1. How does your organization currently demonstrate that it meets each of the Higher Learning Commission’s five *Criteria for Accreditation*?

**Criterion One: Mission and Integrity**

*The organization operates with integrity to ensure the fulfillment of its mission through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.*

**Core Component 1a: The organization’s mission documents are clear and articulate publicly the organization’s commitments.**

- UMC’s mission statement is periodically reviewed and was last revised and adopted by the University of Minnesota Board of Regents in May 2007. The Mission Statement was reviewed with various campus-wide input. The UMC mission, vision, and core values are clearly presented on the [UMC website](http://www.umn.edu) and on posters around campus.
- The mission statement clearly identifies UMC’s unique contributions to higher education through providing applied, career-oriented learning programs that combine theory, practice, and experimentation in a technologically rich environment.
- The UMC vision associated with the mission was developed by the Strategic Positioning Committee in 2006 and is found in its report.

**Core Component 1b: In its mission documents, the organization recognizes the diversity of its learners, other constituencies, and the greater society it serves.**

- One of UMC’s vision statements is to provide a “global and diverse cultural experience”.
- One of the core values is diversity: Respecting differences in ideas and community.
- As a result of UMC’s growing awareness of the importance of a diverse learning community, UMC has made a concerted effort to increase the demographic makeup of both faculty and students. Ten to fifteen years ago most students were from a 150 mile radius of Crookston and had similar backgrounds. Now over 8% of UMC students are students of color, and an additional 8% are international students.
- Faculty and staff diversity has also increased. Over 10% of the Faculty Assembly members are international.

**Core Component 1c: Understanding of and support for the mission pervade the organization**

- The annual university-wide planning and budget process center on the mission and how proposals for new funding fit the unit’s mission.
- The 2006 Strategic Positioning Committee focused on the UMC mission.
- The 2007 process to revise the UMC mission provided numerous opportunities for discussion and input.
- The 2010 UMC strategic positioning process centers on the UMC mission.
- Every new academic program or significant change in an academic program is required to address how the change fits with the UMC mission. As a result, everyone working on or reviewing these changes is very aware of the UMC mission.
Core Component 1d: The organization’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the organization to fulfill its mission.

- Administratively, UMC reports to the University of Minnesota Board of Regents, President, and Senior Vice President for System Academic Administration
- The campus is led by the Chancellor and Executive Committee. This committee includes vice chancellors, directors, academic department heads, and a faculty representative. This broad representation encourages collaboration and communication between units on campus.
- The primary governance structures include Campus Assembly, Faculty Assembly, Staff Executive Committee, and Crookston Student Association.
  - **The Campus Assembly** includes faculty, staff, and students. It provides an opportunity for exchange of information and ideas throughout the campus.
  - **The Faculty Assembly** along with its standing committees reviews and examines academic items such as curriculum, new programs, academic standards, promotions, and tenure.
  - The Faculty Consultative Committee consisting of Faculty Assembly officers along with committee chairs meets regularly with administration and serves as a liaison between faculty and administration.
  - The Crookston Student Association (CSA) is the governing organization for the student body. It serves to address student ideas and concerns along with acting as a liaison between students, administration, faculty, and staff. In addition, it provides organization to the many student clubs on campus since each club needs to be approved by the CSA and each club has a representation on the CSA full board.
- There is interaction and collaboration between these organizations since the CSA president attends and reports at the Faculty Assembly and the Campus Assembly. The CSA has faculty and staff advisors who also assist with collaborative efforts.

Core Component 1e: The organization upholds and protects its integrity.

- UMC follows all University policies involving a variety of topics including Academic Freedom and Responsibility, Student Conduct Code, Openness in Research, etc. There has been a major effort during the past year to update and organize those policies. They are now located in a University-wide policy library.
- UMC has its own set of policies related to the campus. These are available in a campus policy library.
- The University of Minnesota General Legal Counsel advises the campus on all legal issues.
- Grievance procedures are in place and followed carefully. Any concerns are investigated thoroughly.
- One measure of the external reputation UMC holds is that *U. S. News and World Report* has ranked UMC in the top four in public baccalaureate colleges in the Midwest for twelve consecutive years.

Criterion Two: Preparing for the Future

*The organization’s allocation of resources and its processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate its capacity to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.*

Core Component 2a: The organization realistically prepares for a future shaped by multiple societal and economic trends.

- One recommendation in the 2006 Strategic Positioning Report was to internationalize the campus. Recommendations from that report include:
  - “An undergraduate student body with more international students” – The campus has now increased so that between 8 and 10% of the total student body consists of international students.
o “Higher study abroad participation” – Study abroad trips are conducted by UMC each year to China and Norway. UMC students are also taking advantage of other study abroad opportunities. The number of UMC students going on a study abroad trip has increased from 7 in 2006-07 to 44 this year.
o “New faculty with international experiences and multicultural perspectives” – 10% of all the faculty are from other countries.
o “All faculty acquiring international professional development experiences” – Over 30 UMC faculty/staff have travelled on an international trip associated with UMC (teaching, recruiting students, leading study abroad group, etc.)

