

University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point - WI

HLC ID 1716

OPEN PATHWAY: Mid-Cycle Review

Review Date: 7/24/2023

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Context and Nature of Review

Review Date

7/24/2023

Review Type:

Mid-Cycle Review

Scope of Review

- Mid-Cycle Review

There are no forms assigned.

Institutional Context

The University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point (UWSP) was founded as a normal school in 1894. It has been continuously accredited since 1951 and became a part of the University of Wisconsin system (UWS) in a statewide restructuring of public higher education in 1971. In July of 2018, through a system restructuring, the two-year campuses, formally the "University of Wisconsin Colleges," were disbanded with each campus moved under the control of a four-year institution. In this restructuring UWSP received UW - Marathon County (now UWSP at Wausau) and UW - Marshfield/Wood County (UWSP at Marshfield). An HLC reaffirmation review of UWSP occurred in March of 2019, resulting in reaffirming the institution for another ten years. That review required the institution to provide an interim report in 2021 which included a fully developed strategic plan, a progress report on implementation, and status on enrollment and institutional finances. That interim report was accepted, and this current review provided evidence on how the strategic plan, named "Purpose Made Possible", has been implemented and monitored.

UWSP is a predominantly baccalaureate institution with roughly 90 percent of its 7040 full-time students enrolled in Bachelor's degree programs (6400 Undergrad and 640 Grad -FA21 IPEDS). While enrollment has declined since AY16, there is evidence enrollment is leveling with enrollment falling by only 32 full time undergraduate students from FA20 to FA21, and an increase of graduate students by 36. The institution has added advanced degrees, such as the doctorate in Physical Therapy, and has demonstrated that it embraces its unique mission of providing "programs that help communities become more vibrant, healthy, prosperous, and sustainable" through the multiple events, trainings, and workshops offered to both students and community members. More importantly, the finances of the institution have improved, and the CFI of the institution has increased substantially; where in 2021 the CFI was 1.70 it is currently at 5.13.

Interactions with Constituencies

- HLC Peer Team Chair - Email and virtual meetings with UWSP's ALO
- Virtual Meeting with UWSP Chancellor, Provost, and ALO with HLC Peer Team Chair

Additional Documents

None

1 - Mission

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

1.A - Core Component 1.A

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

It was evident that the mission was developed through a process suited to the context of the institution. The University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point (UWSP) is part of the State of Wisconsin university system. As evidenced in the artifact provided titled "About UWSP" the mission of the system guides all the institutions across the state. Additionally, there is a prescribed core mission for what the system refers to as the "University Cluster Institutions" to which UWSP is included. Each of the cluster institutions are charged with developing a mission statement unique to their region. In 2015 the UWSP community undertook that mission statement rewriting process. As evidenced by the letter the UWSP Chancellor sent to the system President, the entire campus community was involved in crafting that statement, with the Academic Affairs Committee and the Faculty Senate directly involved in the development of the mission statement. The statement itself reflects the regional character of the institution as it reflects the value they place on helping the local community thrive, *"the select mission of UW Stevens Point is to provide programs that help communities become more vibrant, healthy, prosperous, and sustainable."*

The mission and related statements are current and reference the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development and religious or cultural purpose. Also the mission and related statements identify the nature, scope and intended constituents

of the higher education offerings and services the institution provides. The mission was created in 2015, prior to the acquisition of the two other campuses that offered the Liberal Arts associate degrees. As evidenced in the Board of Regents meeting minutes, whereby the regional chancellors supported the acquisition of the Liberal Arts Community Colleges (UW Colleges) by the regional institutions, these acquisitions occurred in 2018. As part of that acquisition of the colleges in two different communities, Wausau and Marshfield, UWSP had to agree to continue offering the associate degrees at the Wausau and Marshfield campuses, absorb the faculty from each institution, and maintain a differential tuition structure (i.e., continue to offer courses at the rate established by the Liberal Arts College at the remote location, rather than charge same tuition rate as SP campus). The 2015 mission statement for UWSP includes this statement, *“Our commitment to helping communities thrive requires that we provide education, research and outreach in a wide array of disciplines, with particular emphases at the baccalaureate level in integrated natural resources management and environmental education; in the performing and visual arts; and in areas such as business, health and wellness professions, communicative disorders, design, select engineering programs, family and consumer sciences, information science, paper science, social work, and teacher education.”* The assurance argument noted that the institution considers the two sites as additional locations, regardless of the parameters placed upon the institution by the system when acquiring the two sites. It could be argued that the mission has not changed, despite acquiring the two Liberal Arts Colleges. No evidence was provided that a change of mission was even entertained with the 2018 acquisition of the two colleges, and the assurance argument did state that “since this date (2015) additional revisions have not been proposed nor contemplated.”

In addition to the unique mission statement for UWSP, the core and cluster institution missions provided by the system are broad enough to encompass all students, those seeking an associates, a bachelors, or graduate degrees. The unique vision and values statements for UWSP provided, as well as its unique mission statement, do identify the nature, scope and intended constituents of the higher education offerings and services the institution provides.

The institution’s academic offerings, student support services and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission. As the unique mission for UWSP states, *“the select mission of UW-Stevens Point is to provide programs that help communities become more vibrant, healthy, prosperous, and sustainable. We accomplish this by providing a broad foundation in the fine arts, humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences for associate and baccalaureate degrees.”* That mission is evident by reviewing the Academic catalog that details degree requirements from four colleges that combined offer seven associate degrees, more than 80 undergraduate bachelor of science and bachelor of arts degree programs, 17 master level graduate degrees, and a Doctor of Physical Therapy and an Ed.D. in Educational Sustainability. The institution also offers numerous undergraduate and graduate certificates.

According to posted IPEDS data, in FA21 there were 6403 full time and 1086 part time, undergraduate students. The student profile is reflective of a regional institution, whereby 93% of the undergraduate degree-seeking students are traditional college age (younger than 25 years), with 88% state residents, and 33% of those from the immediate region. The IPEDs data shared indicate that 98% of the first-time full-time students receive some sort of financial aid and 52% take out student loans. As was noted, the Wausau and Marshfield campuses serve the needs of the students within their region, yet each has experienced enrollment declines since 2020. The student profile reflects the unique mission of UWSP with a community focus.

