# Criterion 5 – Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness

**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**

The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening its quality in the future.  The overall fiscal picture of MSU is sound as evidenced by increasing enrollments, an expanding Foundation, innovative cost saving measures, and the continuing academic programming growth and enhancement consistent with the university mission and spurred by a successful Title III grant.

The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to *fulfill* its mission.  The North Dakota State Board of Higher Education exercises control and understanding of the institution through meetings on individual campuses, required periodic program reviews and financial audits.  Faculty, staff, and student senates meet regularly to deal with important issues at the local level.

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning by way of a strategic planning process that incorporates contributions from multiple sources and tracks progress on goals during regularly scheduled sessions.

The institution works systematically to improve its performance by using results from a multitude of academic and non-academic direct and indirect performance measures, and maintaining accountability for  improvement actions by designing and sustaining tools created for that purpose.

**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**

The overall fiscal picture of Mayville State University (MSU) is summarized in the System Annual Budget Report which indicates the institution has a fundamentally sound financial basis. The main sources of operating revenues for the 2013–2015 biennial institutional budget include state appropriated aid (38%), state, federal, and non-governmental grants (24%), tuition (21%), and auxiliary sales and services (12%). The Mayville State Foundation, the primary fund-raising organization for the institution, is also fiscally sound and enjoying increases in

donor giving, evidenced by raising an additional 78% over their 2013-2014 goal and, as of January, 2015, $447,000 had been raised for endowed and annual scholarship drives representing a 190% increase over the same period last year. Increased headcount enrollment, up 37% since Fall, 2008, has also resulted in larger than anticipated tuition collections. Positive numbers in all of these areas indicate a strong financial position for the future, as well.

In February, 2016, the state of North Dakota mandated a 4.05% budget cut for all state agencies including higher education. The cuts stem from reduced tax revenue due to depressed oil prices. The President's Cabinet is working on addressing this in a manner that is expected to protect budgeted salary increases and not materially affect ongoing major initiatives.

MSU has the human resources necessary to support its operations and growth. There has been a 32.41% increase in full-time employees over the last five years to support the increased operational levels associated with increased enrollment, with new delivery methods of courses and programs such as online or at remote sites, with new programs like Communications, RN to BSN Nursing, and Special Education, and sustainability of staff hired through Title III.

MSU has the physical infrastructure to support its operations. Deferred maintenance has been a challenge for the institution, until recently. In the past five years there has been a 62% decrease in deferred maintenance due to state appropriations and private donations. Deferred maintenance now represents just 6% of the plant value, down from 29% in 2008. Reviews of building and classroom usage requested by the State Board of Higher Education (SBHE), dormitory utilization conducted locally, and energy usage (page 10) by Energy Services Group (ESG) from Minneapolis, MN, have resulted in fiscal efficiencies which have been reinvested in the physical plant. East Hall and West Hall, two underutilized and inefficient buildings, were determined in 2007 to be too costly to update by the state. Both have been razed and West Hall was replaced with the modern, and much more efficient, Education addition to the Library and Science building. The most recent legislatively funded capital project involves the Old Gymnasium, constructed in 1929 and associated spaces. The project will result in significant safety improvements and more classroom and lab space for the growing academic area of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation (HPER), which has seen enrollment increase by over 86% since 2008. The number of student athletes has also increased by over 25% during this same time frame with the inclusion of active junior varsity athletic teams and the cheer team. Delays in the project have resulted from bids above the approved project budget due to the strong competition for construction work in a prosperous economy. The project was revised and re-bid in Fall, 2014. The growth in students in these areas has placed even greater emphasis on the need to complete this project. It is expected to be ready for the fall 2016 semester.

MSU has the technological infrastructure to support its operations. Issuing notebook computers to all full-time residential students, the University became a notebook computer campus in 1997. In light of the strong increases in online delivery enrollment--445 students enrolled in online courses, and 107 are students working toward the completion of an online degree program in Fall, 2014--maintaining and growing the technological infrastructure has become even more important to the overall welfare of MSU. The university is currently developing a process by which students will be allowed to supply their own computers beginning in Fall, 2016.

