Overview

This Comprehensive Quality Review (CQR) Quality Highlights report is intended to be brief and manageable, providing broad descriptions and highlights since NDSCS submitted its AQIP Systems Portfolio November of 2013. The report is split into eight sections and throughout the document links to further information are provided (noted with blue, underlined text). At the end of the report you will find links to the required supporting information for the CQR.

1. Special Circumstances

The North Dakota State College of Science (NDSCS) has continued to demonstrate continuous quality improvement since its last reaffirmation in 2009. NDSCS was originally scheduled to host an AQIP peer review team for its seven-year Quality Check-up Visit in 2014-2015 with reaffirmation review to be completed in 2015-16. The College had dedicated resources and staff to this timeline. However in May 2014, in a conference call with HLC leadership, the College was informed of the restructure to the AQIP process, resulting in our Comprehensive Quality Review shifting to 2015-16.

Concurrently, a significant leadership shift occurred at NDSCS; the long-time Accreditation Liaison Officer retired and a new position and division, encompassing the leadership of the AQIP process, was created. Additionally, more than half of the AQIP Strategy Team were new to the institution and/or the team. The timeline shift allowed the College the unique opportunity of acclimating the new team members to the AQIP process and philosophy. The extended timeline also enabled the College to thoroughly examine and implement some of the opportunities for improvement suggested in the Systems Portfolio feedback.

As part of the transition to the new AQIP process, NDSCS was scheduled to participate in a Strategy Forum in April 2015. Participation in the Strategy Forum further enabled the College to focus on opportunities for improvement provided in the Systems Portfolio feedback and for the new AQIP Strategy Team to understand the history of NDSCS through reviewing prior Action Projects. Going into the Strategy Forum, NDSCS had three existing Action Projects that were progressing as planned. Prior Action Projects were managed on a yearly basis with projects lasting over multiple years. This design was suggested and commended in the annual reviews. Participation in the Strategy Forum provided NDSCS with new direction regarding Action Projects, encouraging the College to charter new action projects with timelines from six to 12 months and stagger the start times. This provided the College with both challenges and opportunities regarding their current action projects. The Action Project chartered at the Strategy Forum came directly from an opportunity for improvement identified in the System Portfolio feedback – further illustrating the ‘silver lining’ of the extended timeline before the CQR.

The shift in the AQIP timeline was first viewed as a potential detriment to the quality improvement momentum at NDSCS; however, it is the opinion of most that extended timeline enabled the College to accomplish more than if the visit had occurred earlier.
HLC Interactions

NDSCS had a few notable updates and interactions with the HLC since the last reaffirmation. In 2014, a letter was submitted to the HLC regarding the governance of the North Dakota University System (NDUS), specifically the proposed change in governance authority of the ND State Board of Higher Education (SBHE).

Upon review, the HLC expressed concerns with the challenges the NDUS was facing related to Criterion Five, Core 5d after a HLC advisory visit to the SBHE and the NDUS office in April 2014. The HLC Board required the NDUS to submit an Interim Report regarding these concerns. This visit identified concerns related only to governance of higher education in North Dakota, and there were no concerns related to NDSCS specifically. The Interim report and subsequent focus visit (November 2015) shared the progress the NDUS had made. Specifically, this report addressed the progress NDUS had made, including: the development of a comprehensive strategic plan and its associated metrics through extensive consultation with stakeholders and institutions (including NDSCS); ensuring a clear understanding among the members of the SBHE members regarding the vision and role of the board, which was accomplished through revitalizing SBHE orientation and training and the development of the Roles and Responsibility task force; reviewing policies and procedures; and committing to ongoing study of governance of Higher Education in North Dakota. This review was positive for the NDUS, the SBHE, and NDSCS, enabling the focus to be put back on shared governance and leadership.

Other interactions with the Commission included courtesy notifications for program name changes, an additional distance offering of nursing in Oakes, ND (March 2015), and offering the Dialysis Tech certificate program (less than 50% new courses, review not required). Also, in 2011, the consortial arrangement was approved with FM Ambulance education and in June 2015, the IAC approved NDSCS’s request to offer a certificate, Paramedic (EMT) Technology: Community Paramedic.