To meet the needs of students at the associate, bachelor, master, and doctoral level the institution has

provided evidence of support services that address academic needs for major decisions, career counseling, tutoring, student disabilities, and instructional support for learning management system. Additionally, the external Wausau and Marshfield campuses provide comprehensive support through their Solution Centers in the areas of admission, financial aid, advising, orientation, placement testing disability services, tutoring services, student activities and general information. This is evidence that all the support systems in place on the Stevens Point campus are also made available to students attending the Wausau and Marshfield campuses. Thus, ensuring that the unique mission is evidenced at all campus locations.

UWSP clearly articulates its mission through public information as evidenced in the strategic plan, “Purpose Made Possible”, which was informed by a very public input process as evidenced in the artifact “Planning Documents and Campus Feedback for Vision and Strategic Themes”. The mission emphasis is on community empowerment, and that was made evident through the very public process of soliciting input from several stakeholders (both internal and external) when crafting the Strategic Plan. Additionally, when examining the university website for each of the colleges and their various schools, it is evident that the institution lives its mission through the variety of workshops, performances, lectures, centers, museums, and field stations it opens to the community through various learning opportunities. The four strategic themes found within the Strategic Plan reflect the unique mission for UWSP. The very first theme is titled “align financial model with institutional vision” which has a commitment of transparency and achieving financial sustainability for the region. Themes two (expand educational opportunities for student success) and three (enhance student experience) are consistent with the mission to “*to provide programs that help communities become more vibrant, healthy, prosperous, and sustainable.*” The last theme reflects the value placed on supporting the community as its name reflects “serving our internal and external communities for impact.” As already noted, the four colleges have detailed on their webpages how each provides opportunities for both their internal and external constituencies.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

NA

1.B - Core Component 1.B

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

The institution's actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public, not solely the institution or any superordinate entity. This was evident in examining the three mission statements that guide the institution (the system mission, the regional cluster mission, and the mission unique to UWSP). Each mission statement has a focus on serving the community, with their institutional mission emphasizing programs that support the community. UWSP's unique mission is reflected in their strategic plan "Purpose Made Possible." The identified goals within each of the strategic plan's four themes are built around being responsible to their community in all their offerings. The institution provided a report on progress made during year one of the implementation of the strategic plan (Purpose Made Possible – Year One Goals, Strategies, and Progress). That document provides the strategies used to meet the goals for each theme, the progress made, and comments on progress and/or further action. The reviewed documents verify that the institution's actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public.

The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests. This was evidenced through the shared IPEDs data, a total of 47% of the institutional core expenses were directly related to instruction (33% of core expenses) and academic support services (14% of core expenses). Additionally, as found in the goals for the first theme of the Strategic Plan (align financial model with Institutional Vision), the institution is committed to aligning university expenditures with available resources by using financial models that are data informed, transparent, objective, and action oriented. That said, in the Purpose Made Possible – Year One Goals, Strategies, and Progress document, the strategies identified for the financial model reflect a public process for budget building and reporting. The focus is on sustaining the work of the institution.

The evidence provided made it clear that the institution engages with its external constituencies and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow. Each of the colleges are divided into Schools and housed within some of the schools are centers and/or museums open to the community members. They also host public lecture series to engage students and the communities the institution

serves. For example, the College of Natural Resources provides several outreach and extension programs. In the most recent fiscal year (FY22), they expended approximately \$2.2 million in salary dollars in direct outreach/extension programs and had 30.6% of its payroll expenses dedicated to outreach and extension. Many of the activities that engage Wisconsin communities are not funded by institutional resources, but through external grants and budgets. The supporting documentation for their activities demonstrates that funds come from donors, as well as fees charged to use some of these natural resource areas. The institution's budget model is designed so that the units offering these external opportunities can self-sustain the activities.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.C - Core Component 1.C

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

The institution has demonstrated a commitment to **curricular** activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success. Evidence supplied to demonstrate this commitment includes the Academic Affairs Strategic Plan for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion which included a timeline for when those goals would be met, starting with AY21 and running through AY23. The institution also replaced their Diversity Council with an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity (EDI) Policy Committee, and as evidenced in their website, has a statement on their commitment to an inclusive campus. The institution has provided EDI resources for students, faculty, and staff, as well as the community. Many of the resources available for faculty are provided by the Center for Inclusive Teaching and Learning (CITL). A report on the progress made toward meeting EDI policy goals detailed the changes and initiatives taken at the university level, through Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, through Student Government, and through the Community. Additionally, one of the General Education Program (GEP) overarching outcomes is for students to "recognize that responsible global citizenship involves personal accountability, social equity and environmental sustainability" and the GEP articulates specific category outcomes for cultural awareness and U.S. diversity.

The institution's commitment to **cocurricular** activities to prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success are evidenced by the artifact on Campus Activities and Student Engagement (CASE). As noted on the CASE webpage, the institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world. The information provided on the website states that CASE offers opportunities for UWSP students to "develop as leaders, volunteers, and employees" and then shares links to various student organization (they note there are just under 200) that demonstrate that there are opportunities to participate in organizations for all student interests (e.g., Multicultural, non-traditional, American Indian, Black Student Union, Gender-Sexuality Alliance, Veterans, etc...). The CASE site also states that they "offer transformative leadership opportunities that help students become change agents to improve their campus, community, and the world." Through an examination of the webpage, links to the various student

organizations, athletic opportunities (including club sports and intramural), and Greek Life can be found. It appears that these opportunities occur on the Stevens Point campus. Upon searching the websites dedicated to the Wausau and Marshfield campuses the activities found are tied to athletics. In the event calendar for student activities for the external sites there were events for recitals and colloquium as well as athletic events.

