to provide meaningful feedback in a reasonable amount of time. This understanding has led to the development of the Writing-to-Think! (W2T) Program. In this departmental cohort program, participants will gain understanding about the types of writing assignments that students most benefit from and will learn how to efficiently provide meaningful feedback on writing to students. Participants will also share their experiences and mentor other faculty members.

Other outcomes of the Quality Initiative include a draft proposal to transition the writing center (currently located and funded by the English department through the Arts and Sciences College) into a centrally located and funded University Writing Center; adoption of college and department level writing rubrics that clarify to students the writing expectations across courses within their disciplines; and varied approaches to improve writing within departments, documented through AADA assessment reporting.

In addition to course-level improvements cited by W2L program participants, one faculty member studied the impact of Socratic note-taking in his introductory Philosophy course and then engaged others in similarly large introductory courses in other disciplines to implement the same strategy. Findings show the impact of this intervention is highly effective, particularly for at-risk students. As a result, he and others have implemented changes to their courses.

4.B.4. NMSU’s processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.

In recent years, NMSU used a five-committee framework to ensure that processes and methodologies of assessing student learning reflect good practice and include widespread participation of faculty and other instructional staff. Under the purview of the director of assessment, this system for engaging faculty in assessment practices was effective in sustaining ongoing conversations and activities around students and their learning. In addition, it aided in developing assessment expertise among faculty and staff across campus.

Each of the five committees played a specified role in NMSU-LC’s assessment structure. Membership for all but the University Outcomes Assessment Council (UOAC) is on a three-year rotating basis and includes representation from all academic colleges and many co-curricular units. UOAC membership is representative, by position appointment. Information about each committee is listed below. While having strengths, the multiple committee approach posed challenges to a cohesive vision of assessment. A shift in the committee structure was explored in 2016–17, with members of the AST and CASL-BE assisting in AADA review and feedback processes (formerly completed by the director of assessment). Moving forward, the focal point of assessment will be at the department level, with links to course and institution level assessment stemming from academic departmental assessment. As such, beginning Fall 2017, the AST and CASL-BE will be repurposed to focus on and support AADA assessment. More formal changes to committee structure and composition will ensue during the 2017–18 academic year.

- The University Outcomes Assessment Council (UOAC) "provides collaborative leadership to support a culture of assessment that promotes and reflects a holistic student
learning experience.” The UOAC complements and supports Institutional Analysis and facilitated the NMSU Conference on Assessment 2015, a full-day event attended by 250 faculty, students and staff.

- The Committee for the Assessment of Student Learning in General Education (CASL-GE) facilitates annual assessment of student learning in the GE Core, addressing a different aspect of GE learning (e.g. the arts, STEM, writing, history, humanities, social behavior) with each cycle. The GE assessment cycle reflects careful attention to engaging faculty in various aspects of the assessment process.

- The Committee for the Assessment of Student Learning across the Baccalaureate Experience (CASL-BE) has engaged the campus community about learning across the BE and provided the basis for our Quality Initiative to improve student writing. In Fall 2016 the CASL-BE helped review and provide feedback on AADA reports. Beginning Fall 2017, the committee will be integrated with the AST, and repurposed to support AADA processes.

- NMSU's foundational assessment committee was first known as the Outcomes Assessment Committee 1 (OAC1) for academic departmental assessment. In 2010 the committee was repurposed to focus on course-level assessment and became the Advocates for Scholarly Teaching (AST). The committee developed the Rubric for Scholarly Teaching and provided programs such as Classroom Assessment Scholars, the Peer Review Network (PRN) and Teaching with the Stars. In Fall 2016 the AST helped review and provide feedback on AADA reports. Beginning Fall 2017, the committee will be integrated with the CASL-BE and repurposed to support AADA processes.

- The Outcomes Assessment Committee for Co-Curriculum, Administration and Operations (OAC-CAO) also originated as a foundational assessment committee (OAC2). This committee has consistently worked to engage, support and develop assessment expertise in co-curricular areas. A best practices example set for co-curriculum assessment reporting supplements the review and feedback provided on annual assessment reports. An annual Co-curriculum, Administration and Operations Excellence in Assessment Award is presented at Convocation ceremonies.

AADA reports are monitored and evaluated - among other things - for engagement and impact. For example, in Fall 2016, 51% of departmental reports scored "well developed" for Engagement and 61% scored the same for Impact. Documenting actions taken to improve learning and providing evidence of the impact of changes has been identified as an area for improvement by the director of assessment.

In addition to using a revised committee structure to enhance institutional understanding and application of evidence-based improvement, the director of assessment provides funding for faculty, staff and administrators to attend the New Mexico Higher Education Assessment and Retention conference and the New Mexico Higher Education Assessment Association summer retreat to develop improved assessment practices. The assessment website provides valuable information about assessment and assessment activities at NMSU. A Spring 2017 application to NILOA for the Excellence in Assessment Designation provided a framework for internal and external review, including a critique of NMSU’s student learning outcomes statements, assessment plans, assessment resources, current assessment activities, evidence of student learning and the use of student learning evidence.

NMSU’s Quality Initiative also reflects good assessment practice and widespread engagement by
university constituents in assessment, as noted in HLC's final review and report of the QI.

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4.C - Core Component 4.C

The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to 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 but 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.)

Argument

4.C.1. NMSU has defined goals for student retention, persistence, and completion that are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations, and educational offerings.

Goals for student retention, persistence and completion are identified in the NMSU strategic plan, Vision 2020. Current targets and measures are based on first-time entering, full-time student cohorts (first-time). NMSU-LC's goal for first-time undergraduate retention (fall to fall) is 80%, with four-year and six-year completion rates at 30% and 55% respectively, by 2020. These figures represent an 8% increase in current first year retention, and 11% and 10% increases in four- and six-year graduation rates, respectively. Given our land-grant mission, student demographic and peer institution comparisons, our stated goals are ambitious, yet attainable. For example, the four-year graduation rate has steadily increased from 13% to 22% over the past four years.

NMSU-Grants has taken a slightly different approach that is outlined in their campus strategic plan Foresight 2020. The NMSU-Grants' branch campus mission and student demographic make their goal to increase both retention and completion rates annually by 1%, which is both ambitious and attainable.

4.C.2. NMSU collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence, and completion of its programs.

The Office of Institutional Analysis (OIA) reports retention and graduation rates for first-time, full-time freshmen cohorts for the overall cohorts as well as by gender, race/ethnic group and socioeconomic status. For first-time, full-time students who began their college careers in fall 2010, 45% graduated from NMSU-LC within 6 years. The one-year retention rate for the NMSU-LC Fall 2015 cohort was 71.6%. Analysis of the demographic trends reveal a continuing divide between minority and non-minority students. In-depth analyses indicate the combination of minority status, gender and socioeconomic status accounts for the achievement gap. The achievement gap between...
male, minority, low-income students and all other students is of serious concern and NMSU is determined to reduce this divide.