2. Actions capitalizing on System Appraisal Feedback

In March 2014, NDSCS received the System Appraisal Feedback report (SAFR). Since that time, processes and positions have evolved, and the SAFR has allowed NDSCS to identify areas of improvement and focus. The SAFR identified three strategic challenges that address the following reviewers’ concerns:

- The relationship between NDSCS and the North Dakota University System (NDUS) is not clear, specifically in the areas of autonomy and governance.
- Specific responses in the portfolio addressed the “what” of a process but did not address the “how” of the process.
- Data analysis is inconsistent. Ensure that performance results inform improvements.

NDSCS chose to immediately address the first strategic challenge regarding the relationship between NDSCS and the NDUS. As mentioned in Section 1, at the same time that the Systems Appraisal was being reviewed there was a scheduled HLC advisory visit to the State Board of Higher Education and the NDUS office that led to the interim report and focused visit in November 2015. In a response letter to Mary L. Green dated March 14, 2014, NDSCS provided assurance to the Commission that the SBHE and the NDUS addressed and/or corrected the matters that caused the review.
Shortly after receiving the SAFR, nine different cross-discipline teams were formed in late March 2014 to review the feedback report by category, develop responses (see Portfolio Addendum), and recommend ‘next steps’ based on the feedback. These groups focused on the second strategic challenge - trying to better explain the ‘how’ of the processes. These teams met face-to-face and the membership reached beyond the AQIP Strategy Team to enable feedback and insight from various areas within the College.

The nine teams recommended specific action items or ‘next steps’ and shared them with the AQIP Strategy Team and/or other College departments as appropriate. Several items have been addressed or improved based on the SAFR. For example, in the section related to Category 3, P6a the reviewers indicated that the complaint process could be improved and clarified for those that receive the complaints and those that are seeking to make a complaint. The team recommended that we could better publicize the process for making both formal and informal complaints, especially to students. This opportunity was capitalized on by both the academic and non-academic areas since receiving the SAFR. A one-stop web page was launched in August of 2015 and was heavily promoted to students as a way for them to provide informal feedback/complaints and to find out more about how to navigate the formal complaint process.

The third strategic challenge provided opportunities for improvement in various areas since data informs most decisions at NDSCS. Not only does NDSCS recognize the importance of ensuring that results inform improvements – but also how essential it is that the College community is aware of the data analysis and results. For instance, the President consistently sends out ‘talking head’ videos to employees and students to increase awareness of new data or information. Additionally, e-mails are sent to faculty and staff daily until 20th day of instruction (and weekly thereafter) that share the College-wide and academic-program specific retention numbers. Results of College-wide surveys and feedback tools are also shared through traditional meetings and discussions with stakeholder groups (e.g. Faculty Senate, Student Senate) and are also shared freely on the NDSCS intranet (internal website). Additionally, the survey reports that are shared with the College community are more robust (e.g. charts, tables) and are broken out, where possible, by areas and programs. Not only are these improvements aimed to increase data-driven improvements, they also serve to improve College-wide communication which, based on the 2014 College Employee Satisfaction Survey, was shown to be a continued concern.

Additionally, the SAFR was thoroughly reviewed and discussed by the 2015 Strategy Forum team. The SAFR was the cornerstone of the Action Project that was identified and chartered during the Strategy Form (see section 3 for detailed information).

3. Actions capitalizing on Strategy Forum Participation

The Strategy Forum enabled NDSCS to transform feedback from the SAFR into actionable strategies. To support this process, the 2015 Strategy Forum Team committed significant time and effort to the pre-work, discussions and exercises at the Forum, and to the resulting action project.

The Strategy Forum Team (SFT) consisted of the President, Vice President for Administrative Affairs, Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, Dean of Extended Learning, Dean of Technologies and Services, Faculty Senate President, ND State Board of Higher Education Member, and the Associate Vice President for Student Success (AQIP Strategy Team Chair, ALO). Four of the members had attended a previous Strategy Forum and the rest of the team was very new to AQIP processes - this enabled mentoring and fruitful
discussions throughout the process. Additionally, having a member of the State Board of Higher Education on the team provided a unique opportunity for both NDSCS and the SBHE member.

The SFT efficiently completed the Strategy Forum pre-work by utilizing online discussion and feedback tools prior to all face-to-face meetings. The first meeting consisted of the SFT reviewing the required outcomes of the pre-work. This meeting also facilitated a shared understanding of the strategy forum among the team members. Prior to meeting two, the group reviewed prior action projects, identified two or three action projects that they perceived to be the most successful, and were asked to explain their rationale for choosing the action project(s), including the main factors that contributed to making the project(s) successful.