- There is continued emphasis in both the 2006 and 2010 strategic positioning processes on the effective use of technology in teaching along with providing all students with a strong background in technology.
- As a result of the 2006 Strategic Positioning Committee recommendation to reposition and re-brand:
o Two year programs have been phased out.
o In the mission statement, the term “polytechnic” has been changed to “applied, career-oriented”
- In response to the 2006 Strategic Positioning Committee recommendation to recruit and retain:
o The 4 year graduation rate which had been ranging between 20 and 25% for the past five years increased to over 38% for the most recent class.
o The number of online students increased from 78 in spring 2006 to 269 in spring 2010 which was a 245% increase.
o The number of degree seeking students increased from 951 in spring 2007 to 1264 in spring 2010 which was a 33% increase.
- Present economic trends have resulted in substantial reductions in state allocations along with corresponding increases in student tuition. Extensive long range planning efforts with a variety of opportunities for input at both the campus and all University levels have dealt with the budget situation.

Core Component 2b: The organization’s resource base supports its educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

- In spite of budget cuts, UMC has set a priority of maintaining the students’ academic experience and directed funding to achieve that goal. For example, for the 2010-11 academic year, UMC has hired 5 new tenure track and 4 new lecturer faculty members to fill new and existing positions.
- A significant part of the 2010 strategic positioning process has been to examine all areas ranging from energy efficiency in buildings to curriculum efficiencies in course and program offerings for improved efficiency.
- A sophisticated budget forecasting tool has been developed to look at long term (10 years in the future) budget implications for proposed changes such as creating new degree programs or discontinuing existing degrees.
- Many of the goals and changes recommended in the 2006 planning process have been achieved. These include:
o Review of mission
o Repositioning and re-branding
o Increased student enrollment through better recruitment and increased retention
o Carefully selected new programs which are consistent with the mission
o Internationalizing the campus
- Each year UMC participates in the University Compact process which combines planning, goals, and strategies with budget requests. This process links the UMC strategic plan, the all University goals, UMC objectives, and budget requests.

Core Component 2c: The organization’s ongoing evaluation and assessment processes provide reliable evidence of institutional effectiveness that clearly informs strategies for continuous improvement.
• All academic programs are evaluated every three years through the program review process.
• All degree programs are evaluated by Program Improvement Audit Committees (PIAC) comprised of external persons with expertise in the subject matter.
• The University has a system-wide office of Institutional Research which maintains a wide variety of student and campus data.
• The University also has an office of Planning and Analysis which is developing campus and University dashboard statistics.
• UMC also has an office of Institutional Research which maintains a wide variety of student and campus data.
• UMC has the expertise to combine data from a variety of sources including the university data warehouse, perform a variety of statistical analysis, and use the results in campus decision making.
• A budget model has been developed to allow analysis of long term (10 year) budget implications of proposed changes.
• Employees in administrative and executive classifications are reviewed at least every 5 years. Staff members are reviewed annually.
• Tenure track faculty members are reviewed annually.
• A new process has just been approved for regular review of tenured faculty as well as adjunct faculty.
• Employer surveys are used to measure satisfaction with UMC graduates.
• Student surveys are conducted on a regular basis.
• All sections of every course are evaluated by students.
• An Online Quality Assurance Committee reviews and recommends standards for quality course design and teaching methods in online courses.
• The faculty led Assessment Committee addresses academic and institutional assessment methods and processes.

Core Component 2d: All levels of planning align with the organization’s mission, thereby enhancing its capacity to fulfill that mission.

• The Strategic Positioning Task Force in 2006 included UMC faculty, staff, and students as well as representatives from the Twin Cities campus and the community. This task force centered on the UMC mission and vision and developed a series of recommended changes. This report has been used as a guideline, and many of the recommended changes have been accomplished over the last four years.
• The 2010 Strategic Positioning Committee is discussing new challenges and opportunities along with budget issues.
• The University Compact is an agreement between UMC and the University. It starts with the UMC mission and contains budgetary requests, justifications, and background information along with reports on the progress of projects authorized in previous compacts. This process provides integration of strategic positioning recommendations and budgeting plans.
• The UMC vision and core values associated with the mission stress excellence, diversity, global experiences, leadership, and technology applications with a learner centered approach.
• The annual Executive Committee Planning Retreat utilizes the UMC mission in planning priorities for the year.

Criterion Three: Student Learning and Effective Teaching

The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

Core Component 3a: The organization’s goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.