Through use of Tableau software, the OIA now provides access to one-year retention rates for first-time students, with visualized retention data that drills down to the department level for numerous demographics, financial aid and academic factors. Information highlights the critical impact faculty have in first-year success. Program retention and completion rates are considered in academic program review, with goals for each program identified in consultation between the department and the dean.

NMSU is increasingly focused on retention and completion of transfer students. NMSU-LC participates in the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) Student Achievement Measure (SAM), which provides enrollment and graduation information on first-time entering students and undergraduate transfer students, including the transfer-out success of students. For example, 59% of full-time transfer students starting at NMSU in fall 2009 graduated from NMSU within six years, and another 11% graduated from other institutions in the same time period.

NMSU also compares retention and graduation rates to our peers using the IPEDS Graduation Rates Survey, Graduation Rates 200% Survey and the new Outcomes Measures Survey. Retention data for NMSU-Grants reflect its student population, which is high-minority and low-income. Because of the small size of first-time entering cohorts, retention and graduation rates exhibit wide swings from year to year. While this limits the usefulness of comparison data, it is clear that retention rates remain low.

4.C.3. NMSU uses information on student retention, persistence, and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.

Analyses described in 4.C.2 have resulted in strategies aimed at improving retention and completion generally, and particularly for the populations that are shown to have greater challenges to retention - low income, minority status and male gender. Retention efforts reflect successful national models and utilize increasingly intrusive practices.

Academic Requirements

In Fall 2016 the required high school (HS) GPA for admission to NMSU-LC rose from 2.5 to 2.75. Retention analyses indicated that students entering with a HS GPA of less than 2.75 had a six-year graduation rate of only 13-18%. A high percentage were incurring debt but not obtaining a degree. To better serve these students, NMSU developed the Aggie Pathway to the Baccalaureate, a program that invites students with HS GPAs below 2.75 to begin their four-year degree program at one of NMSU's community colleges. A combination of smaller class size, learning communities, and intensive peer and staff mentoring provide less prepared students an opportunity to succeed academically and obtain essential skills to successfully matriculate to a research university. Students in the Aggie Pathway who complete 24 credit hours with a GPA of 2.5 or more are guaranteed admission to NMSU-LC. Response to the program has been positive. In Fall 2016, 286 students enrolled in the Aggie Pathway; By Fall 2017, 750 students were enrolled, including 15 at NMSU-Alamogordo, 12 at NMSU-Carlsbad, 693 at NMSU-Doña Ana, 7 at NMSU-Grants, and 23 who have transitioned to NMSU-Las Cruces.

As with other initiatives, this program is being evaluated to determine its effect on student success. Initial data are promising: NMSU-Doña Ana Pathway students were more likely than non-Pathway students to be retained Fall to Spring (75% to 80%). Moreover, Aggie Pathway students with a HS GPA of 2.5 to 2.7499 show greater Fall to Spring and Fall to Fall retention than did past NMSU-
LC students with the same entering HS GPA. For example, prior to implementation of Aggie Pathways, 54% of Fall 2015 first-time freshmen with a HS GPA between 2.50 and 2.7499 were retained to Fall 2016; Fall 2016 to Fall 2017 retention of Aggie Pathway Students with a HS GPA between 2.50 and 2.7499 was 61%. The Aggie Pathway program has also brought new attention to NMSU’s community colleges as cost effective entries to a four-year degree and has been an important factor in a 17% increase in branch campus transfers to NMSU-LC in Fall 2017.

Other changes aimed at improving persistence and completion include the Fall 2014 changes to the undergraduate tuition structure to encourage students to enroll in 15 credit hours of course work each semester. The new structure provides a reduced rate per student credit hour when students take at least 15 hours. Students must take 15 hours to qualify for major university merit scholarships, including the New Mexico Lottery Scholarship. This change, along with a move to 120-credit-hour degrees, is consistent with Complete College America and its “15 to Finish” agenda; national data indicates increased credit hour enrollment results in increased retention and more timely degree completion. Use of meta-majors has been implemented to better advise students who have not decided on a major, increasing the likelihood that credits taken will count toward their degree, once declared.

(Student Support)

Over the course of the last year, NMSU moved aggressively to improve student support and success. The most visible change is the implementation of centralized advising and use of a variety of analytic tools to enhance student success by providing alerts when students show signs of distress, such as not attending class, performing poorly in class, not logging into Canvas, signing up for a class that is not part of their degree plan, struggling to pay university bills, etc. Advisors are knowledgeable in effective interventions and the complex rules that regulate the university and its students, including those associated with financial aid. Centralized advising accommodates consistent training and preparation of advisors while simultaneously providing the convenience of a one-stop shop for students.

Centralized advising is not intended to remove faculty from playing a critical role in mentoring students and providing a strong sense of community. Instead, it is intended to free faculty from spending time on things like scheduling, academic rules and financial aid regulations, so that they can spend more time engaging with students on a more personal level, providing professional and career guidance based on the aspirations of students.

It is too soon to know whether centralized advising and use of analytics will improve student retention; however, Aggie Welcome Orientations went very smoothly this summer, and student traffic this fall (2017) in the Center for Academic Advising and Student Support has been high. Combined with the new residential requirement for first-year students, NMSU is well positioned to continue to improve student retention and graduation rates.

(Early Alert Interventions)

In 2012, NMSU implemented QuickConnect, an early alert system used to communicate and intervene with students who are identified by their instructors as struggling academically. QuickConnect allows faculty to identify and request assistance for students who are not attending class and/or who are performing poorly on assignments. Once identified, students receive a call and/or email from a QuickConnect responder (NMSU faculty or staff volunteer) who has been trained to encourage the student to attend class or to access needed support services. Use of QuickConnect steadily increased from Fall 2012 to Fall 2015, and continues to remain strong. In 2012, 439 referrals were received and 147 student contacts were made. By Fall 2016, 470
unique student referrals (unduplicated students) were received and 248 student contacts were made. Use of QuickConnect will continue to be an important tool for faculty members on the front line of teaching and student support.

In Fall 2015 NMSU began requiring faculty to submit Early Performance Grades reports through the student information system (Banner) for all lower-division courses. Grades are available to students, faculty and advisors. Systematic contact is made with at-risk students by advisors, with additional support dispatched through residence hall assistants when students do not respond to emails or phone messages. The goal is to ensure that students are aware when they are not doing well in a course and have time to take corrective action or withdraw from a course without jeopardizing their academic standing, scholarship and/or financial aid award.