The processes and activities of the institution demonstrate inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations. Their Center for Inclusive Teaching and Learning (CITL) offers a four-part training series for faculty and staff, “Toward a More Inclusive Campus,” a Safe Zone training. CITL also provides their faculty and staff access to the institutional subscription to LinkedIn Learning courses, such as “Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging for All,” “Becoming an Inclusive Leader,” or “Confronting Racism, with Robin DiAngelo.” The campus centers provide activities and programming that promote and support inclusivity and diversity. The mission of their Diversity and College Access (DCA) office is “to improve the retention and graduation rates for African American, Asian American and Pacific Islander, Latinx, Native American and LGBTQ+ students.” The DCA manages specific resource centers for the institution, including the Multicultural Resource Center, Queer Resource Center, Native American Center, and Student Success Center. It also offers programs to engage the pre-college community members such as Upward Bound and Summer Bridge Leadership programs. Posted on the DCA webpage is the 2021-2022 DCA Annual Report. This report provides details of the various activities from each of those centers during AY22. The Academic and Career Advising Center (ACAC), in addition to the typical academic and career advising services provided, facilitates workshops and career fairs, as well as coordinating professional internship programs. Artifacts provided describe the various activities of DCA, CITL, and ACAC as well as programming and expected learning outcomes. While no assessments of the programming were provided as an artifact to Criterion 1, assessments were provided in Criterion 4B for the centers discussed in this criterion. Those assessments demonstrate that students and staff are participating in the offerings designed to inform, educate, and engage that campus around diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The institution acknowledges that their region of the state of Wisconsin is not particularly diverse. The institutional data provided on the Office of Institutional Research website, indicates that the majority of their students and employees are white, with a very small percentage identifying as Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Native American or Native Alaskan, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. Nevertheless, the institution has demonstrated their commitment to providing all students and staff with opportunities to examine the diversity and uniqueness of all ethnicities and cultures. The Diversity Equity and Inclusion webpage states that “as a predominantly white institution with changing student, faculty, and staff demographics, it is imperative we work together in the pursuit of social justice...” That is evident in their programming, the activities of their many centers, and the integration of cultural explorations within their courses. The descriptions of these activities are detailed in the webpages of the University Centers, Student Affairs, the CITL, and the DCA.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary

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

Rationale

As part of the University of Wisconsin system, UWSP is guided by the system mission and the cluster institutions' mission statement. The institution itself has a unique, select mission, with a focus on their region. Specifically the mission aims to "help communities become more vibrant, healthy, prosperous, and sustainable." Evidence that their mission is lived through curricular and co-curricular offerings for their students in the three campus locations was provided. Additionally, evidence was provided through the varied cultural, civic, and environmental events, workshops, and trainings made available for community members throughout the region.

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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

2.A - Core Component 2.A

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

UWSP establishes and follows policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty, and staff. While UWSP shares a common systemwide mission and core mission of the university cluster institutions, included as evidence in Criterion 1, the institution's select mission was revised in 2015, abiding by a system-wide policy for mission revision that requires public hearings with UW Board of Regents present and approval by the institution's Academic Affairs Committee and Common Council. Board of Regents' minutes reflect approval in December 2015, and the mission has not been revisited since.

UWSP operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources and auxiliary functions as evidenced by a variety of institutional and the University of Wisconsin System (UWS) policies/statutes found on the UWS website and provided in the assurance argument. Financial statements included in the argument indicate a financial position stronger than the previous fiscal year for UWSP. UWS also participates annually in an audit conducted by a non-partisan agency, the Wisconsin Legislative Audit Bureau, and now includes institutional level reporting on program revenue fund balances. Other state reporting requirements and agencies tasked with financial reporting indicate appropriate financial oversight at UWSP and the larger UW system. Academic integrity is ensured through a series of academic and administrative policies and a shared governance committee structure. The Common Council, Academic Affairs Committee, and the Graduate Council are three examples of such, and a review of minutes of the committees found in the assurance argument demonstrate that actual practice follows shared governance policies as the committees make decisions on academic program and curriculum planning and revisions, university handbook updates/changes, new course approvals, changes to governance and committee structures, etc. The Course Catalog, readily available on the UWSP website, contains many of the academic policies pertaining to students such as academic forgiveness, academic standing, and FERPA. Other student policies such as conduct are found on the Dean of Students website. UWSP reports institutional data

to the system via the Central Data Request. A publicly available dashboard found on the UWS website provides data on UWSP and its UW peers, providing additional assurance for operating with integrity with multiple layers of checks and balances. From a human resources perspective, the institution follows UWS University Personnel System policies, including a code of ethics in which all UWS employees must adhere. Moreover, Board of Regents members must abide by an ethics and conflict of interest policy (Regents policy 2-4) while UWSP faculty and academic staff report annually on any outside activities in which they are involved to avoid potential conflicts of interest. UWSP also has its own workplace conduct expectations document that outlines appropriate employee conduct. Finally, UWSP's auxiliary enterprises are guided by UWS policies, Financial Management of Auxiliary Operations, that are in line with NACUBO definitions and practices.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.B - Core Component 2.B

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

UWSP ensures the accuracy of any representations it makes as evidenced primarily through various university websites/pages, which include documents and information such as the Course Catalog (which includes program offerings, requirements, and outcomes; financial aid/fees information; and academic policies). Included in the website is a new homepage for prospective students that includes a “Discover Your Purpose” quiz; admissions & financial aid webpages that include information such as cost, financial aid information, and a net estimated price calculator; Right to Know/Consumer Information data and accountability dashboards/website which also includes links to external sites like NCES and College Navigator (e.g., disclosures page, institutional fast facts & figures, and retention & graduation data); lists of institutional and program accreditations, etc.. UWSP is appropriately transparent in communicating the institution’s profile to constituents. The University Communications and Marketing office provides oversight to ensure accuracy and clarity of the information. They provide a comprehensive communication standards manual for campus use.

UWSP provides multiple examples to support claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through research, community engagement, experiential learning, religious or spiritual purpose and economic development. For example, they have robust grant funded research, typically ranking first or second among comprehensive universities within the system, in grants awarded. Student research symposia are held annually on campus, while student field experiences and internships are encouraged or required in some disciplines. Examples of community engagement/outreach & experiential learning are provided in the assurance argument including students helping with local Boys & Girls Club and student research for in the Water and Environmental Lab providing statewide water quality analyses.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.C - Core Component 2.C

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

The UW Board of Regents (BOR) governs UWSP along with the other UWS institutions. The BOR, which meets eight times per year and is comprised of 18 members, 16 of whom are governor appointed and subject to Senate confirmation (and includes two UWS students), is autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the system and the individual institutions. The BOR's role is outlined in WI state statute and includes "enact[ing] policies and promulgat[ing] rules for governing the system, plan[ning] for future needs of the state for university education, ensur[ing] the diversity of quality undergraduate programs..., and promot[ing] the widest degree of institutional autonomy within the controlling limits of systemwide policies and priorities established by the board." It also continues describing the responsibilities, powers, and duties.