Multiple technology collaborations within the North Dakota University System (NDUS) have generated significant savings for our small institution. MSU phone service is now provided in collaboration with other NDUS institutions. Collaboration with the System technology services provides the institution with a multi-campus learning management system (Moodle) and a 24/7 help desk to support the learning management system. Further collaboration with System technology services provides MSU with a Microsoft Campus agreement for faculty, staff, and students. The collaboration has decreased MSU's software costs from $94,835 per year in 2006-07 to $4,049 in 2014-15. The cost savings has allowed MSU to reinvest in new applications to serve students on-campus and on-line, as well as to upgrade all campus IT infrastructure to provide improved and secure services to faculty, staff, and students, including campus-wide wireless connectivity.

Elective resource allocation is controlled by the President's Cabinet, which consists of the President, Vice President for Business Affairs, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Vice President for Student Affairs, the Executive Foundation Director, and the Athletic Director. The Cabinet meets regularly and has input from all areas of campus, so that the educational purposes and the institutional priorities are considered at all times.

MSU's goals, incorporated into the mission statement, are realistic in light of its resources. The available fiscal and human resources allow class sizes to remain small (average size 14.8) and allow students to know the instructors (student/faculty ratio 13:1) and staff members, as well. The technology infrastructure and collaboration as mentioned above, allows the institution to operate with greater efficiency, and the instructors and staff to teach and work in an effective manner.

MSU's goals incorporated into the mission statement are realistic in light of its opportunities. Established by constitutional charter in 1889, MSU has always been recognized for teacher education, although existing fitness and wellness, business administration, sports management, early childhood education, as well as newly created nursing, and special education programs, are also popular. Distance learning has prospered. Distance education began for MSU with offering face-to-face early childhood classes at sites around North Dakota. This contributes to the institutional purposes of meeting workforce needs and contributing to individualized learning environments to meet the needs of the rural population of North Dakota. With Title III grant funding beginning in 2007, 148 courses and eight online programs were developed and are now available to students. The number of degree-seeking students has grown from 88 in 2007 to 236 in 2015, with fourteen programs now available.

Leadership programming has also become an opportunity for MSU. Students are actively encouraged to participate in everything from drama to music to varsity athletics. Opportunities exist for involvement in the Larson Leadership Program, an integrated leadership program designed to increase awareness of, and interest in, leadership and then encourage students to step into leadership positions on campus, within Mayville-Portland, and their respective home communities.

MSU staff, in all areas, are appropriately qualified. NDUS policy documents general qualifications for employment, and position specific qualifications are determined by supervisors. Every staff position has a specific job description in accordance with NDUS Broadbanding Policy, which is an approach to job classification and compensation that sets policy for staff qualifications by taking into consideration content and scope of the job, employee knowledge, skills and abilities, the job market, and employee performance. MSU procedures ensuring how appropriately qualified staff are hired, are outlined in position description instructions, job posting options, and staff interview procedures.

MSU staff in all areas, are appropriately trained through new employee orientation, on-campus activities, access to webinars, and attendance at conferences and workshops. New faculty and staff are given an employee handbook and attend a new employee orientation designed to assist in acclimation to campus and their position. NDUS mandated annual training includes code of conduct and fraud awareness. Faculty and staff attend fall pre-service training annually, with themes generated around important and/or ongoing institutional directions/goals/strategies. For example, Fall, 2014 pre-service training included sessions on diversity, and 2015 revolved around institutional strategic planning. Special event speakers are provided on campus based on institutional priorities with opportunities for faculty, staff, and student participation. Opportunities for additional professional development are offered and funded through departments and/or divisions. Employees are also given an employee tuition waiver to further their education.

SBHE Policy outlines Board, Chancellor, and institution President responsibilities for proper budget management and control, including annual and biennial budget preparation and monitoring. The Analysis of the 2013-15 Legislative Appropriations (see pages: 28, 39, 43, 56, 58, 60, 69, 76) provides NDUS Office, campus summary, and entity funding information, including MSU specific information for the current 2015-17 biennium.