Mini-semester courses are designed for two purposes - to help struggling students develop study, time management and information literacy skills and/or to meet general education requirements. Specifically, "mini-mester" courses allow mid-semester schedule changes that can help students maintain their academic progress and/or financial aid award when they find they need to drop a course. For example, to remain eligible to receive the New Mexico Lottery Scholarship, students must complete 15 graded credit hours each semester while maintaining a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.50. Students are able to remain eligible for the scholarship even if they drop a course because they can enroll in a mini-semester course to maintain 15 graded credit hours and get essential support in developing skills needed for academic success.

Completion

The Calling All Aggies campaign was initiated in 2012 and focuses on retention and completion. Relying on faculty and staff volunteers, this campaign reaches out to students in good academic standing who are not registered for classes in the upcoming semester. After a student's designated registration classification date passes, the student receives an email that reminds them to register and provides information about their advisor and financial aid. If they do not register within a given timeframe, the student receives a call from a volunteer who is trained to provide assistance with the registration process. If there are obstacles the student is facing that are preventing them from enrolling, (e.g. a University Accounts Receivable hold), the caller assists the student in finding a solution or directs them to resources that can help them remain in school. From November 2016 to mid-January 2017, volunteers made 2,369 contacts (phone/email) to students who had not yet enrolled for spring 2017. Of these, 1,631 students completed enrollment for Spring 2017.

In Spring 2014, NMSU initiated the Aggie Capstone Graduation Challenge. This program helps students who have completed at least 94 credit hours return to NMSU to complete their undergraduate degree. Advisors provide guidance to each student and aid in developing a graduation plan. Since its inception, 106 students have taken part in the program, and 79 have completed their degree. In Fall 2017, 27 students are actively participating in the program.

Additional Programs

Other programs support narrower segments of the student population and strive to increase student success, retention, and graduation. These include TRIO Student Success Services (federally funded since 1971), American Indian Programs and Indian Resource Development, Black Programs, Chicano Programs, CAMP, and Military and Veterans Programs. These programs strive to help specific populations make a successful transition to college life through various means such as mentoring, scholarships, social activities, job placement opportunities, etc.
Recognizing that financial challenges are a factor in retention, persistence and graduation, NMSU provides financial literacy training to students through the Red to Green Money Management Program. The Financial Aid Office conducts outreach programs, and all students are encouraged to apply for university, college and department scholarships through Scholar Dollar$, an online application that matches students with available funding.

University retention efforts are complemented by efforts within colleges and departments. For example, the Engineering College revised the freshman curriculum in Fall 2014 and implemented an ENGR 100 course that has significantly improved retention of engineering students. The Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences College partnered with NMSU-Doña Ana Community College to combine a developmental math course with an intermediate algebra course. Supplemental instruction was also provided. Immersing underprepared students in 8 credits of math generated good results in both courses, and has moved students more rapidly toward their major and degree. A similar focus on math success prompted the Arts and Sciences College to develop AS 103 - Quantitative Foundations, a math emporium course designed to fast-track students through developmental math. This 3-credit course prepares students who are comfortable learning via computer for college level math (MATH 120/210). While instructors and peer-learning assistants are available to help, students complete their work independently through an on-line adaptive learning system, ALEKS.

NMSU-Grants' Student Success Committee meets monthly during the academic year and supports training for faculty in online course development, redesigning and developing web-based STEM and general education courses, and updating infrastructure with the goals of increasing student retention, associate degree completion and transfers to four-year degree programs. NMSU-Grants' Title V initiatives further support retention and completion.

4.C.4. NMSU’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.)

The Office of Institutional Analysis (OIA) is responsible for university-wide analysis of student retention, persistence and completion. Data reports have traditionally been based on IPEDS definitions and methodology and, as such, focus on first-time entering, full-time cohorts. NMSU’s participation in the APLU Student Achievement Measure (SAM) helps to develop a comprehensive picture of student progress toward graduation, including transfer students coming into the institution and those who leave NMSU to complete their education at a different institution.

Because of the variation of program length, start dates and prior degree requirements, methodologies for calculating graduate student persistence and completion have been difficult to implement and have changed over time. A methodology put forth by the Council of Graduate Schools that focused on time to degree did not provide sufficient information for program directors, so a new methodology suggested by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges is currently in use. Comprehensive databases are being created for every graduate program, and rates will be calculated at the program level and then rolled up to the university level.

Distinct program analyses are provided by OIA on request by the program, such as for Military and Veteran’s Affairs, TRIO Student Success, Greek Affairs and several grant funded programs including RISE and MARC. When separate methodologies are required, OIA works with the program to identify best practices, as well as to gather pertinent data which may not be available in Banner. This collaboration also serves to enhance the more comprehensive longitudinal databases to support more
in-depth analyses of student retention at the university level.

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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.

Summary

NMSU demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs in many ways. Course and curricular expectations are established by faculty, and new courses and programs must be approved through appropriate university committees, and in some cases by agencies external to the university (e.g. accreditors, state agencies, etc.). Comprehensive procedures for evaluating and awarding transfer credit further ensure the academic quality of NMSU transcripted credit. NMSU's commitment to provide quality educational programs is also evident in its attention to program review processes for non-accredited programs, and the professional accreditation of 39 programs.

NMSU demonstrates responsibility for the quality of the educational environment and related support services through practices of self-study and external review (e.g. Library, Graduate School, DE). Other areas, such as the Counseling and Health Centers (now the Health and Wellness Center) maintain specialized accreditation.

NMSU has robust assessment processes that regularly measure student achievement with regard to learning objectives. Learning outcomes/objectives are articulated and measured at the institution, department/program, and course levels, and assessments are used to inform change and improve student learning across the institution. NMSU's QI project exemplifies how the institution has learned to integrate learning assessment at multiple levels to enact change that supports improved learning (in this case writing). Annual Academic Departmental Assessment (AADA) reports include many examples of closing the loop. The NMSU Teaching Academy, the Online Course Improvement Project, and other structures support faculty development in assessment practices. Assessment committees further engage faculty in assessment processes and methodologies and promote good practice by faculty and staff in assessment efforts.

Continuous improvement efforts are also apparent in the goals for retention, persistence, and completion that are identified in the NMSU-LC and NMSU-Grants strategic plans. Various retention initiatives have been implemented (e.g. Aggie Pathway to the Baccalaureate, QuickConnect early alert and intervention program, Calling All Aggies campaign, centralized advising), and recent data suggests these efforts are having a positive impact on student success.

Sources

There are no sources.
5 - Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

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

5.A - Core Component 5.A

The institution’s resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

1. The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The institution’s resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.
3. The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution’s organization, resources, and opportunities.
4. The institution’s staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.
5. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.