A review of a handful of recent Board and Board Committee minutes found online (1992-2023 minutes) reveals committees regularly meet and provide updates including Audit, Business & Finance, Education, and Capital Planning & Budget Committees. Minutes include in-depth information/discussions about strategic planning (June 8-9, 2023), tuition & fees (December 9, 2022), new program approval (September 29-30 & April 7-8, 2022), capital budget (December 9, 2022), and other matters that allow the board to make informed decisions with respect to the institutions' financial and academic policies and practices. These minutes also show board deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution as the examples cited above. Moreover, the review of minutes indicate the BOR appropriately focuses on their responsibilities outlined in statute while delegating the day-to-day management of UWSP to the institution's administration and faculty regarding academic matters.

BOR meeting minutes show that before considering any items on the open session agenda the BOR president asks if any Board members wish to declare any conflicts of interest as per Regent Policy

Document 2-4, "Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy for the UW System Board of Regents."

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.D - Core Component 2.D

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

UWSP is committed to academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning as evidenced both in policy and practice. The system's mission even declares "basic to every purpose of the system is the search for truth." Moreover, the institution has adopted AAUP's 1940 statement on academic freedom and tenure, shared in UWSP's University Handbook. Policies governing non-discrimination are found in both Board policies and at the institutional level as indicated in the assurance argument. The chancellor at UWSP has made diversity, equity, and inclusion a priority as evidenced by numerous materials and resources found on the institution's website. Graduate students' freedoms and responsibilities are outlined in the University Catalog and include the freedom "to express yourself freely in the classroom and take reason exception to the data and views presented in any course." A system-wide civil dialogue project further reflects the commitment to the freedom of expression and the open exchange of ideas. As a result of a student survey on freedom of speech on campuses, UWSP has redoubled its commitment to open dialogue by encouraging a community read of *Beyond Your Bubble: How to Connect Across the Political Divide*.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.E - Core Component 2.E

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

UWSP's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery, and application of knowledge by its faculty, staff, and students through oversight and training by the university's Office of Research and Sponsored Projects (ORSP). The ORSP aids faculty and staff in preparation and oversight of grants. They conduct trainings on writing proposals and adhering to the University's grant and contract policies and procedures and provide additional resources on their website such as a grant Reference Guide. Additionally, UWSP's Institutional Review Board (IRB), Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, and Institutional Biosafety Committee help ensure ethical research practices through required training modules utilizing Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Program. UWSP encourages faculty-mentored student research as evidenced by the handful of college-specific annual research symposia.

The UWSP Libraries provide ample resources such as 200 research databases for faculty, staff, and students. Research guides on topics such as avoiding plagiarism and citations are available to students as is the ability to connect for research consultations with librarians via in person, phone, chat, text, or email. As noted above the ORSP also provides support services for research and grants.

UWSP has policies and procedures in place as found in the assurance argument and online on academic honesty and integrity. Their Center for Inclusive Teaching and Learning provides workshops on academic integrity while the Office of the Dean of Students provides resources and supports for both students and faculty on academic integrity. The online Student Handbook includes a guide for students on academic integrity and a subsequent academic misconduct procedure guide. Faculty are also encouraged to consult with the Dean on academic misconduct cases, and the office has a form for reporting academic misconduct.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary

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

Rationale

USWP has appropriate policies, procedures, and supports in place to assure that it acts with integrity, and its conduct is ethical and responsible.

3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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

3.A - Core Component 3.A

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

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of student performance appropriate to the credential awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate and certificate programs.
3. The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

Rating

Met

Rationale

Several approval steps and overall processes ensure that the courses and programs offered at UWSP remain relevant and reflective of professional expectations of student performance. UWS Policy related to program planning and approval guides the university's process. Planning for degrees begins with administrative approval. Department and college faculty review occurs prior to submission to at least two university committees, the Curriculum Committee or Graduate Council and the Common Council. Final approval is granted by the UWS Board of Regents. Once implemented, degrees and programs undergo regular review within the assessment cycle. Some departments engage with professional advisory boards, and a number of programs hold national accreditations with external reviews. Each degree and program is also evaluated for continued student demand as well as alignment with the overall mission and goals of the university.

Course proposals undergo regular reviews by relevant committees. Additionally, the General Education Committee reviews courses in the General Education Program, and a peer review process exists for these courses.

Criteria for hire and promotion govern all instructional personnel expectations. The Center for Inclusive Teaching and Learning provides all faculty with resources and support in delivering online, hybrid, and face-to-face classes. Furthermore, online course instructors have specific expectations and receive training in online pedagogy. Regardless of the campus location, all courses and programs are held to the same standards and procedures for quality, assessment, and student performance expectations.

Learning goals are differentiated across programs as evidenced by the new program proposals, syllabi, the academic catalog program listings, and assessment plan guidelines. Undergraduate outcomes are designed to include introductory knowledge and experience with expectations for content growth and development throughout the programs. Graduate programs expectations are appropriate to professionals with experience in their fields and reflect advanced academic and applied research and leadership performance goals.

Over the last five years, UWSP has implemented at least two new undergraduate degrees and nine graduate degrees, including two doctoral programs. The program approval process included research to ensure local, state, and national needs were addressed.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.B - Core Component 3.B

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

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution. The institution articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements.
2. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity and provides students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world.
4. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their offerings and the institution's mission.

Rating

Met

Rationale

The UWSP General Education Program (GEP) is organized around three overarching levels: 1) Foundational Skills and Dispositions, 2) Human Cultures and the Sciences, and 3) Social and Environmental Responsibility. These three levels comprise 12 categories with 32 distinct learning outcomes that support the mission, vision, and values of the university and serve as the foundation and preparation for the undergraduate baccalaureate degrees. The GEP has undergone changes since 2019; these changes are based upon data from the previous general education program with input from feedback from a variety of programs. One change involved moving capstone, communication, and experiential expectations to the major area rather than general education to reflect existing program outcomes and avoid redundancy.