MSU, as a part of the NDUS, operates on two budget cycles. Budget development processes are similar and include input driven by the strategic direction for the NDUS (Biennial Budget) and the campus, MSU (annual

budget).  Departments annually submit initial report requests addressing personnel, operating, and equipment needs to improve their operations. The input is grouped by the controller into program costs, and the President's Cabinet reviews the requests and, if approved, the department budget is increased. Following budget approval, reports (page 5) are prepared and provided to appropriate levels of oversight for review. Interim departmental budget change requests are processed through the department's respective Vice-President.

The institution has a well-developed process in place for monitoring expenses.  Monthly expenses are tracked and posted on the campus computer system by the controller. The posted documents are available to all departmental administrators to aid in monitoring their specific budget area. Required budget training is provided to ensure departments can access the computer system to monitor their budgets effectively. The controller position was added in 2006 to assist with these processes and issues authorization as necessary to ensure appropriate internal control and oversight.

**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**

The North Dakota State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) is the policy-setting and advocacy body for the North Dakota University System (NDUS) and the governing body for North Dakota's eleven publicly supported colleges and universities.  The SBHE has established policies, based on its authority granted by the North Dakota Constitution and the North Dakota Century Code, that define its legal and fiduciary responsibilities and establish its authority to oversee the University's financial and academic operations. The SBHE rotates its meeting location to remain knowledgeable and maintain relationships with each institution.  While on campus, SBHE members tour campus and get first-hand experience with the institution, its facilities, staff, students, and community stakeholders. The most recent SBHE meeting on campus of Mayville State University (MSU) occurred in November of 2013. The SBHE hired a new Chancellor who began his position July 1, 2015. The NDUS Chancellor visited MSU on September 25, 2015 to become both knowledgeable and responsive to MSU's financial and academic needs. The Chancellor's Cabinet provides a conduit from MSU to the SBHE regarding institutional matters. NDUS annually audits the financial situation to ensure that MSU remains in compliance with federal and state regulations. Academic Policies are monitored through program reviews scheduled every seven years on a rolling basis. MSU is following this program review schedule, with a similar system being developed to evaluate co-curricular activities.

Institutional authority for MSU is passed from the SBHE to the president. A committee structure is in place that allows for input from all constituents. MSU has created an institutional culture grounded in the principles of stakeholder involvement shared governance, and decision-making. This includes the adoption of a new Faculty Constitution in 1993, a revised Staff Constitution Fall, 2015, and Student Constitution update Spring, 2015. Students, faculty, staff, and members of the public have many opportunities to participate in defining the strategic direction of the University and in shaping decisions. MSU's culture is formalized through a well-

defined organizational structure and through a series of policies and processes that provide sustainable avenues for communication and collaboration. Faculty, staff, and students have regular and effective input through standing university committees, such as strategic planning, diversity, and technology planning.
MSU's organizational structure establishes clear lines of authority and reporting and formal relationships among individual employees and across units.  This structure, and the small campus size also encourage less formal communication to occur across organizational lines, especially through the school's long-established practice of engaging in collaborative planning and decision making through cross functional teams. For example, the MSU Policy Manual and the Faculty Constitution (pages 6-16) list the major, ongoing committees and teams, but other ad hoc committees and work groups are formed, as needed, to address specific policy matters and/or institutional activity.

The institution has established formal processes to enable faculty to take part in governance. The Faculty Handbook outlines the expectations for faculty participation in the life of the college. Staff have input through the Staff Association and its standing committees.

MSU students have many opportunities to get involved in the life of the university, through formal groups and organizations, including those that promote their academic interests (e.g. Science Club, DECA) and those that are more focused on shaping the culture of the school such as the Cometeers, who are student-led, and have a strong community service component. Students have a well-organized student government, the Mayville State Student Senate, who works with a faculty advisor and the Vice-President for Student Affairs to represent student interests on a variety of university matters.