Argument

5.A.1. NMSU has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations regardless of where and how programs are delivered.

Fiscal Resources

NMSU-LC revenue comes from three primary sources; the majority (66%) are unrestricted funds:

- State Appropriations (approximately 33%)
- Government Grants and Contracts (approximately 28%)
- Tuition and Fees (approximately 20%)
- Combined Other (approximately 19%)

Approximately 39% of the budget is allocated to Instruction and General (I&G).

Funding sources for NMSU-Grants include:

- State Appropriations (approximately 48%)
- Government Grants and Contracts (approximately 33%)
- Tuition and Fees (approximately 14%)
- Combined Other (approximately 5%)

Over 70% of NMSU-Grants' budget is allocated to I&G.
NMSU operates on a balanced budget. Investor Service bond ratings of NMSU are strong even in light of recent enrollment declines and decreased state funding.

- **Moody's Investment Services** rating is Aa3 (outlook is negative)
- **Standard and Poor's (S&P)** rating (2015) is AA- (outlook is stable)
- **Fitch rating** is AA- (outlook is stable)

NMSU financial reserves remain solid, and we consistently satisfy HLC's Composite Financial Index (CFI) score expectations. The small dip in the 2016 CFI score reflects a low Net Operating Revenues Ratio that resulted from one-time expenditures for lighting and system upgrades that were a part of a Guaranteed Utility Savings Contract. These expenditures could not be capitalized and were therefore reflected as an expense in our Statement of Revenues Expenses and Changes in Net Position. Other uncommon expenditures are not expected in the future.

**Human Resources**

NMSU employs a combination of regular, temporary, full-time and part-time faculty (920 FTE at NMSU-LC; 30.8 FTE at NMSU-Grants) that provide quality education to NMSU students. Some decline in faculty numbers has occurred over the course of the past three years in response to enrollment declines. Even during this period of declining enrollment, NMSU has recognized the importance of paying competitive salaries to its faculty members and has increased faculty compensation by more than 5.1 million dollars between 2013 and 2016. These additional dollars were part of a commitment to bring faculty salaries up to 90% of market. This investment in faculty reflects NMSU’s commitment to its teaching, research and service mission. In addition, NMSU has invested in Endowed Professorships (39), Endowed Chairs (25), and Regents Professors (22).

NMSU also employs a combination of regular, temporary, full-time and part-time staff (2283 FTE at NMSU-LC; 37.5 FTE at NMSU-Grants) that provide high quality service and maintain NMSU's operations. NMSU engaged Deloitte to review staffing efficiencies. Recommendations of the study, combined with long-term budget strategies, have succeeded in maximizing staff efficiencies. Overall results are a reduction of staff FTE by approximately 23% over the past 7 years.

**Physical Resources**

NMSU's comprehensive capital outlay process to manage physical assets includes assessing facilities, planning preventative maintenance, and funding maintenance and capital needs. Utility system development plans guide planning for Building Renewals and Replacement (BRR). A comparative space study commissioned in 2016 to inform development of the 2017-2027 NMSU-System Master Plan confirmed NMSU has ample infrastructure to support and deliver its educational programs, student activities and research activity.

NMSU-LC offers bachelor completion programs and one graduate program at five different physical locations (including NMSU-Grants) across the state (Alamogordo, Carlsbad, Grants, Santa Fe and Albuquerque). Combined, these programs include face-to-face, Interactive Television (ITV) and online course delivery. Alamogordo, Carlsbad and Grants locations are housed at NMSU-system community college campuses, and services and facilities are maintained by the respective campus and/or the NMSU-system as appropriate. The Albuquerque Center is a rented property and IT services are provided by the NMSU-system, which includes a local IT position. The Santa Fe location is a rented space at Santa Fe Community College (SFCC) and IT services are coordinated through SFCC.
Facilities at NMSU-Grants are funded as described above, but alternative funding also impacts facilities planning. For example, a general obligation bond secured in 2014 is funding construction of a new Teacher Education, Health Care, and Child Development Center.

**Facilities and Services (FS)** provides oversight of operation and maintenance at NMSU-LC and for environmental compliance and capital projects for the NMSU-system. FS is responsible for monitoring operating resources, energy consumption, and capital investment, and uses APPA: Leadership in Educational Facilities (APPA) Facilities Performance Indicators (FPI) and Sightlines (a third-party firm) to benchmark performance. Real and potential human and physical asset loss are mitigated through various means, including through a Loss Prevention and Control Committee, an All Hazards Emergency Plan (AHEOP), the On-campus Fire Department and the NMSU-system Emergency Planning Committee.

In 2016 FS received the prestigious APPA Award for Excellence, APPA's highest institutional honor.

**Technological Infrastructure**

NMSU’s information technology (IT) environment is a combination of centralized and decentralized units. The central organization is called Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and reports to the Chief Information Officer (CIO). Decentralized IT units are dispersed in various academic and administrative units. The CIO provides IT strategic leadership for the NMSU-system. Critical responsibilities of NMSU's ICT unit include:

- Information Security
- IT Compliance
- Local and Wide Area Networking
- Enterprise Applications and Systems
  - Learning Management System (Canvas)
  - MyNMSU portal
  - Banner ERP System

NMSU uses three paths through three Internet providers to meet ever increasing internet connection demands as well as business continuity and disaster recovery needs. NMSU is a member of Internet2 and connected to national research networks. Remote access to secure onsite storage and applications is provided through the Cisco virtual private network.

NMSU’s Chief Information Security Officer oversees protection of confidential information. The IT Compliance Officer ensures compliance with various privacy laws and regulations, including FERPA, GLBA, FISMA and HIPAA. These offices work together to ensure related risks are known and either mitigated or accepted by executive management. The IT Compliance website is the repository for NMSU-system announcements regarding policy and security.

The NMSU-system uses integrated modules in the Ellucian Banner enterprise resource planning software system and a combination of Ellucian’s Operational Data Store and Cognos for enterprise reporting. Companion and supplemental software packages meet additional needs, such as for human resources, procurement, facilities management, etc. A Spring 2015 review of NMSU's operational processes spurred efforts for more effective use of the full Banner environment. For example, CRM Advise, a customer relationship management software to inform advising, is now utilized to provide a comprehensive view of students, including an analytic-based early alert component for at-risk students.
Canvas is NMSU’s learning management system (LMS). Academic Technology functionally administers Canvas, and ICT provides Banner integration, authentication and general technical support. In Spring 2017, 3,742 course sections used the LMS, representing 23,113 student users across the NMSU-system.