Another recent change in the GEP is the focus on the broad concept of critical thinking with embedded skills in the areas of oral, written, and visual expression. UWSP engaged in Quality Initiative work surrounding this topic and have used the AAC&U VALUE Rubric for Critical Thinking as a resource. Workshops and trainings have been developed to assist instructors in aligning general education courses with critical thinking outcomes and assessments. UWSP plans to begin student assessments of Critical Thinking learning outcomes in 2024. As a resource to faculty, the Critical Thinking Center supports student learning by providing resources for pedagogies, strategies, and assessments for critical-thinking outcomes.

UWSP's Strategic Action Plan guides faculty efforts and student opportunities to recognize life in a multicultural world. Students explore topics in human and cultural diversity, global awareness and

environmental responsibility within the General Education Program. The Center for Inclusive Teaching and Learning provides support and resources for faculty development in inclusive instruction.

Opportunities for faculty and students to engage in scholarship and creative work exist in areas such as music, theatre and research. UWSP faculty have also been awarded millions of dollars in grants, gifts, and contracts. A number of university and sponsored awards across all colleges promote, encourage, and support teaching, service, scholarship, and spirit as part of the culture of the institution. Students have opportunities to showcase discovery of knowledge and ideas in research symposiums, professional collaborations beyond the classrooms and creative expressions.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.C - Core Component 3.C

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

Inclusive excellence is one of three strategic imperatives outlined for UWSP. Within the Purpose Made Possible strategic action plan, the goal to “build and enhance a community that values inclusion, equity, and diversity” is encompassed within the plans to enhance the student experience and supports the mission and vision of the institution. The assurance evidence includes a summary of progress steps and changes within the academic and student affairs divisions and across the university. Committees have been formed and/or encouraged to examine areas where improvements can be made and action can be taken. UWS recruitment policies and procedures are detailed and provide guidance in the university’s continuing commitment to campus-wide inclusivity. Personnel engaged in search committee activities are expected to complete “Ethical and Equitable Search Training” every two years.

Among 1,126 total staff, UWSP reported 318 full-time and 94 part-time faculty as shown in the IPEDS data for Fall 2021. Tenured and tenure track faculty totaled 267 or 84%. The UWSP student-to-faculty ratio was 20:1 in fall 2021 and fall 2022. The full-time teaching workload is 12 hours, and faculty loads may include engagement in a number of governing academic councils, committees, and subcommittees. Expectations for student access to faculty during office hours are outlined in syllabi, including contact methods such as email and virtual meetings.

Criteria for teaching faculty are outlined in UWS policies and apply to all campuses. Tenure and tenure-track faculty must hold terminal degrees in their teaching fields. Council approval procedures exist for variations from this expectation or other faculty qualifications and include the application of tested experience criteria or relevant program accreditation standards. University and departmental procedures and calendars are published for submission of review materials for retention, tenure, and promotion as defined for varying types of instructional faculty and differing levels of experience. In general, annual reviews are conducted for faculty; post tenure review occurs every five years. UWS and UWSP centers and committees provide faculty development support and opportunities for teaching fellows, grants, course design, and sabbaticals.

Similar to faculty recruitment procedures, UWS, Board of Regents policies, and relevant laws guide the hiring processes for university staff and student workers across a multitude of student services to maintain nondiscriminatory practices. Likewise, personnel evaluations and reviews are conducted regularly and include opportunities for professional development when department needs warrant additional training and workshops.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.D - Core Component 3.D

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

1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.
2. The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.
3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its offerings and the needs of its students.
4. The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites and museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).

Rating

Met

Rationale

UWSP provides a variety of services to its students. Services with a specific population focus include centers or resources for students requiring child care, students with disabilities, and students with military experience among several others. Organizations exist to support nontraditional students, the LGBT community, international and minority students. Students' needs related to technology or textbooks are addressed in their respective areas. Campus security, counseling, and health services are available to meet students' wellness needs.

The academic needs of students are served by the Academic and Career Advising Center (ACA); each of the colleges at UWSP houses an academic advising center for students in those majors. In addition, a Tutoring and Learning Center assists with specific skills and provide content-related tutoring; tutoring is also available in departments, such as math. Through the use of program and career specialists, the ACA Center provides career services to students and works with professional and faculty advisers to assist students in career preparation activities. The institution monitors retention data and NSSE survey data to measure efforts and student satisfaction in these areas.

Testing services offer placement exams for math and foreign language. Intentional efforts are made to align the initial math courses with students' abilities, anticipated majors and career goals. Writing course placement is based upon ACT scores. Students not located at the main campus are placed into initial courses based upon a "multi-measure testing procedure." Providing learning support and preparatory instruction to students at all campuses in the areas of math and writing remain areas of focus for the institution.

At UWSP, effective online, hybrid, and face-to-face teaching and learning occur through technological infrastructure and dedicated physical instructional facilities in 35 buildings that house technology, library resources, residences, centers, performance spaces, and on-campus clinical practice sites for students in Physical Therapy and Communication Sciences and Disorders. Through

external partnerships, students in education, clinical laboratory science, and athletic training have experiences in schools, hospitals and other professional settings.

Academic buildings and areas contain computer labs, instructional technology, and workstations supported by the UWSP Information Technology Services. The institution uses CANVAS as its Learning Management System and uses Office, One Drive, and Teams for user operations and productivity. The university library provides class sessions, workshops, and individual assistance with access to UWS shared resources, multidisciplinary databases, print and online periodicals and collections. Library personnel further support students in person and through a variety of communication methods, including personalized tutorials. Faculty and students in the College of Natural Resources have access to wildlands, nature reserves, natural habitat types for research, and conservation areas to engage in teaching, learning, and research.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary

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

Rationale

UWSP is guided by a number of policies, procedures, and practices that ensure quality education across campuses and modalities. Facilities, infrastructure, and institutional personnel are included in the academic and support services efforts designed to enhance student educational experiences for the overall purpose of helping students achieve their academic and career goals.