The Curriculum Committee is the main group involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes. The Curriculum Committee is a Faculty Association committee with broad membership, consisting of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the chair of each of the divisions. The student body is represented by two students, nominated and elected by the Student Senate. The Registrar, Library Director, Chair of the Essential Studies Committee, and Director of Extended Learning are non-voting members. Their actions are reviewed and approved by the Faculty Senate and/or Association, as appropriate.


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.**

Following guidelines from the North Dakota University System (NDUS), the President is charged with responsibility for preparation and implementation of both short and long range plans related to institutional goals, academic

programs, teaching methodology, research, public service, and the development of the financial, human, and physical plant resources to accomplish State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) approved goals and objectives for the University.  The President is also charged with the preparation of the biennial and annual salary and general operating budgets and the presentation of these spending plans in compliance with the policies of the SBHE and the state of North Dakota. The President's Cabinet exists to enhance the ability of the President and cabinet members to lead more effectively in pursuing the mission and vision of Mayville State University (MSU). The President's Cabinet serves as the institution's official policy-making body, advisory to the President. It works closely with the President to develop and implement university-wide initiatives, assure that attention is given to short and long-term opportunities and issues, provide advice, ensure university decision-making through the benefits of collective experience and thought processes, and oversee the operation of the university. Institutional purposes, supported through resource allocations, include the Online Learning, Technology Planning, and Emerging Technologies Committees to support the application of information technologies to instruction and administration.

New offerings such as the RN to BSN and Special Education programs  address the institutional purposes of providing collaborative relationships with schools, employers, and communities that contribute to the economic growth and social vitality of North Dakota, and academic programs and services that address real-world career and North Dakota workforce opportunities. Of particular note, no other institution in the North Dakota University System currently offers a bachelor's degree in Special Education. Program delivery for each new program is a mix of distance education and campus offerings providing multiple platforms for student learning.

**5.C.2.**

The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting through the MSU Academic Assessment process. Each academic program, including Essential Studies, identifies student learning outcomes that are measured in course-embedded and non-course activities, along with progress made toward the achievement of the identified outcomes. The Director of Academic Assessment receives evaluation reports from each division and provides an executive summary used by the President's Cabinet for planning and budgeting purposes.

Another example of MSU's attention to integrated planning was the recent NCATE review which resulted in the Division of Education doing a thorough evaluation of how the unit met the Diversity Standard. This evaluation led to the planning and development of a Diversity Task Force, budget allocations specific to programming, and personnel changes across the institution. Based on this planning, courses were added, course content was enhanced and a student assessment data and analysis program was purchased and developed. This example demonstrates the universities attention to processes that connect student assessment and program standards, evaluation of operations, planning, and budgeting.

**5.C.3.**

Institutional planning occurs mainly through the President and the President's Cabinet, consistent with policy.  The Cabinet garners input from committees such as the Strategic Planning Committee and other groups outlined in the organizational chart. The current MSU strategic plan runs from 2009-2016 and has been revised in the last three years with new instructional strategies.  The plan identifies goals, outcomes, strategies for improvement and progress in areas such as recruiting and retention, physical facilities, marketing and communication, and alumni and community relations.

The SBHE adopted a new set of five-year goals and strategic plan and has mandated that all institutions revise or re-develop their own strategic plans to support the new SBHE goals. The goals include delivering degree programs that are the best value in the nation, providing programs people want, where and when they need them, equipping students for success, and maximizing the strengths of the unified system.  This includes examining retention and graduation rates, as part of the student success goal, which are currently below average at

MSU.  Part of the retention issue is being addressed by the first-year experience course that was developed through the Title III grant (page 8). It has become an institutional requirement for all incoming freshmen.  New, higher freshman admission standards have also been developed by the SBHE, which will go into effect starting Fall, 2016.  The standards generate a cut score for applicants.  Each level of institution (research, regional state which includes MSU, and community colleges) can automatically accept students that achieve its appropriate cut score.  Some students not meeting the score may be accepted if they meet additional criteria determined by the institution.  These new standards should provide a better prepared student.

MSU has begun to examine the variables that affect our campus, our dreams, and our resource realities. A comprehensive strategic planning process was developed ensuring MSU had a road map into the future, 2016 - 2020. The process encompasses MSU in its entirety, involves all of its stakeholders (internal and external), and is transparent in its communications and activities.