The MyNMSU portal facilitates system-wide applications (e.g. email, Office 365, Canvas, Banner Self-Serve, etc.) and communicates important messages to the NMSU community (e.g. outages, compliance, security, etc.). Research support is accessible through a MyNMSU portal tab, and ICT has a Cyber Infrastructure Architect position and a high performance computer to assist faculty and student researchers.

5.A.2 NMSU’s resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.

NMSU is a public university and does not have a relationship with a superordinate entity; thus there is no disbursement of funds to such an entity.

NMSU’s funding and resource allocation processes are directly tied to our educational mission and ensure against elective allocations that could negatively impact our educational purpose. State formula funding provides the primary support for the instructional mission of NMSU. Research and public service units are funded separately through state appropriation line items and are accounted for separately within the operating budget. Auxiliary operations are self-supporting.

Strategic priorities guide resource allocation and clearly align allocations with our instructional mission. Investment in the instruction function within I&G continues to be a priority. I&G allocation also considers equipment renewal and replacement (ERR) and building renewal and replacement (BRR) needs. Mandatory transfers for debt service are covered by the area benefiting from the sale of revenue bonds. Indirect cost recovery revenues are accounted for in I&G and then allocated through a standard formula. Transfers made out of I&G are, in general, to support the instruction mission such as those for ERR and BRR, but may also include the transfers related to internal service, athletics and other functions that augment but are not directly related to instruction.

5.A.3 The goals incorporated into elaborations of the mission statement are realistic in light of NMSU’s organization, resources, and opportunities.

Vision 2020 outlines strategic goals and provides benchmarks against which NMSU measures progress. Monitored performance identifies areas of strength, opportunities for growth, and challenges for the institution. Recently, NMSU narrowed its focus to a smaller set of goals that are more closely aligned with institutional priorities. Focusing on these goals and KPIs reflects a more realistic approach to institutional improvement that will lead to real progress while ensuring continued fiscal stability. NMSU-Grants’ strategic plan aligns with Vision 2020.

5.A.4 NMSU’s staff, in all areas, are appropriately qualified and trained.

NMSU recruitment strategies are designed to attract and retain qualified faculty and staff. Human Resource Services (HRS) evaluates all new staff position requests and assigns appropriate classifications. Position postings outline minimum qualifications and educational requirements, and only qualified applicants are considered for hire.
Faculty qualifications are defined in Rules 5.14 and 5.15 of the Administrative Rules and Procedures (ARP) of NMSU. Faculty candidates are screened as part of the recruitment process in accordance with guidelines provided by HRS. More information on faculty qualifications is provided in 3.C.

All new employees are encouraged to attend a new employee orientation and complete required compliance training. Job-specific training is monitored by the hiring unit. Newly hired faculty participate in a New Faculty Orientation.

The Center for Learning and Professional Development and the Teaching Academy offer an array of training and development opportunities designed to strengthen specific job skills and responsibilities, as well as enhance personal and professional growth. The Aggie Leadership Training Academy (ALTA) is a unique opportunity for employees to discover personal leadership capacities that support NMSU succession planning.

Annual performance evaluations assess employees' strengths as well as areas for improvement, and when needed include requirements for job-related training and/or professional development.

5.A.5 NMSU has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.

NMSU prepares annual budgets for current and plant fund expenditures from unrestricted and restricted revenue sources. The annual cycle begins in November and coincides with the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) submission of the higher education funding recommendation to the state legislature. Funding priorities are established through a review of mandated requirements and strategic investments. Each NMSU-system campus goes through independent processes that merge when budgets are presented to the Board of Regents (BOR) for approval, prior to submission to state authorities.

The budgeting process starts with developing campus budget guidelines that identify sources and uses; priorities are identified through a collaborative and iterative process that begins with upper administration and expands to include the university budget office, deans and the broader campus community. Feedback from all participants is used to further vet institutional priorities, which are then provided to the University Budget Committee (UBC) and the administration for consideration. The Regents Financial Strategies, Performance and Budget Committee (RFSPBC) participates through regularly scheduled meetings. While state funding for the budget year is determined, the list of priority investments is aligned to match available resources including tuition and fee adjustments.

Auxiliary services rate proposals undergo a similar process that includes gathering input from students and constituent groups, prior to reviews by administration, budget office, UBC and RFSPBC. Mandatory fees are reviewed by the Student Fee Review Board which makes a fee recommendation to the chancellor.

The RFSPBC votes (regents abstaining) on proposed guidelines (which include tuition and fees and auxiliary service rates) before they are presented to the full BOR for approval, usually in April. The BOR has final authority to approve budget guidelines, which are used to create the operating budget. Budgets are due to the NMHED by May 1st, and may be 'pending' final approval (no later than May 19) by the BOR. NMHED has 1 month to review and submit budgets to the NM Department of Finance and Administration (DFA). The DFA has one month to review and send approvals to institutions by July 1, the beginning of the fiscal year.

Budget office staff continuously monitor current year financial performance against the approved budget, and a Fiscal Watch certification is submitted quarterly to the NMHED. Modifications to the
approved budget are allowed throughout the year, using the Budget Adjustment Request (BAR) process. The BAR must pass through the BOR prior to NMHED submission.

NMSU’s internal financial monitoring process includes a monthly review of budget exhibit fund balances and a comparison of current budget to actuals for revenue, expense and transfers on an aggregated basis for each established budget reporting unit. If needed, individual units may be placed under fiscal watch for close monitoring, which includes periodic meetings between unit administrators, the Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance, and budget office staff to discuss budget status and other fiscal issues.

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5.B - Core Component 5.B

The institution’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight of the institution’s financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in the institution’s governance.
3. Administration, faculty, staff, and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

Argument

5.B.1 The governing board is knowledgeable about NMSU; it provides oversight of NMSU’s financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.

New Mexico statutory law provides for a five-member Board of Regents (BOR) appointed by the Governor of New Mexico. One appointed member is an NMSU student. Additional non-voting ex-officio members include the NMSU Faculty Senate chair, Employee Council chair and the president of the student governing body, the Associated Students of NMSU (ASNMSU). NMSU’s BOR meets all requirements identified in Article XII - Sec. 13 of the Constitution of the State of New Mexico.

Authority for oversight of the institution is defined in NMSU policy. NMSU is currently in the midst of separating what was formerly the NMSU Policy Manual into two separate and distinct documents - The Regents Policy Manual (RPM) and the Administrative Rules and Procedures of NMSU (ARP). The former provides for oversight of the institution by the BOR, who are governed by the Bylaws of the Regents of New Mexico State University; the latter provides operating procedures and regulations for carrying out the business of the institution. Policies 1.01, 1.02 and 1.03 define the authority and responsibility of the BOR to NMSU.