4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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

4.A - Core Component 4.A

The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews and acts upon the findings.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that ensure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It ensures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution ensures that the credentials it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission.

Rating

Met

Rationale

UWSP has a well-developed protocol for conducting program reviews. Since their comprehensive evaluation in 2019, the campus has further refined its program review procedures and the kinds of information that departments need to report. Program reviews are now on a five year cycle instead of a ten year cycle. The program self-study template has been revised to adhere more closely to the principles of its mission and strategic plan. Program reviews include the following: (1) a review of the program and its alignment to the mission of the campus; (2) the ways that the curriculum incorporates diverse perspectives; (3) which discipline-specific best practices are used in teaching and learning; (4) how student learning is assessed; and (5) how did/will assessment results inform teaching and learning practices. Programs are asked to reflect on advising practices and the post-graduation outcomes of their students. Program self-studies are reviewed by the Program Review Subcommittee (PRS) which issues a summary report detailing their evaluation of the program. The

summary reports are sent to the relevant dean and the Provost. Program reviews are concluded with a decision as to whether to continue support for the program. At various points in the evaluation process, the program can offer comments and clarifications.

As part of the program review process, a new policy was also enacted on program discontinuance, outlining the policy and procedures for determining when a program should be discontinued.

Since the implementation of the program review protocol, several dozen degree programs have submitted self-studies and received evaluations.

External evaluations are optional at UWSP. Programs may request an outside evaluator, in which case the PRS reviews the external report and incorporates it into its program evaluation summary report.

UWSP evaluates all credits accepted for transfer. It adheres to the University of Wisconsin System transfer policy, titled University Credit Transfer Agreement (UCTA). Along with a number of articulation agreements with other educational institutions, the campus awards credit through Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, credit for military service, and early college programs. Some programs allow for credit by exam. Credit for prior learning is being revised by the UW system and the campus.

UWSP publishes its policies on transfer credit in its academic catalog. As mentioned above, it adheres to the UWS transfer policy (UCTA). The campus is committed to expanding its opportunities to transfer students. Theme two of its strategic plan states its goal of adding additional transfer articulation agreements with other educational entities. The campus participates in the Howard Hughes Medical Institute grant administered by the UW Madison – WiScience Office to create clearer transfer pathways for STEM-intended technical college liberal arts students. This grant has precipitated greater conversation on the campus concerning transfer student success.

UWSP maintains course requirements in keeping with the level of course difficulty. The faculty determine course prerequisites and students may not register for courses if they have not completed the course pre-requisites. Exceptions are determined on a case by case basis. Course rigor is determined and evaluated by the programs. Program reviews and assessment of student learning outcomes are used by faculty to monitor and revise course expectations. Student learning outcomes in general education are evaluated by the General Education Committee.

UWSP faculty and staff must meet minimum qualifications in keeping with HLC requirements. These are spelled out in the University Handbook. A number of programs have guidelines on ‘tested experience’ or alternative credentials, which are listed in the University Handbook and are explicitly tied to the HLC guidelines on tested experience.

UWSP has an early college credit program for high school students where courses are taught by UWSP instructors, thereby ensuring that the courses are equivalent to UWSP college level courses. The campus has not engaged in much dual credit courses. Its campuses in Wausau and Marshfield (community colleges integrated into UWSP in 2018) had significant dual credit programs. Its instructors have been vetted by the appropriate UWSP department and the provost to ensure compliance with UW and HLC instructor qualifications.

UWSP maintains external accreditations for a number of academic degree programs. This list is maintained on its website, and is available for public perusal.

UWSP has worked diligently to track their graduates upon graduation. A memorandum of understanding exists between all units and departments on campus to utilize the First Destination Post-Graduation Survey as a means of tracking graduates. Information gathered by the First Destination Survey is published on a dashboard that lists post-graduate outcomes, including employment and salaries, continuing education, employers, and job placement by majors. The campus has a goal of getting to an 80% response rate for this survey and of using the results to enhance its educational mission.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.B - Core Component 4.B

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

UWSP has well developed and effective processes for assessing student learning. Assessment centers on whether program learning goals are being met, as well as an analysis of how the results of assessment can be used to promote quality improvement. Not only are academic programs assessed but much work has been done in the assessment of student services.

In its last comprehensive review in 2019, three areas were identified by the HLC review team for UWSP to address:

1. To publicize its program learning outcomes so that they are accessible to students and the public;
2. To develop distinctive program learning outcomes for their graduate programs;
3. To develop practices to ensure more regular assessment of learning outcomes.

UWSP has implemented all three recommendations. Program learning outcomes are listed in the campus catalog and available to students and the public. All graduate programs have developed program learning outcomes as part of the Graduate Program Assessment Plan. UWSP clarified their assessment expectations by implementing an annual reporting requirement for at least one program learning outcome while continuing to require programs to assess all learning outcomes within a 5-year cycle. This replaces the schedule that had assessment taking place once every five years with all program learning outcomes being assessed at the same time.

The change to an annual assessment calendar has resulted in high levels of compliance in submitting assessment reports. It has led to greater participation by faculty and resulted in more detailed assessment data. In its first two years of implementation, the campus determined that faculty and staff needed more professional development in defining benchmarks for expectations of student learning. As such, the Assessment Coordinator in collaboration with the Center for Inclusive Teaching and Learning (CITL) developed an assessment training course available on the campus learning management system, Canvas. This 2- 4 hour self-paced course enables instructors and staff

to access resources and best practices with regards to assessment. This site, along with workshops on assessment, speak to the campus and faculty's commitment to continuously improve their assessment practices. A project to develop an assessment results dashboard should complete its work by Fall 2023.

The coordinator of Assessment publishes annual reports on campus assessment activities. The reports offer summaries of the assessment that took place in the academic units, any challenges that emerged, and comparative data on the assessment of student learning. It is clear from a review of several years' reports that the campus continues to refine and improve their assessment practices. A review of program assessment reports from an undergraduate and graduate program indicated that faculty were engaged in authentic assessment practices.

Assessment of associate degree programs has been integrated into the assessment framework. The Associate Degree subcommittee oversees the assessment of associate degree programs.