During meeting two, the SFT reviewed the results and feedback and selected the “Develop and implement a NDSCS image campaign” as the most successful action project. The elements that made this campaign so successful included sufficient dedication of resources (human, time, fiscal), the project was easily understood by all stakeholders, and there was college-wide support for the project as a result of constant and consistent communication. It was also decided that the SFT would work with the College Relations and Marketing Staff to develop a headline and article depicting the key strategies and cultural elements that drove the action project to success.

Before coming together for the third meeting, each member of the SFT individually reviewed the AQIP categories and criteria, then responded to a short online survey which asked questions regarding NDSCS’s challenges, strengths and opportunities for further improvements. This allowed the team to identify the three AQIP categories they felt needed the most improvement. At the SFT’s third meeting they discussed the results of their online survey, and then reviewed the results of the Student Satisfaction Inventory (2014) and Campus Employee Satisfaction Survey (2014). The SFT’s discussion focused on identifying NDSCS’s strengths and challenges – based on their own perceptions (online survey), perceptions of the faculty/staff (CESS) and students’ perceptions (SSI).

Following the third meeting, each SFT member reviewed the most recent feedback systems portfolio feedback, focusing on the identified opportunities for improvement. Then team members were asked to identify the category they felt needed the most improvement. This allowed the team at their fourth meeting to identify specific challenges and targets and to examine both obstacles and strengths of the College. Category 1, “Helping Students Learn” was recognized by the team as being the most critical category for NDSCS to address first.

Based on the SAFR, SFT meeting discussions, and other data, the SFT determined that identifying targets/benchmarks and creating a meaningful review process NDSCS would enable (academic and non-academic) programs to more quickly identify opportunities for improvement, increase responsiveness to student and stakeholder needs, and be able to effectively utilize data. All of these were identified in the SAFR as areas needing improvement.

This intensive approach to the Strategy Forum pre-work enabled the team to effectively move through the exercises and allowed for focused discussions at the Forum, permitting the team to focus on the ‘how’ versus the ‘what’ during the Forum. Through the many discussions at the Forum, guidance from the facilitators, and reviewing trends and most recent College Employee Satisfaction Survey, the SFT realized that although the College would benefit greatly from an academic and non-academic program review process – it was more important to first effectively communicate and gather input about the process from stakeholders. That was an ‘aha’-moment for the SFT and resulted in the action project charter being narrowed to focus solely on the first phase of establishing an academic and non-academic program review process.
Specifically, the narrow scope of the first phase is to establish the leadership and communication channels to provide input and explain the academic and non-academic program review process entitled ‘Building Success @ Science.’ The academic and non-academic review process will be the final goal; however, through the lessons learned from the most successful action projects and the feedback received from the College related to communication, the SFT recognized that the College needed to first identify how to effectively communicate the project.

After returning to campus, the SFT was able to ‘hit the ground running’ and quickly communicated the ‘Building Success @ Science’ initiative and next steps. The SFT gathered a final time with the AQIP Strategy team to provide an overview of the proposed Action Project charter and the proposed timeline (see attachment 1). The AQIP Strategy team agreed to lead this action project and has successfully done so thus far. Additionally, NDSCS will continue to benefit from the work that the SFT accomplished and the resulting Building Success @ Science.

4. Action project impact on CQI Efforts

At the Strategy Forum in April 2015, the facilitators encouraged NDSCS to focus future Action Projects to include activities that could be completed within 6-12 months. This provided the College with both challenges and opportunities regarding current action projects with anticipated completion/institutionalization slated for 2016 and 2017. The new timeline was built into our fourth action project resulting from the strategy forum “Building Success @ Science: Phase 1” and future projects.

The Assessment of Student Learning across Non-Academic Areas action project has the central goal of demonstrating that learning is occurring outside the classroom through developing a process that mirrors the academic program assessment process. This action project was aggressive in its timeline and goals, especially given the varying levels of experience with departments writing/identifying student learning outcomes. This variation has translated to the differing progress made by each of the departments over the course of this project. Although most areas have identified at least one student learning outcome and have defined a plan for assessment – some areas are still refining their plans, while others are in full implementation mode. This project has enabled non-academic areas of the College to reflect on their role in student learning; however, a feedback process and additional training still needs to be identified. Although the intent is to close this action project in June 2016, the institution is committed to continuing the development of identifying an assessment process for the non-academic areas.