The BOR carries out its responsibilities and remains informed about the institution through regularly scheduled meetings and through four BOR-established committees that provide additional insight and awareness on institutional matters.

- Regents’ Audit Committee
- Regents’ Financial Strategies, Performance and Budget Committee
- Regents’ Real Estate Committee
- Regent’s Student Success Committee

5.B.2 NMSU has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in the institution’s governance.

Shared governance is a central tenet at NMSU and is evidenced through structured policies, rules and procedures as well as through institutional practices. Policy 1.10 outlines conditions for inclusive
procedures:

- The BOR, under the New Mexico Constitution and related statutes, governs NMSU through the adoption of policies that provide direction for the mission and goals of the NMSU-system.
- Policy 1.10 establishes a framework for adopting policies and developing enforceable administrative rules and procedures. The BOR must approve, by vote in an open meeting, any changes to the RPM.
- The chancellor is authorized to adopt administrative rules and procedures as appropriate and necessary to implement the policies adopted by the BOR and to ensure efficient and effective organizational/transactional control; these comprise the ARP. Policy requires the ARP to include a process that allows opportunity for university stakeholders to introduce and/or comment on all proposals to amend, repeal or propose new policies or ARP provisions.
- ARP Rule 1.10 establishes the protocols by which policies, rules and procedures which govern the operation of the NMSU-system will be developed, reviewed and officially adopted.
- By law, the Board of Regents governs the NMSU System, under the advice of faculty, by the enactment of policies and by its delegation of operational authority through the chancellor. Therefore, consistent with the law and the principles of shared governance of the American Association of University Professors, the faculty, represented through the Faculty Senate (FS), has primary responsibility for developing and applying the policies and procedures affecting the university’s academic mission in regard to curriculum and instruction, research, and other areas relating to the educational process. Regents Policies 1.10 and 1.70 and Administrative Rule 1.10 and the Constitution of the FS provide the processes by which proposals affecting the academic mission are developed, vetted and approved. In general terms, legislative proposals affecting the academic mission are sponsored by faculty senators, carried through the FS, and if approved by formal vote of the senate, are forwarded to the chancellor for further action. Proposed new or revised Regents Policies must be forwarded to the BOR for its approval. Proposed new or revised academic rules (also policy) must be approved by the chancellor. If the chancellor does not approve an academic proposal submitted by the FS, procedures exist by which the matter may be elevated to the BOR for a final resolution.

ARP Rule 1.10 Part 6 C includes a process for assigning proposed legislation to either an administrative or academic track for review and comment. Proposals within the legislative jurisdiction of the Faculty Senate under Regents Policy 1.70, as well as other proposals where the Assignment Advisory Group may determine that the Faculty Senate legislative process is appropriate, shall be assigned to the Academic Track for review. All other proposals will be assigned to the Administrative Track. Nothing in this rule regulates or alters the Faculty Senate process for review and adoption of Faculty Senate Propositions. Students are represented through ASNMSU as described in 5.B.3 below.

Additional practices that inclusively engage all aspects of the institutional community in governance and decision-making include open forums hosted by the Employee Council. Over the past two years, such forums have included topics related to budgeting, federal regulations and compliance that impact the institution and its constituents (e.g. FLSA), and institutional transforming exercises. Employees can join the forums remotely or in person, including asking questions or offering comments. Time and means for accepting additional input following the forums is always provided.

5.B.3 At NMSU, administration, faculty, staff, and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.

Faculty at NMSU have primary responsibility for the curriculum, including subject matter, methods
of instruction, research, faculty status and those aspects of student life that are related to educational processes. Through Faculty Senate, faculty are responsible for **developing and applying policies affecting the university’s academic mission.** Faculty, staff, administrators and students are all involved in setting academic requirements, policy and processes through service on university committees. Those most directly involved at the university level include the following.

- **University Administrative Council (UAC)** - The BOR recognizes the UAC as an advisory body to be used at the chancellor’s discretion for discussion and/or recommendations on matters of university business. UAC membership includes administration, faculty, student and staff representation and is integral in development of policy.
- **President’s Academic Council**
- **Academic Deans Council (ADC)**
- **Associate Deans Academic Council (ADAC)** - One of the roles of ADAC is to ensure coordination among departments and colleges in regard to courses and programs. A subset of ADAC serves as the University Curriculum Committee (UCC).
- **Employee Council** – The Employee Council chair is an ex-officio member of the BOR and a member of the UAC.
- **Associated Students of NMSU (ASNMSU)** - Elected government of the student body; the president is an ex-officio member of the BOR and a member of the UAC; the vice-president is an ex-officio member of Faculty Senate and a member of ADAC.
- **University Research Council (URC)**
- **Faculty Senate (FS)** - The FS chair serves as a voting member on the ADC, UAC, University Budget Committee and the Naming Committee. The FS chair is also an ex-officio member of the Board of Regents. The FS vice-chair serves as a voting member of ADAC.

In addition, the chancellor hosts informal but regular meetings of the "Kitchen Cabinet," a group consisting of the current and past FS chairs. These individuals collectively act in an advisory role to the chancellor on institutional issues, and particularly on those dealing with academic issues.

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5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.
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. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution’s sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.
5. Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

Argument

5.C.1. NMSU allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.

As seen in Core Component 5.A, NMSU's budgeted resources support the Institution's educational, research and service mission. In addition, NMSU has a strategic planning process that further aligns available resources with institutional priorities, expressed in five goals and operationalized through objectives and key performance indicators (KPIs). NMSU tracks use of centrally allocated resources to strategic goals, as does each college and major operational area.

In December of 2016, the BOR approved Six Pillars of Vision 2020, and eight key metrics associated with these pillars as a special focus of NMSU with regard to planning and budgeting. New investments in the 2018 budget are closely aligned with these pillars.

In 2013 NMSU introduced President's Performance Funding for short-term projects with potential for positive impact. Through a competitive application and hearing process, in January of 2014 the University Budget Committee (UBC) awarded $750,000 to finance 19 independent projects that supported various Vision 2020 objectives. Funding was renewed each year (for up to three years) based on milestone achievements. Successful projects included developing peer-learning assistants for barrier courses that resulted in improved student grades and pass rates, creating an engineering preparatory course that led to a 10% average increase in freshmen engineering student retention, and building an interdisciplinary minor in sustainability. Current fiscal conditions prevent funding of additional projects, but all initiatives that met performance criteria were financed throughout the three years for which the initial award was intended.

5.C.2. NMSU links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.