UWSP has also taken great strides in its assessment of general education. General education courses require instructors to submit a portfolio that details the general education learning outcomes being assessed, the artifacts used to assess the learning outcomes, samples of student learning, reflection on what the results mean, and instructor recommendations for revision. Peer assessment work groups (PAWS) of faculty evaluate the individual instructor assessment portfolios. General education assessment takes place each year with a calendar indicating which learning outcomes and courses are to be assessed. General education courses are assessed over a four year period with a fifth year spent on a comprehensive review of the program and its assessment plan. The General Education Committee (GEC) has oversight over these processes.

Faculty are recruited by their associate deans to serve on PAWS for an academic year. The general education course portfolios are reviewed by PAWS using a rubric. They provide anonymous feedback to instructors. The Assessment Coordinator, in collaboration with PAWS, will aggregate findings from the course portfolios and prepare a report for the GEC. The GEC will report to the Common Council on its assessment of student learning and recommendations for improvements. The report is also shared with the provost, deans, and department/unit chairs.

Assessment of student support services is quite robust at UWSP. Student learning outcomes are posted on the Division of Student Affairs website. All nine departments have posted student learning data since 2021-22. Results show positive results of the work that student affairs staff do.

The UWSP assessment process asks programs to report on the implications of their findings. As a continuing professional development priority, the campus continues to refine its assessment processes to ensure that the assessment loop is closed. In its 2021-22 Assessment Report, all 63 programs that submitted assessment results discussed the implications of student learning for the program learning outcome that was being assessed. Programs are reminded of the need to close the assessment loop. As more programs develop benchmarks for student learning, the quality of assessment results will inform faculty as to areas in need of revision. The nearly completed assessment dashboard will also aid in this endeavor.

The assessment culture at UWSP includes the substantial participation of faculty, department/unit chairs, deans, and the provost. It involves the work of the Assessment Coordinator, student affairs staff, IT specialists, and the Center for Inclusive Teaching and Learning. There is a commitment to providing a safe and effective environment for assessment. There is a commitment to providing professional development for faculty and staff to develop effective tools and practices for assessment.

As an indicator of their excellent work in sustaining a culture of assessment, the campus Assessment Coordinator, Vera Kekovkina, and software developer, Kyle Bennett, presented a session entitled: “The Power of Inspiration: Assessment Leadership Across Institutions” at the annual HLC meeting in 2023. UWSP is establishing itself as a leader in effective assessment practices.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.C - Core Component 4.C

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

UWSP has engaged in efforts to improve retention, persistence, and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs. As with so many regional public universities, UWSP faced steady declines in enrollment after the 2009-11 recession. It has sought to reverse these declines by redefining itself as a new kind of regional university, one with an ethical commitment to recruit, retain, and graduate its students. It also sets the goal of reducing the achievement gap between students of color and majority white students. To this end, UWSP has committed resources for retention and persistence, with the appointment of a Director of Student Retention and acquiring robust data gathering capabilities through EAB Navigate. Enrollment and retention data are continuously reviewed to inform the campus on policy making.

The campus understands that it is not enough to focus on numbers but that the hard work of retention resides in creating what they call an “ecosystem of support and engagement practices to support their (students) persistence”. As such, the campus has focused on developing high impact practices in its curriculum, creating cross-institutional programs to promote broad-based student support, and identifying barriers that impede student progress towards a degree. This, along with tailoring specific student services to a diverse student body comprised of students of color, first generation students, commuters, athletes, and low income students shows a holistic approach to student retention and persistence. Their goals are ambitious but realistic given their mission and commitment to the region.

As an indication of their effectiveness in retention work, UWSP was invited to participate in the Complete College America – Intermediaries for Scale Institutional Transformation Initiative. UWSP plans to focus on retention and persistence issues. Specifically, it aims to improve retention rates of

students of color to those of their white counterparts and upper income students. It seeks to create a shared understanding of student success across academic affairs, business affairs, enrollment management, and student affairs units. The ultimate goal is to identify quality initiatives to promote retention and persistence and a campus culture dedicated to student success.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary

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

Rationale

UWSP demonstrates that it is committed to fostering a culture of assessment to improve teaching, learning, and student support services. It has assessment protocols that involve multiple constituencies on campus. It is constantly reviewing its processes, making improvements, and evaluating the integrity of its assessment processes. It is also engaged in ways to improve student recruitment and retention. It is aware of and actively engaged in the national conversation with regards to admission, retention, and completion issues. It continues its record of excellence in all aspects of its academic enterprise.

5 - Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

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

5.A - Core Component 5.A

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point (UWSP) relies on many different organizational structures to ensure that they have the appropriate governance and input to fulfill its mission. The University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents governs UWSP. This Board of Regents governs all the public higher education institutions in the State of Wisconsin. Transparency of Board proceedings is demonstrated by the materials and minutes being posted online as well as live streaming of the Board meetings.

As demonstrated by the institution's organizational charts, UWSP has developed a broad and comprehensive management structure. The faculty governance organization at UWSP is the Faculty Council, which includes membership from all colleges and other academic members. Institutional shared governance is demonstrated through the Common Council. The Common Council is comprised of the Academic Staff Council, Faculty Council, University Staff Council, and the Student Government Association. These groups meet regularly and further break into a committee structure that assist with the governance of the University.

University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point utilizes data throughout its operation to make decisions and provide transparency to the campus community. Examples include the addition of the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) program in 2022. Following extensive surveying, needs assessment and other data gathering, the University made the decision to add this program. It will fill a need in the

northern two thirds of the State of Wisconsin that previously had gone unmet.

In 2019 the offices of Admissions, Financial Aid and Marketing and Communications were merged to better meet the needs of the University community by aligning their resources. An outcome of this effort is regular reports that are distributed to stakeholders that help define marketing strategies, identify and expand academic programs and analyze return on investment of enrollment and marketing strategies.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.B - Core Component 5.B

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

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point maintains the appropriate resources in order to fulfill its mission. The University in 2022 completed the third year of a three-year plan to reduce its budget by \$8 million. In addition to the main campus budget reduction, the institution also reduced the base budget of the Wausau and Marshfield locations by \$1.1 million. Beginning in 2020, the University enrollment has stabilized from the significant decline it experienced from 2015 to 2019. In the last fiscal year, enrollment has shown modest growth. This continued stable enrollment trajectory will assist the University in managing its finances.