• Institutional core competencies are clearly stated.
• For liberal education learner outcomes, UMC follows the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum which has learner outcomes established for each goal area.
• Program outcomes are identified for each program.
• Course learner outcomes are developed for each course. UMC Faculty Assembly passed a policy for developing and approving course outcomes so that each course has a consistent set of learner outcomes regardless of the instructor.
• All the learner outcomes listed above can be tracked using The Electronic Assessment Management System (TEAMS) which is a web-based database-driven system developed at UMC.
• For each program, TEAMS can track evidence for completion of institutional core competencies along with program, course, and liberal education learner outcomes.
• TEAMS can also track levels of learner outcomes using Bloom’s Taxonomy and six levels of learning.
• In addition, TEAMS can document and summarize use of formative and summative assessment techniques along with faculty use of assessment results to improve student learning in specific courses.
• In the past, TEAMS and the syllabus manager (which provided archival copies of syllabi) were separate applications. Work is now underway to integrate the syllabus within TEAMS. This will allow more efficient development of course syllabi and save reentering course learner outcomes separately in TEAMS.
• The UMC Assessment Committee is a standing committee of the Faculty Assembly with the duties:
  o To review and advise the office of the VCAA on UMC's Assessment Plan.
  o To work towards continuous process improvement in implementing UMC's Assessment Plan.
  o To encourage regular review of course and program learner outcomes.
  o To evaluate and advise on technical solutions to assessment issues.
  o To promote professional development opportunities related to assessment.

Core Component 3b: The organization values and supports effective teaching.

• There are all University awards recognizing outstanding teaching and advising (Morse Award for distinguished faculty and John Tate Award for advising). UMC has recipients of both.
• Each year a UMC distinguished faculty member is selected and recognized with a plaque and cash award. Teaching effectiveness is the most important criteria for this award.
• Each year students select and recognize faculty members for Outstanding Educator, Most Supportive of Students, and Most Innovative Use of Technology.
• UMC has adopted the University of Minnesota Student Rating of Teaching form for student evaluations of courses. Use of this form will allow comparisons between similar courses within the campus and throughout the University.
• The Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology provides faculty support for both use of technology and other methodologies in teaching. This Center works with the Twin Cities Center for Teaching and Learning along with the Digital Media Center in providing faculty training and workshops.

Core Component 3c: The organization creates effective learning environments.

• Since UMC began issuing laptop computers to students in 1993, the infrastructure has matured into a technology-friendly environment that includes a projector, digital camera, and internet access in all classrooms. Wireless Internet access is also available throughout the campus.
• A choice of learning management systems (WebVista or Moodle) allows use of technology in providing an effective learning environment.
• The UMC Library provides a quiet environment for faculty, staff, and students seven days a week for study and research.
• A new high end computer laboratory is in the process of being developed with equipment ordered. This will provide access to high end computer applications such as GIS, medical informatics, etc.
• Over the past couple of years there has been a committee actively looking at effective advising, conducting workshops, and writing an advising manual.
• There are extensive and sophisticated online advising tools to help both students and advisors. These include Academic Progress Audit System (APAS) which lists graduation requirements that have been completed along with those left to complete and Grad Planner which allows students to plan their future courses by semester to meet graduation requirements.
• Service learning continues to be an important part of the UMC experience. A number of classes incorporate service learning projects.
• All clubs on campus are required to do at least two community service projects each semester, and all freshmen are required to do service within the Crookston community.
• The Office for Students with Disabilities continues to provide and arrange for adaptations to the normal learning environment required by students with a wide variety of disabilities.
• UMC continues to receive federal funding from TRIO which provides extra support for students with disadvantaged backgrounds.
• The Academic Assistance Center provides help to students in need of tutoring, counseling, and also houses the UMC Writing Center. Both tutoring and writing assistance are widely used by students and are important to student success.
• Student research is integrated in the learning environment. Funding is provided both by the all University Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP) and the campus Undergraduate Research Opportunities Crookston (UROC) program.
• NSSE survey indicates UMC rates higher by both freshmen and seniors than its peers in providing a supporting environment.
• A variety of collaborations with the Northwest Research and Outreach Center include sharing of faculty and facilities. These provide expanded opportunities for students.
• Development of National Society of Leadership and Success chapter on campus (Sigma Alpha Pi).
• An honors program has been established on campus to further develop student leadership, international experiences, and critical thinking.
• Residence halls have created enrichment opportunities for student growth and development. Examples include living and learning environments, diversity programming, wellness, civic engagement, and so forth.

Core Component 3d: The organization’s learning resources support student learning and effective teaching.

• There are extensive online library resources and databases available to faculty, staff, and students both on campus and remotely. All University of Minnesota libraries are on a common system which improves collaboration and sharing of resources. Interlibrary loans are also easily and quickly available at no charge.
• The Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology provides support to faculty for both teaching methodologies and use of technology in teaching.
• The Computer Help Desk provides technology support to both students and faculty.
• Classrooms continue to be upgraded with new furniture and specialized technology (such as interactive white boards) as determined by the faculty primarily using the room.
• A new classroom designed around collaborative learning was built as part of a new residence hall. This room was designed by faculty and incorporates special features such as multiple projectors, a white board for each table and so forth.
• Science laboratories received a major renovation and redesign over the past 3 years.
• Ordering new science equipment has been possible over the last few years both through targeted equipment funds as well as a significant increase to the supplies, expense and equipment budget.
• A major renovation of two old laboratories into state of the art laboratories has been funded and planning is in process.
• The Media Services Department provides faculty support for use of multimedia in teaching including video, audio, projectors, etc.
• UMC serves as a regional hub for the state’s interactive television network which provides two way audio and video connections to colleges and high schools throughout the state. An example of the use of this technology is a set of Agricultural Education classes taken concurrently by students at both the
St. Paul and Crookston campuses. In an effort to conserve resources and time, the network is also increasingly used to facilitate meetings between UMC groups and others around the region.