**5.C.4.**

Planning at MSU occurs with a sound understanding of current capacity and anticipation of the possible impacts of enrollment fluctuation, the state of North Dakota's economy, and state support.  North Dakota legislators reviewed projected tax revenues from oil extraction and in early February, 2015 revised their projections. These projections have forced the Governor to implement a 4.05% budget cut across all state agencies as of February 2, 2016. Ongoing concerns going forward include the NDUS mandated switch to a per credit tuition model and the impact of fluctuating oil prices on the state's economy and legislative funding decisions. These concerns are among the topics of planning discussions across campus.

**5.C.5.**

Institutional planning has considered emerging demographic shifts, technologies, and globalization.  According to data and predictions from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (pages 52-53) from January, 2013, North Dakota will see decreases in high school graduates through 2015 to a low of 6930 and then a gradual increase to 7950 through 2021. MSU utilizes such emerging data to plan recruitment, enrollment, and admission strategies.

Strategic planning goals (pages 3-4) include the development of additional online programs and courses to offset a potential decline in local students. Planning also addressed the need for an integrated marketing and communications focus to increase visibility and expansion of all degree programs to new markets.  MSU's Office of Extended Learning coordinates online program efforts. Residential student experiences are expected to improve with more and better engagement opportunities (pages 10-11) and improved campus physical facilities (pages 12-13). Improved levels of service (pages 14-16) for all students are expected.

Strong efforts have been made by MSU to leverage the power of multiple collaborations which have resulted in significant savings (page 19) and opportunities for students. For example the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN to BSN) and the Dakota Nursing Program/Lake Region State College (DNP/LRSC) programs are working to establish and strengthen collaborations. MSU provides pre-requisites for nursing, and hosts the DNP/LRSC nursing programs for LPN and ADN degrees. Both programs are proving to be popular with students as they meet rural community nursing needs.

MSU stays abreast of emerging technologies via the work of the Technology Planning (TPC) and Emerging Technologies (ETC) committees.  The first of these groups provides leadership for the development and integration of campus technology promoting the improvement of: instruction, communication, and academic and

administrative support. The TPC serves as an advisory committee to the CIO in regard to the MSU Technology Plan, equipment standards and acquisition, the MSU Web Site, and other technology issues. The ETC is an innovative "think tank" responsible for exploring emerging technologies that support the achievement of student learning outcomes and the delivery of course content. This committee also, when appropriate, collaborates with partners as new program initiatives and opportunities arise across the institution and NDUS.

**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**

Mayville State University (MSU) develops and documents evidence of performance and uses that information and experience to improve institutional effectiveness, capabilities, and sustainability in many ways.  The Director of Academic Assessment reports annually to Cabinet on findings (pages 4-16) aligned with actions for each division and for essential studies from the prior academic year. In 2013-2014, all divisions performed satisfactorily on measures designed to encourage program accountability. Dual credit sections were less likely to report academic results, and the creation of an "Adjunct Day" addresses this and other issues pertinent to those who are not full-time, on-site instructors.

The North Dakota University System (NDUS) mandates program reviews at least every seven years to assess the current level of program quality, the means to improve program quality, the relationship of the program to the mission of the institution, and program productivity.  Program reviews (pages 9-13) update the status of actions to remedy challenges suggested by consultants from prior review findings. The schedule for program review outlines the timing of participation for each major, minor associate degree, or certificate. A similar plan for co-curricular evaluation is in the development stages. Additionally, MSU prepared and successfully received NCATE accreditation and underwent an on-site accreditation visit November 16-18, 2015 with the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). The final report from the evaluation team reflected that the program had met all accreditation standards and there were no identified compliance concerns for any of the key elements within each standard. The CCNE Board of Commissioners will communicate the final accreditation decision early in May, 2016.