As established in Core Components 5.A and 5.B, NMSU engages in continuous processes to evaluate and improve operations at many levels. Such processes inform fiscal decisions and institutional planning. Examples include the Mercer and Deloitte studies, sustainability improvements and technology enhancements. Intensive efforts are also recognized through NMSU's Transforming exercises, which by Summer 2017 have resulted in real cost-savings of $2.7 million,
with an overall estimated project cost-savings of $9.7 million. The more recently developed Team 6 is focused on optimizing NMSU's academic structure to encourage collaboration and reduce administrative costs.

Data more directly linked to student experiences includes information acquired from student surveys, institutional student data and learning research. Data-informed institutional planning and budgeting has resulted in a comprehensive revamping of the financial aid award process; development of living learning communities, including a new initiative to link faculty fellows with these communities; development of the Student Navigator Program which transitioned in Fall 2017 to centralized advising; and construction of the Technology Enhanced Active Learning (TEAL) classroom located in the newly renovated Hardman and Jacobs Undergraduate Learning Center.

Institutional data on retention and graduation have spurred multiple actions, including reducing minimum bachelor degree requirements from 128 to 120 credit hours, and minimum associate degree requirements from 66 to 60 credit hours; establishing the Aggie Pathway to the Baccalaureate program, which is designed to help students achieve a four-year degree from NMSU by beginning their studies at one of our community colleges; implementing meta-majors to guide students who are undecided about their majors so that they make progress toward a degree while exploring their degree options; creating a Math Emporium to accelerate attainment of needed math skills; requiring participation in new student orientation (which includes an online option); and adopting a first-year residency requirement, effective Fall 2017.

The most visible example linking institutional assessment of student learning to evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting is NMSU's Quality Initiative (QI) project to improve student writing. The four-year initiative was awarded $100,000 annually to support research, pilot strategies and launch a comprehensive effort to improve student writing in the disciplines. Through this institutionally-focused process, NMSU has committed ongoing resources to expand a successful pilot program that is grounded in our QI research.

Assessment of general education (GE) has driven decisions to host national experts on the NMSU-LC campus to provide faculty development in the areas of critical thinking and writing. Similarly, an assignment design workshop was hosted to strengthen faculty skills in addressing GE, Baccalaureate Experience and program-level outcomes through classroom assignments. An application for the Excellence in Assessment designation by the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment identified improved articulation of program-level outcomes and increased closing-the-loop practices as institutional priorities; assignment design supports both. Moving forward, joint efforts between the directors of the Teaching Academy and Assessment Office will support continued focus on refining articulation of program-level learning outcomes while incorporating curriculum-mapping practices.

Other planning, budgeting and funding tied to assessment of student learning occurs at a more granular level. Colleges and departments may align resource allocation to student learning assessment outcomes. For example, beginning in Fall 2012 the Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Sciences College implemented a partnership with NMSU-Doña Ana to enhance student persistence and success in Math. In Fall 2014 the Engineering College revamped the core course for incoming engineering majors, ENG 100. It is now paired with the freshman composition course (English 111G), and in addition to regular assignments, special engineering design challenge assignments and multiple writing assignments are incorporated into the ENG 100 class. Not only has fall-to-fall retention improved (from 62% prior to the intervention to an average of 76.8% over the last three years), it appears to be affecting greater retention of engineering students beyond the freshman to sophomore year.
5.C.3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.

Planning at NMSU takes many forms. The current Vision 2020 Strategic Plan is grounded in the work of prior administrations, with this iteration being a refined and focused plan that increasingly drives institutional actions and allocation of resources. Strategic planning encompasses the entire institution and invites all perspectives. For example, in Spring 2015 the Chancellor embarked on a comprehensive listening tour to encourage and collect input on system-wide planning. Nineteen 90-minute open forums were held with NMSU constituents, and external constituents participated through Town Gown Commission and Foundation Board meetings. In addition to previously mentioned initiatives, (e.g. centralized advising, meta-majors, etc.) input from these conversations led to the incorporation of all NMSU-system campuses, including NMSU-Grants, into the Vision 2020 Strategic Plan. Community colleges share a common set of objectives, KPIs and peer comparison institutions. Various advisory boards provide an external perspective to planning, including in the disciplines; the NMSU-Grants advisory board also participates in budgeting processes.

Additional venues regularly engage constituencies in reviewing and updating strategic initiatives, and include regular meetings of the University Administrative Council, NMSU Foundation and the Regents Financial Strategies, Performance and Budget Committee, as well as the annual NMSU-system summit. A more recently developed planning website invites input from all constituents and provides a continued transparent framework for strategic planning.

Beyond NMSU-system and campus strategic planning, NMSU engages in regular planning at multiple levels. Each level of planning is tied to the Vision 2020 Strategic Plan and engages various constituent audiences. Examples include:

- Marketing and Communication
- Community Engagement
- Economic Development
- Undergraduate Domestic Recruitment
- Campus Master Planning
- University Architect
- Capital Outlay Planning
- Space Management
- Technology Plan

5.C.4. NMSU plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution’s sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy, and state support.

NMSU’s strategic planning process provides ample opportunity to anticipate, identify and negotiate changes in the environment and in available resources for higher education. In recent years NMSU's revenue resources have been impacted by declining enrollment, a strained state economy, decreased state funding, flat tuition rates and declining state support for lottery scholarships. NMSU has been proactive in mitigating the immediate impact of these circumstances and planning for future anticipated revenue reductions from current sources.

Specifically, NMSU has implemented immediate cost-savings through operating budget cuts and long-term hiring freezes. Longer-term savings have been realized, and continue to be realized, through extension of hiring freezes, investment in facilities improvement and energy saving.
strategies, and implementing strategies identified through Transforming NMSU exercises. The Transforming NMSU process, which began in 2015, was initially comprised of five teams that focused on administrative units and sought efficiencies by addressing issues such as levels of management, spans of control and fragmentation of services. A new team, Team 6, comprised largely of faculty, is now examining academic colleges, with a similar focus on identifying administrative efficiencies, as well as cost savings that might be realized through revision of academic areas and offerings.

Donor and federally-funded projects support maximization of available resources. For example, private donations ($1.6 million) and federal funding ($9 million) supported the metamorphosis of the Hershel Zohn Theater into Domenici Hall and the NMSU Library Domenici Archives; revenue bonds financed the satellite ice plant that makes chilled water at night when electricity rates are lowest; and private funding paid for most of the improvements to NMSU's athletic facilities over the past decade, including Aggie Memorial Stadium and Presley Askew Field.

NMSU has expanded and continues to expand current revenue streams while developing new ones, including increased attention to philanthropy, revised strategies for student recruitment and retention, strategic distance education offerings, and real estate investments.

5.C.5. NMSU planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts, and globalization.