**Criterion Four: Acquisition, Discovery, and Application of Knowledge**

*The organization promotes a life of learning for its faculty, administration, staff, and students by fostering and supporting inquiry, creativity, practice, and social responsibility in ways consistent with its mission.*

**Core Component 4a:** The organization demonstrates, through the actions of its board, administrators, students, faculty, and staff, that it values a life of learning.

- In spite of substantial budget reductions, UMC continues to provide funding at both the campus and department levels for faculty professional development encouraging faculty to attend professional meetings and workshops.
- There are an increasing number of faculty publications and presentations.
- There are a variety of professional development opportunities provided on campus.
- Student undergraduate research projects are recognized at a campus poster fair.
- There is an increasing emphasis on both discipline related research and also research related to the scholarship of teaching which is frequently used directly to improve teaching on campus.
- UMC is covered by all University policies related to academic freedom and freedom of inquiry.
- Scholarships are provided to faculty and staff to continue their education.

**Core Component 4b:** The organization demonstrates that acquisition of a breadth of knowledge and skills and the exercise of intellectual inquiry are integral to its educational programs.

- For its liberal education goals, UMC follows the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum which includes ten liberal education goals areas and learner outcomes associated with each. This provides consistency throughout the state of Minnesota.
- Learner outcomes are tracked for each program using the locally developed TEAMS program.
- In addition to the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum, UMC has three core components of communication, critical thinking, and working with others each including related subareas. These are also tracked for each program using TEAMS.
- Undergraduate research is integrated into the student experience. Funding for projects is provided by the University wide Undergraduate Research Opportunities (UROP) and Undergraduate Research Opportunities Crookston (UROC). Each year there are a growing number of both UROP and UROC projects on campus.
- The wide variety of discipline related clubs provide an opportunity for students to develop leadership skills.
- Social responsibility is developed through a wide range of community service learning projects incorporated within classes and required of all clubs on campus.

**Core Component 4c:** The organization assesses the usefulness of its curricula to students who will live and work in a global, diverse, and technological society.

- All academic programs are reviewed annually by the Program Improvement Advisory Committees (PIAC). These include employers, alumni, students, and faculty.
- All academic programs are reviewed extensively every three years.
- All academic programs have learning outcomes which are reviewed annually by the PIACs for relevance and importance.
- Internships, which are required for all programs on campus, provide students with an opportunity to apply and use what they have learned in classes.
For liberal education, UMC follows the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum which has ten goal areas each with associated learning outcomes. One of these goals areas is human diversity and a second is global perspective.

UMC has a Diversity and Multicultural Programs office which has the mission and roles:
  o The University of Minnesota, Crookston Diversity Programs is committed to fostering a campus environment of inclusion, knowledge, and understanding in which faculty, staff, and students learn to value diversity and to respect individual differences that enrich the University community.
  o A wide variety of diversity oriented programs are provided on campus.

The use of technology is integrated throughout the campus with every student and faculty member having a laptop computer. Full technology services are provided on campus.

Core Component 4d: The organization provides support to ensure that faculty, students, and staff acquire, discover, and apply knowledge responsibly.

- All grants are approved by the University Sponsored Projects Administration (SPA).
- All grant Principal Investigators (PIs) are required to complete training before receiving a grant. This training includes a variety of topics such as social responsibility, fiscal responsibility, data management, conflict of interest, intellectual property, reporting misconduct, etc. Student research assistants are also required to complete appropriate training.
- UMC is covered by a range of University policies including areas such as ethical conduct, intellectual property rights, etc.
- UMC also has a series of campus policies pertaining to responsible acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge.
- Social responsibility is encouraged by a wide variety of community service projects both incorporated within classes and by all clubs on campus.
- A variety of workshops are provided using the expertise of the University of Minnesota system. For example, an attorney will be presenting a session in the near future on copyright issues.

Criterion Five: Engagement and Service.

As called for by its mission, the organization identifies its constituencies and serves them in ways both value.

Core Component 5a: The organization learns from the constituencies it serves and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations.

- Program Improvement Advisory Committees (PIACs) consist of employers, alumni, citizens, students, faculty and staff.
- The all campus Advisory Committee provides input for campus priorities.
- Each program PIAC evaluates curriculum and program learner outcomes providing directions and improvements for the program.
- Student surveys of regional high school students along with UMC students provided input on new program development. As a result, new programs in biology, psychology, criminal justice and environmental science have been added. In addition, based on student interest, UMC has obtained institutional approval to offer teacher licensure degrees and is in the process of considering expansion of the present birth through grade 3 program to include other programs in education.
- The NSSE student survey provides comparisons between student views on the educational experience at UMC with other peer institutions.
- The UMC Student Experience Survey includes a variety of questions including a range of student experiences, quality of instruction and advising, effectiveness of student services, and overall experiences at UMC.
- Every two years employers of UMC graduates are surveyed and assembled for a focus group to assess and advise regarding matters of UMC graduates.
A variety of student surveys are conducted. Examples include student activities, food service, educational technology, sustainability, graduation, and so forth.