The UWSP Composite Financial Index (CFI) calculation has shown tremendous improvement. In 2021 the CFI was 1.70 and it is currently at 5.13. This improvement, assisted by the UWSP Foundation as well, has moved the institution from a category that requires monitoring into an area where they can invest resources into new endeavors that could allow transformation of the institution.

UWSP maintains a robust system of budget projections as well as monitoring of current year budgets. The Office of Financial Planning and Budget has developed additional tools for the University to utilize in monitoring its budget and finances. Meetings are held with divisions when major deviations from the budget are found. This type of budget monitoring helps to catch any surprises in the budget as the academic year unfolds. These types of reports and monitoring will also assist the divisions and the University with future year forecasting as well.

An activity based academic budgeting model was developed that assists the academic divisions in making resource decisions. This helps with not only initial investment decisions but reallocations as well. Another model, the curriculum planning tool, was also developed to help the Deans and Associate Deans in their managing of the curriculum in an efficient and effective manner.

Through the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) UWSP has been able to invest in its

academic infrastructure as well. Improvements to classroom technology for distance education instruction helped during the pandemic, but also continues today as more and more students transition to this type of learning.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.C - Core Component 5.C

The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

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

Rating

Met

Rationale

University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point engages in systemic planning and improvement at various levels of the institution. The campus strategic Plan, *Purpose Made Possible* and Chancellor Gibson's strategic imperatives guide the strategic direction of the institution. The themes of the strategic plan have been implemented with the assistance of the entire campus. For example, the institutions Integrated Planning and Advisory Council (IPAC) have managed the process of the refinement and implementation of the goals in the plan. The IPAC has also taken the plan and broken it up into Year One efforts, Year Two efforts, etc. Evidence of a thoughtful and well managed implementation process is when the Year one efforts were deemed to require more time to be developed and communicated, the University decided to pause the Year Two efforts. This allowed the necessary time for the institution to recalibrate and focus on completing the Year One tasks before attempting more items than they can effectively manage.

Integrated planning at UWSP is evidenced by the Enrollment projections that are developed and refined as a joint effort between the Provost and the Chief Marketing and Enrollment Officer. These three-year scenario-based projections are utilized by others at the University to determine financial projections, auxiliary budget planning, capital project planning and academic decisions.

UWSP engages the surrounding community in its planning and mission as well. The institution is working with the City of Stevens Point as they develop their plan for revitalization of a significant section of road with the city which also serves as the main access point to campus. The city is looking to make this road more pedestrian and bike friendly as well as improve traffic flow, which are all goals the University has in mind for the corridor as well. This type of integrated planning can create a win-win venture for both parties.

University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point demonstrates linkage between data and planning and resource allocations. The University develops a six-year capital budget plan that is submitted to the University of Wisconsin System for consideration. This capital budget plan contains a direct connection to the University strategic plan as evidenced by creating a healthy and sustainable campus, maximizing the use and reuse of existing facilities and enhancing the image and identity of campus. An example of reuse is the proposed renovation of the current Collins Classroom Center into the Sentry School of Business and Economics. This renovation was made possible through a gift of \$10 million from the Sentry Foundation.

Interim Monitoring (if applicable)

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.

5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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

Rationale

University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point continues to meet the requirements in criterion five based upon the information and evidence observed. Through its shared governance processes and robust planning efforts, the University is very intentional in its planning and resource allocations. While the budget and CFI for the University has vastly improved in the past few years, University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point should remain vigilant in its monitoring of enrollment and demographic changes as well as shifts in state funding to ensure the appropriate planning is taking place for its future.

Review Dashboard

Number	Title	Rating
1	Mission	
1.A	Core Component 1.A	Met
1.B	Core Component 1.B	Met
1.C	Core Component 1.C	Met
1.S	Criterion 1 - Summary	
2	Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct	
2.A	Core Component 2.A	Met
2.B	Core Component 2.B	Met
2.C	Core Component 2.C	Met
2.D	Core Component 2.D	Met
2.E	Core Component 2.E	Met
2.S	Criterion 2 - Summary	
3	Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support	
3.A	Core Component 3.A	Met
3.B	Core Component 3.B	Met
3.C	Core Component 3.C	Met
3.D	Core Component 3.D	Met
3.S	Criterion 3 - Summary	
4	Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement	
4.A	Core Component 4.A	Met
4.B	Core Component 4.B	Met
4.C	Core Component 4.C	Met
4.S	Criterion 4 - Summary	
5	Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning	
5.A	Core Component 5.A	Met
5.B	Core Component 5.B	Met
5.C	Core Component 5.C	Met
5.S	Criterion 5 - Summary	

Review Summary

Conclusion

As a regional public institution, UWSP provides a broad array of educational opportunities and community services that serve to fulfill its Mission Statement “*to provide programs that help communities become more vibrant, healthy, prosperous, and sustainable.*” This Mission Statement, supported by a Strategic Plan, with its clearly stated goals within strategic themes, and budgeting processes that reflect the nature and needs of the academic region, serve to ensure efficient operations. Enrollment challenges are being met with planned efficiencies in recruitment, persistence, and retention goals embedded within the strategic plan. A future challenge that must be addressed is the commitment made when acquiring the two liberal arts colleges (in Wausau and Marshfield) to continue to offer associate degrees at each location. Since restructuring, the state’s Technical Colleges have been granted the ability to offer the full general education curriculum. This change is resulting in fewer students enrolling in the associate degree programs at the two external locations. The institution has taken steps to increase pathways in the STEM fields for those enrolled in the Technical Colleges with the general education curriculum completed. As the institution strives to meet the goals of the strategic plan, this commitment to continue offering the associate degree at the Wausau and Marshfield campuses is a challenge that will need to be addressed.

Overall Recommendations

Criteria For Accreditation

Met

Sanctions Recommendation

No Sanction

Pathways Recommendation

Not Applicable to This Review

No Interim Monitoring Recommended.