NMSU planning processes are designed to be responsive to an ever-changing environment and economy. For example, the number of high school graduates in the state of NM is declining. As a result NMSU has targeted recruiting efforts to attract a greater percentage of the state's graduating seniors, while at the same time specifically targeting promising populations outside of the state, particularly in El Paso, Texas and Mexico. In addition, NMSU has taken a more strategic approach to online education that focuses on programmatic offerings rather than individual course offerings.

Through the Descubre Program and relationships with Mexican governmental entities, NMSU is leveraging our location near the border to propel growth in our international programs. In March 2016, the BOR passed a resolution allowing Mexican students reduced tuition of 1.5 times the NM resident rate. Complementing reduced tuition are enhanced recruiting efforts in Mexico, especially in the bordering states of Chihuahua and Sonora, and other areas with established institutional relationships.

NMSU's technology plan anticipates future technological needs; NMSU's ICT unit was proactive in reducing operational costs while meeting institutional needs by participating in a long-term irrefutable right of use (IRU) agreement with the State of New Mexico and New Mexico Tech for fiber from Santa Fe, NM to El Paso, TX.

To further position NMSU as an incubator for emerging ideas, NMSU's Arrowhead Center was established to act as an agent for instilling in students a sense of innovation, risk-taking and respect, and to serve as an engine for economic development, moving discoveries by NMSU faculty and students into the broader economy. Studio G, Arrowhead Park Early College High School and the Arrowhead Park Medical Academy were springboards to a more recent agreement with the Burrell College of Osteopathic Medicine (BCOM) to enhance health and medical related opportunities in the region. A separate institution, BCOM offers a unique opportunity to leverage resources for mutual benefit. For example, NMSU provided space for the brand new BCOM facility and contracts with BCOM to provide select services to BCOM students; BCOM supports scholarships serving NMSU
students and opportunities to transition to medical school. As another example, the Arrowhead Center is assisting in the licensing and marketing of Maestro, an internally-developed IRB system, and continues to be instrumental in developing partnerships within and beyond NMSU.

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• VPED_CommunityEngagementSP_8.29.2017
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5.D - Core Component 5.D

The institution works systematically to improve its performance.

1. The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.
2. The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.

Argument

5.D.1. NMSU develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.

As evidenced throughout the Criterion 5 Argument, NMSU’s Vision 2020 Strategic Plan and the strategic planning process is the means through which we develop and document evidence of institutional performance. Institutional performance on strategic priorities and KPIs is reported to the Board of Regents (BOR) annually and is reviewed and monitored regularly. Fiscal performance is evaluated through the annual audit of financial statements (see 5.A and 5.B). Fiscal health is demonstrated through fiscal ratios and bond rating reviews. Internal audits and risk assessments assist the university in developing and maintaining sound business practices.

Academic performance, including learning assessment, is evaluated through formal Academic Program Review, external specialized accreditation processes, and annual assessment reporting. Other units are evaluated through independent external reviews (e.g. Library, Graduate School). Internal unit evaluation and assessments are also ongoing and collectively impact the institution’s practice of continuous improvement.

Annual job performance evaluation of faculty, staff and administrators examines productivity and quality in educational and service offerings as well as in organizational structures and operations.

In all, NMSU is committed to continuous improvement of personnel, program, services and facilities through evaluation and reflection on current and potential practices. Combined, these practices support ongoing comprehensive individual and organizational improvement actions.

5.D.2. NMSU learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability, overall and in its component.

NMSU recognizes that many operational and educational improvements are gained through 'lessons learned' - either firsthand or vicariously through observations of other institutions of higher education and/or other large non-academic organizations. NMSU strives to apply best practices and sound principals in new endeavors but also realizes that its unique population, location and institutional make-up require us to engage an entrepreneurial spirit that promotes discovery and learns from failure.

Efforts at an institutional level to improve operational performance are included throughout this document and specifically in Criterion 5. Included in those examples are efforts that have been redirected based on limited success in initial rounds. For example, development of the Student Navigator program did not have as dramatic an impact as desired on student retention. Because we
believed the program was having some impact, rather than terminate the program prematurely and completely, lessons learned from the program were used to merge navigators and decentralized advising approaches into a centralized advising model. NMSU will monitor the impact of centralized advising on student retention and continue to make adjustments and improvements as warranted.

NMSU component units also exemplify a willingness and desire to learn through experience and improve accordingly. Additional examples not already referenced in Criterion 5 include:

- An annual customer service survey by Facilities and Services addresses concerns from any department and is used in conjunction with the benchmark data to reallocate resources and improve operational effectiveness.
- An Employee Engagement Survey conducted by Administration and Finance in 2014 led to development of an employee-managed recognition program and the formation of the Administration and Finance Voice, an employee organization dedicated to improving the workplace environment.
- As part of ICT's ongoing performance appraisal process, surveys are deployed to assess how ICT performs in providing services to the NMSU community.

Sources

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5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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

Summary

CC 5. NMSU’s resources, structures, and processes are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. NMSU plans for the future.

NMSU’s resource base is stable, sufficiently supports its current educational programs, and is positioned to adequately support educational programs into the future. NMSU operates on a balanced budget, and despite recent enrollment declines and decreased state funding, bond ratings remain strong and our financial reserves remain solid. Human and physical resources and technological infrastructure adequately support our educational purpose, which remains at the forefront of strategic and budgetary planning and monitoring processes. Recent improvements in graduation and retention rates further support the stability of the institution in meeting future challenges and opportunities.

NMSU’s governance and administrative structures support effective leadership and collaborative processes that enable it to fulfill its mission today, and into the future. The existence and authority of the Board of Regents (BOR) is established through New Mexico statutory law; the Regents Policy Manual (RPM) gives authority to administer the institution to the NMSU Chancellor; and the RPM gives Faculty Senate legislative jurisdiction over academic matters. External constituencies are engaged at multiple levels, including through BOR sub-committees and multiple advisory boards across the institution. Administrative structures and institutional practices provide multiple avenues for collaboration and contributive processes.

NMSU engages in regular, integrated planning processes that ensure resource allocation is aligned within its mission and priorities. Operationalized through KPIs, NMSU benchmarks performance and regularly reviews progress. Emerging factors such as the economy, the changing landscape of higher education, future demographics and enrollment, etc., also remain under constant consideration. NMSU’s master plan projects 10 years into the future, and is updated as needed to respond to changing conditions.

NMSU works continuously to improve performance. Recent improvement in retention and graduation rates are the result of several comprehensive initiatives. Collective efforts to reduce expenditures and maximize operational efficiencies are another example of how the institution continuously implements actions for improvement. Other continuous improvement processes occur at various levels of the institution, such as through financial auditing, specialized accreditation, assessment, and through student feedback and surveys. Continuous improvement efforts also extend to the individual level through annual performance reviews and evaluations.
Sources

There are no sources.