Core Component 5b: The organization has the capacity and the commitment to engage with its identified constituencies and communities.

- UMC is a member of Minnesota Campus Compact which leverages the assets of higher education institutions in partnerships with communities to educate students and develop creative solutions to society's most pressing issues.
- UMC’s Service Learning Office coordinates service learning projects throughout the community with UMC clubs and classes.
- UMC maintains a city wide volunteer clearinghouse to match volunteers with community needs.
- UMC houses and manages grants for the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP).
- The Minnesota Rural Health Association office is on campus.
- The campus serves as a co-location of the Extension Regional Center, Northwest Regional Outreach Center, Agricultural Utilization Research Institute, and Northwest Regional Sustainable Development Partnership. There are a variety of collaborative projects between UMC and each of these groups.
- Faculty and staff provide a variety of services to groups and businesses in the community. Examples include tax assistance, small business development, marketing, economic development, educational programs for P-12 schools, and so forth.

Core Component 5c: The organization demonstrates its responsiveness to those constituencies that depend on it for service.

- There are a number of UMC classes that incorporate service learning projects as part of the class requirements.
- Service learning projects are included in the student first year experience.
- All student clubs are required to perform at least two service learning projects each semester.
- UMC has an active chapter of Students Today Leaders Forever which provides leadership and service oriented alternative spring break opportunities.
- UMC has collaborative relationships with a number of regional high schools offering college class in the high schools. The cooperating teachers come to UMC for workshops, and UMC faculty visit the high schools.
- UMC has established a number of 2+2 articulation agreements with two year colleges throughout the state along with one in China.
- UMC has adopted transfer friendly policies accepting credits from all accredited higher education institutions.
- The Crookston Students for Sustainable Development (CSSD) is commissioned by the Crookston Student Association (CSA) and serves as the student group for exploration, research and collaborative conception of a number of sustainability initiatives for the campus and community.

Core Component 5d: Internal and external constituencies value the services the organization provides.

- UMC’s international dinner series is widely attended by members of the Crookston community and is usually sold out with around 200 people attending each one. These are produced by UMC international students and give the Crookston community an introduction to foods and culture from different parts of the world.
- For the past two years, UMC has planned and organized a Cinco de Mayo celebration providing an introduction to Mexican culture to the Crookston community. It has had over 500 people attending each year.
- There are a number of high school events held at UMC such as Knowledge Bowl, regional FFA, regional athletic tournaments, and so forth.
- UMC has established a Center for Sustainability which serves the region.
• A wide variety of summer camps are offered on the UMC campus for high school students. Examples include computer game design, robotics, river watch, equestrian, science discovery, Rotary Youth Leadership, and so forth.
• UMC has just been named to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll which is the highest federal recognition a college or university can receive for its commitment to volunteering, service-learning, and civic engagement.
• The UMC is home to the Economic Development Advancement Section II, there were four general areas where the team made recommendations. The report of the Commission’s last comprehensive evaluation visit on April 24-26, 2006, indicated that each Criterion was met and that no Commission follow-up was recommended; however, in the progress on three of these areas is listed below. The fourth is still actively being addressed and progress is summarized in part 2B of this question.

2A. Through what specific actions has your organization demonstrated its responsiveness to the Commission in addressing specific accreditation concerns or challenges identified by the Commission’s last comprehensive evaluation?

The first of these areas dealt with distance learning and online programs. UMC has committed time, development, and support activities for online enrollment growth and online student services while providing the desired level of exceptional student experience combined with academic course quality. The review team recommended that the Center for Adult Learning (CAL) develop course development standards and processes to assure that the level of quality is consistent so that UMC can continue to be recognized as a leader in online education. CAL in collaboration with the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology and Academic Departments created such an entity through what is known as the Online Quality Assurance Committee. The Online Quality Assurance Committee follows the Higher Learning Commission’s (HLC’s) Best Practices for electronically delivered degrees and consists of faculty and staff from administration; The Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology; each Academic Department; and the Center for Adult Learning.

Regarding procedures related to course development, The Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology assists with instructional design in cooperation with Academic Departments and Media Services for technology/graphics to work with faculty members to produce online courses. UMC’s Online Quality Assurance Committee provides direction for course development, ensures course quality, and oversees a faculty peer-to-peer course review as a part of the online course development.

Related to service scalability, in 2009 CAL was awarded the University of Minnesota Digital Campus Calling Center (DC). The Center for Adult Learning Digital Campus Calling Center, by adding staff in addition to UMC’s Admission Office, continues to compliment the 24/7 student support services specific to online learners and the growth within the University of Minnesota, Crookston. Within the University of Minnesota system, a Constituent Relationship Management (CRM) is under review for implementation. The University is especially interested in understanding how the CRM solutions can meet the needs identified to serve all students; traditional, virtual and distance through implementation of higher education best practices.

The second of these areas dealt with resource development. Over the last four years the University of Minnesota, Crookston Office of Development & Alumni Relations has remained highly stable, proactive, engaged, ambitious, and successful in fundraising efforts. The U of M, Crookston has a unified vision with the University of Minnesota Foundation and partnership with the U of M Foundation peers is stronger than ever before. UMC’s top strategic fundraising initiatives are increased scholarship support, a new Gateway/Wellness Center, and athletic support.