MSU relies on a number of professionally and locally developed surveys to document operational performance. In 2014, MSU began administering a common survey to graduates from 2011-2013 to demonstrate how graduates perceived that the institution prepared them to meet or accomplish specific student learning outcomes that were part of the institutional assessment plan, as well as their satisfaction levels with their student experiences. Findings were largely favorable. Areas of strength included the development of commitment to lifelong learning, the development of oral communication skills, and the ability to identify, access, and utilize information from a variety of sources to solve problems. Noted challenges included comprehending and understanding cultures and the physical and natural world, reading skills that allow for understanding professional literature in the chosen field of study, and understanding complex global challenges and applying learning to take responsible action in contemporary global contexts. MSU developed a comprehensive diversity plan which should address a number of these challenges.

The National Survey for Student Engagement (NSSE) is administered biannually to freshmen and seniors. The most recent administration identified relative strengths in overall satisfaction with the college experience as compared to national norms.  Perceived levels of academic challenge and learning with peers were viewed as relative

challenges. Divisions incorporate NSSE results into action plans (page 2) as part of the campus academic assessment process.

General strengths identified by the 2012 Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) included academic advising, small class sizes, campus safety, knowledge and availability of faculty, and improvements in campus physical facilities.  Noted challenges included the variety of courses offered, the quality of instruction, faculty feedback on student progress, living conditions in residence halls and availability of financial aid, and commitment to academic excellence.  Re-energized academic assessment efforts, residence hall renovation, and the transformation of scholarships and the Foundation Office addressed some of these weaknesses.

A campus quality survey administered, collected information from employees in 2010 and 2012 that pertained to how well employees worked together using practices, procedures, and attitudes relating to continuous quality improvement.  The highest-rated programs, services, or activities included the library and learning resources, communications with legislators and other politicians, and bookstore, human resource, and student admission and registration services. Rated lowest was security and police services. Additions to the Institutional Strategic Plan (page 13) help to address this issue.

The Noel-Levitz Priority Survey of Online Learners (PSOL) was given to distance students in 2008, 2010, and 2012.  The 2012 instrument noted the convenience of online course registration, convenience of billing and payment, clear definition of student assignments, quickness of response to information requests, helpfulness of university staff, and meeting the expected needs by Moodle and other technology requirements as positives.  Timely feedback from faculty and quality of online instruction were viewed as issues needing improvement.

Numerous operational improvements identified in the Title III grant (page 10) included the development of distance learning, including course development and support services, increases in enrollment, the creation of the campus Writing Center, and the reinstatement of the Grants Office.

MSU established the Online Learning Committee (OLC) tasked to improve guiding principles for online education. Its early work focused on strengthening the online course development process by refining the course development rubric.

A more recent initiative of the OLC was to look at online course and program quality in the institution's adoption of the Online Learning Consortium's Quality Scorecard.  This nationally-recognized self-assessment tool identifies program strengths and weaknesses, and supports improvement and strategic planning initiatives. Initial rankings identified teaching and learning, technology support, and course structure as strong categories, and evaluation and assessment as an area needing work. Early efforts to address Scorecard findings include creating the Emerging Technologies and Learner Accessibility Committees. OLC's plan will be integrated into the institution's strategic plan set for release Fall of 2016.

MSU has seen a dramatic reversal of fortunes in the last eight years; from a nearly million dollar deficit in local funds to a $1.5 million dollar institutional reserve fund; from relatively stagnant to record-setting enrollment. This has been the result of re-commitment to our core identity of providing quality personal service to all constituents, implementation of new programs, and delivery methods to meet needs of our students and prospective students wherever they might be. MSU works hard to be as affordable for students as possible.  The bookstore offers used texts, e-texts, and rental books.  The use of these items helped to save students over $112,000. Mayville State has been recognized by various organizations.  Recently MSU was identified as one of the thirty most attractive, yet affordable, colleges by Affordable Schools.net.  MSU is one of 159 colleges that The Princeton Review has chosen for the "Best in the Midwest" section of their website feature, "*2015 Best Colleges: Region by Region*".  Affordable Colleges Online analyzed data from hundreds of colleges with online teaching programs. The goal was to see which schools offer the best combination of online program quality, affordability, and student support. Mayville State University earned a place on the list of the Best Online Teaching Degrees in 2015.