The position of director of athletic fundraising is housed under the Development & Alumni Relations Office and works in collaboration with the Director of Development and the Athletics Department. The UMC Development & Alumni Relations Office confidently anticipates fiscal year 2010 (July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010) generating total commitments of nearly $700,000 and total gifts of approximately $500,000.
(these two numbers include both athletic & non-athletic support). The total commitments this year will be the largest in six years.

The third of these areas dealt with stabilizing personnel. At the time of our site visit in 2006, for various reasons there were a number of interim appointments within the administrative structure. Since then, the UMC administrative team has stabilized. At this point, all positions on the Executive Committee are filled with regular appointments and there are no longer any acting or interim appointments for anyone on that committee.

2B. **What specific actions or activities are you planning to take in order to address any accreditation concerns or challenges from the Commission’s last comprehensive evaluation that are still active issues?**

There are no concerns or challenges from the Commission’s last comprehensive evaluation that are active.

In the Advancement Section II, we are still actively responding to the recommendations in the team report that involve assessment. At this point there continue to be improvements in the processes and electronic system that UMC has developed TEAMS to collect and analyze data. The UMC Faculty Assembly has adopted a process to develop and approve course learner outcomes to ensure that the outcomes are appropriate and that all sections (regardless of instructor) use the same learner outcomes. The reporting and analysis parts of TEAMS continue to be enhanced. In addition, development is now underway to integrate the syllabus archival system with TEAMS to allow easy development of syllabi and automatic transfer of learner outcomes from syllabi to TEAMS.

3. **Why does your institution wish to participate in AQIP? What benefits do you hope to gain as a consequence of participating?**

Over recent years, UMC has had a strong interest in further developing a Continuous Quality Improvement model to assist with implementing strategic positioning committee recommendations and making campus improvements. Participating in AQIP will provide us with a better set of resources and models as we improve and refine our quality improvement methods and action projects. During recent years, through our various planning processes, UMC has identified projects that need to be accomplished; however, using the AQIP action project resources and models will help refine the structures for accomplishing such projects along with documenting and measuring the success.

In addition, UMC has an interest and has been moving toward better use of metrics and analytics in decision making. The University is in the process of establishing a metrics framework which includes development of strategies to meet each goal, key indicators for each strategy, and measures for each key indicator. Some of these are University wide and some are campus specific. Throughout this process, there is a significant move toward evidence based decision making. We believe that the AQIP methods fit comfortably with UMC’s framework for better developing an evidence-based decision making process.

4. **Since broad understanding of, support for, and commitment to a continuous improvement approach and AQIP are essential for their success, what is the current level and extent of these elements in your organization? What is the evidence that key groups in your organization (e.g., Board, CEO, senior leaders, faculty, and staff) understand the nature of continuous improvement efforts and the demands of AQIP?**

Although UMC had interest and some earlier involvement in quality improvements methods, the campus did not actively begin considering AQIP until immediately after the last comprehensive evaluation in 2006. At that time UMC decided to develop a thorough process for helping to determine whether AQIP would be appropriate for the campus.

One part of that process was to have a variety of faculty/administration attend the AQIP Colloquium which precedes the annual meeting. In 2007, two faculty members attended, two additional faculty members
attended in 2009, and three in 2010. This has provided a core of people from different areas across campus with a basic knowledge and understanding of AQIP.

A second part of the process was to gather input from other AQIP institutions. In the winter of 2009, UMC invited guests from other AQIP institutions to visit UMC to discuss AQIP. UMC has identified a group of peer institutions, two of which have been part of AQIP for a number of years. We invited the following to campus:

1. The Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Director of Assessment from Dakota State University
2. The Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs at the University of Wisconsin-Stout

Each person spent a day presenting a summary of experiences with AQIP to the following:

1. The campus as a whole
2. The UMC Executive Committee (consisting of the Chancellor, vice-chancellors, and campus leadership)
3. The steering committee UMC established to consider AQIP

A third part of the process was to have a series of presentations and discussions during the 2009-10 academic year to various groups on campus, including:

1. The campus Executive Committee
2. Each academic department
3. The student affairs directors and other leaders
4. The Faculty Consultative Committee
5. The Faculty Assembly
6. The Campus Assembly (which includes faculty, staff, and representative students)

In addition, AQIP was discussed briefly at several Crookston Student Association meetings to begin developing an awareness of AQIP on the part of students.

As a result of this process, there is strong support from all parts of the campus including the Executive Committee and Faculty Assembly both of which strongly support UMC’s application to AQIP.

Concurrently with our exploration of AQIP, we have also been developing our knowledge and use of continuous quality improvement methods. Over the last five years, UMC has been actively involved with the University of Minnesota Office of Service and Continuous Improvement (OSCI). This group has regular meetings which a UMC faculty member attends. These meetings have included a variety of presentations involving topics such as the following:

1. Lean and Kaizen methods
2. Using Baldrige Criteria in education and the Minnesota Quality Council
3. Quality improvement projects at companies such as 3M and health care organizations
4. Quality improvement at other educational institutions including University of Wisconsin and Rochester Community and Technical College
5. Data driven decision making
6. A variety of Quality Improvement action projects within the University of Minnesota

In addition, OSCI has an annual Quality Fair which includes a variety of internal and external speakers along with posters describing quality improvement projects. UMC has been actively involved with the Quality Fair:

- Each year a number of faculty/staff attend (in 2010 eight UMC people attended).
• Each year we have 1 or 2 posters describing UMC quality improvement projects selected to display.
• Twice UMC has had posters win an award.
• In addition, twice UMC has been awarded Service and Process Improvement grants from OSCI for quality improvement projects.

In order to provide a broader understanding of quality improvement methods across campus, a quality improvement workshop is scheduled on campus for Aug. 4, 2010. This is being presented by a person from Minneapolis with wide experience and background in quality improvement from both the business and educational perspective.

Along with the explorations involving AQIP and quality improvement, UMC has been gradually developing abilities to use metrics and analysis to drive decision making. The University of Minnesota has a data warehouse with a wide variety of data. UMC is developing capabilities to download data from various parts of the data warehouse, to combine that data with local data, and to analyze the results using SAS and JMP for analysis and manipulation. A good example of UMC’s use of metrics is in the area admissions. For marginal students, UMC developed a conditional admission program to provide extra support for high risk students. In analyzing the success of that program, UMC discovered that the conditionally admitted students had better success than those with slightly higher ACT scores which were regularly admitted. As a result, the UMC Admission Committee changed its practices to conditionally admit all students with a composite ACT of 20 or less.

The University of Minnesota is significantly expanding its interest in and use of analytics. A new business information software program has been purchased which will allow easier access to information in the data warehouse along with the creation of dashboard statistics. Also underway is the creation of an all university and campus metrics framework summarizing key statistical indicators and comparisons. In addition, the university has developed budget modeling software to analyze proposed changes (such as a new program or elimination of a program) and examine the budget impact over the next ten years.

As a result of these activities, UMC has a good understanding of quality improvement methods and AQIP.

5. What are your plans for integrating participation in AQIP into your organization’s current agenda? Are there major events on the horizon (e.g., a change in leadership, a major contract negotiation, budget cuts), and how are you planning to address them or integrate them into your quality efforts?

One major issue UMC is facing (along with many other institutions) relates to budget cuts in state funding. Due to major shortfalls in revenues and increasing expenses, the state of Minnesota has been facing the necessity for large reductions in expenditures. As a result, the University's base budget from the state has been cut from $703 million to $591 million--the lowest level in a decade--in just two years. This has resulted in substantial increases in student tuition each year. At this point, UMC student tuition brings in about the same total amount as the state funding which compares to a few decades ago when state funding was roughly twice tuition. Part of the budget cuts have been offset by increased efficiency and tuition provided by increasing student enrollment.

A good summary of the university budget situation is provided by the University President Robert Bruininks:

These challenges are real and substantial--but they are not unmanageable. Although the reduction in state funding as a result of the global economic downturn was sudden and unexpectedly rapid, we had anticipated the declining role of state funding in the University's budget when we launched strategic planning in 2004. We began at that time to make long-term decisions that are resulting in substantial savings today. In the same way, the long-term decisions we are making today will yield real results in the next biennium.
The university wide emphasis has been on improving efficiency and reducing costs while maintaining a quality student experience. This is being accomplished by such things as energy use reduction, changes in health care, retirement incentives, better construction management and so forth.

- On the Crookston campus, some of the topics the Strategic Positioning Committee has been considering include reduced energy costs, curriculum and program efficiencies, reduced use of adjunct instructors, etc. One measure of the importance placed on the student academic experience is that UMC has hired for the 2010-11 academic year five new tenure track and four new lecturer faculty members to fill new and existing positions.

Over the past four or five years, UMC has had the practice of identifying projects through both the Executive Committee annual retreat and the University budget planning process. Committees are then established to work on these projects. Sample projects include goals such as increasing retention and graduation rates, increasing student enrollment, developing new programs that fit the campus mission, improving the advising process, improving the first year experience, and so forth. Although these committees have worked hard and accomplished many things, frequently what has been missing is as follows:

- Documentation of and easy access to results
- Consistent use of quality improvement techniques
- Consistent use and documentation of analytics

UMC is confident that the AQIP processes will provide a framework for improving these areas.

6. **How are you planning to organize your quality effort? Explain which current or new structures (committees, systems, etc.) you will use to organize and run your improvement efforts? What organizational systems, structures, and other resources (e.g., a quality council, quality “champions,” task forces, training programs, etc.) currently exist or are planned that will sustain your continuous improvement efforts?**

During the past year, UMC has had in place an AQIP Steering Committee which is guiding the efforts through the application process. This committee includes the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, the Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, faculty, and staff. The committee is being led by a faculty member with half time responsibilities for the AQIP application, analytics, quality improvement, and assessment. That person reports directly to the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs and in addition works closely with the Chancellor. Upon being accepted into AQIP, the AQIP Steering Committee will evolve into a Quality Committee to coordinate AQIP activities. Common members between the Quality Committee and Executive Committee will provide ongoing communications and cooperation between the two groups. Each of the nine AQIP categories will have a champion on either the Executive Committee or Quality Committee. Each action project will have a project committee which will report to the Quality Committee. Analytics and metrics will be coordinated by a small subcommittee of the Quality Committee.

The University Executive Director of Planning and Analysis has a strong analytics background. He has been to Crookston several times over the past year and is leading the development of all University and campus metrics along with the creation of a metrics framework. He has led the development of the budget modeling tool that the campus uses in predicting budget implications over the next 10 years for changes such as new programs or deleting a program. He also has a person on his staff who is an AQIP reviewer. That office is available to provide UMC support related to evidence based decision making, planning, and quality improvement.

7A. **Prior to attending a Strategy Forum, how are you planning to meet AQIP’s requirement to conduct a preliminary self-assessment from a systems- or process-
focused perspective, one that includes input from perspectives external to the organization?

There are four processes related to our institutional self-assessment. The first is the HLC Team Visit to UMC in April 2006 and the Self-Study Report related to that visit. As indicated in question 2, we have considered carefully suggestions and ideas from the team’s final report as we have made improvements over the last few years.

Second, in 2006 we had a Strategic Positioning Committee thoroughly analyze our status, develop a vision, and form a series of actions and recommendations for the campus to pursue. This committee included UMC faculty, administration, Twin Cities’ campus representatives, a campus Program Advisory Committee member, along with regional representatives from outside the University. During the past few years, UMC has achieved many of the recommendations included in the final report.

Third, each year as part of the University planning and budget process (Compact process), UMC develops an annual plan including new projects, reports on old projects, and funding requests to support the new projects. This plan is reviewed annually by the University central administration.

Fourth, beginning in January 2010, a new Strategic Positioning Committee was established. This committee has spent a significant amount of time analyzing campus strengths along with areas for improvement and increased efficiency. The committee process was led by a facilitator from outside UMC. The committee began with an all day workshop in January which reviewed opportunities and challenges using criteria:

- Centrality to mission
- Quality, productivity, and impact
- Uniqueness and comparative advantage
- Enhancement of academic synergies
- Demand and resources
- Efficiency and effectiveness
- Development and leveraging of resources

Six broad areas were identified where either more information was needed or there appeared to be opportunities for improvements. The committee then met biweekly during spring semester and had a two day retreat in May, 2010, which resulted in a series of five year goals along with steps needed to achieve the goals.

7B. Prior to attending a Strategy Forum (within the 12 months following admission), how will your organization identify issues, challenges, problems, or opportunities that might become Action Projects?

Potential projects are being identified by the 2010 Strategic Positioning Committee described in 7A above. As a result of the May committee workshop, ten goals were established along with steps for achieving them. At this point, we can now examine each of the ten goals and determine which might be appropriate to form into AQIP Action Projects.

In addition, it has been a practice during recent years for the Executive Committee during its annual retreat to identify potential projects and identify a group to work on them. As a result, the identification of potential action projects is a concept that has been ongoing at UMC over the past four or five years.
Contact Information for Organization’s AQIP Liaison

When you submit your application, please name a formal AQIP Liaison for your organization — someone who is centrally involved in your quality initiative. (It need not be the CEO or chief academic officer. We intend to continue to communicate closely with your CEO, CAO, and other members of your leadership, but we must have someone we can call or email directly regarding details of your relationship with AQIP. You inform AQIP whenever you change your AQIP Liaison.)

William Peterson
Salutation, Name
Professor
Job Title of Liaison
University of Minnesota Crookston
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2900 University Ave. Math, Science and Technology Department
Office Address
Crookston, MN 56716
City, State, Zip
218-281-8265 218-281-8080 bpeterso@umn.edu
Office Phone(s) and Extension(s) Office fax Email Address

Name and address to which AQIP should send invoice for application fee of $350:

Tricia Sanders, Finance Director
Salutation, Name, Title
University of Minnesota, Crookston
Organization Name
2900 University Ave. Selvig Hall 106
Office Address
Crookston, MN 56716
City, State, Zip
I affirm that the application emailed to AQIP@hlcommission.org presents our institution accurately, and that we agree, if admitted, to abide by the Academic Quality Improvement Program Understandings and Expectations and to:

- commit to a systematic initiative to improve continuously our academic and related processes and their results;
- engage faculty, staff, and other constituents in defining and implementing quality improvement efforts so that an institution-wide culture and understanding of systematic academic quality improvement evolves;
- promote and provide broad-based involvement in activities and in professional development that builds awareness and understanding of the principles and practices of systematic quality improvement at all levels of the institution; and
- establish systems for communication across staff, students, and other constituents and stakeholders regarding our institution’s involvement and progress in systematic Academic Quality Improvement.

Signature of Organizational CEO

Date

Chancellor Charles Casey

Printed/Typed Name and Title

University of Minnesota, Crookston

Name of Organization

2900 University Ave

Address

Crookston, MN 56716

City, State of Organization, ZIP code