The Increase Completion/Graduation Rates of Students Taking Developmental Courses action project is currently in progress, but has not progressed at the rate anticipated due to a variety of factors. These setbacks have delayed the identification of the trends, barriers, and success factors of the cohort being tracked; however, these setbacks are not anticipated to impact the completion date. This project is still positioned to provide the information and longitudinal data to make recommendations to improve students’ success. At the onset of this project, it was thought that the cohort data would be easily queried and provided – however the discussion about the parameters and definition of the query took longer than anticipated. Additionally, data was tracked at two levels (department level and institution level) which added a layer of complexity. This discovery enabled processes and procedures to be put into place to make future access to this type of data much easier.

The Strengthening Relationships with K-12 Focused on the Southeast North Dakota (SE ND) Region action project has been used to inform face-to-face discussions with high school and Career and Technical Education (CTE) Center administrators in SE ND. The NDSCS
President visited 39 high schools and CTE centers. Discussions during these visits centered on four topics: first, how NDSCS and the school/CTE Centers could strengthen their relationship through early-entry course offerings; second, how NDSCS is trying to develop business and industry partnerships with the intent of increasing the number of sponsored students and scholarships was discussed; third, the President shared recent NDSCS initiatives in the areas of student success and the positive outcomes, and how high schools/CTE centers can support those results; and finally, the development and implementation of academic program admission standards was reviewed. These discussions will be finalized mid-March 2016 and the resulting concerns, questions, and ideas will be themed and shared back with the Action Project team. Additionally, these new relationships resulted in NDSCS hosting over 450 teachers and administrators from the SE ND region on campus fall 2015 for a professional development event. A similar event is being planned for fall 2016, which will be enhanced through providing collaborative workshop opportunities between NDSCS faculty and high school faculty grouped by academic discipline.

The Building Success @ Science: Phase 1 goal is to identify leadership and communication channels to enable building an effective academic and non-academic program review process. This project is on track with four out of the six objectives being met, with a scheduled completion of June 2016. A leadership team, led by a faculty member and an AQIP Strategy Team member, is currently developing formal recommendations regarding communication plans, message and/or channels for the “Building Success @ Science” initiative. This project is allowing NDSCS insight into how future action projects could be phased into shorter timelines.

5. Update on assessment of student learning and recent successes

Support for the assessment of student learning process is provided by the Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Office, under the direction of the Associate Vice President for Student Success. The IE office was shifted to the Student Success Division when it was created in 2014. IE facilitates tracking the assessment of student learning from the time the student enters NDSCS until employment or transfer. Since completing the Systems Portfolio, NDSCS has continued to demonstrate the development and improvement of student learning across the College. This is documented through a robust academic assessment process, through the growth of assessment in non-academic areas, and in student learning trend data.

Overview of Student Learning

Student learning is strong at NDSCS as demonstrated through a variety of measurements and assessments. When compared to national data, NDSCS students often exceed national or cohort means, particularly in first-time certification and licensure exam rates and national exam scores. This reaffirms that students are learning entry-level skills that are being measured in the program student learning outcomes. These nationally-recognized exams vary based on the academic program but include: CAAP (Critical Thinking, Writing), SkillsUSA, NOCTI, AED, ServSafe, ICE, and others.

In 2015, out of the six programs (Nursing – RN, Health Information, Occupational Therapy Assistant, EMT Technology, Pharmacy Technician, Nursing – LPN) reporting first-time licensure pass rates, all were above the national average and four were 90% or higher. Regarding performance on nationally recognized exams, NDSCS students’ average scores were higher than
the national average in 14 of the 18 tests given. Other examples of recent academic achievements include:

- In 2015, the NDSCS John Deere Tech program obtained the Platinum ‘College of Tomorrow’ award, which is the highest award possible from the John Deere Tech Advisory committee. This was the first Platinum award given by John Deere.

- The NDSCS nursing programs continue to receive national recognition. 93.78% of the 2014-2015 graduates passed the NCLEX-RN (National Council of Licensing Exam) and 90.91% of the 2014-2015 graduated passed the NCLEX-PN test on the first attempt. In 2015, the NDSCS RN program was ranked number one in the United States based on the NCLEX-RN results reported by Mountain Measurements, Inc.

- At the 2015 SkillsUSA National Championships, NDSCS students earned gold medals in Motorcycle Service Technology and Culinary Arts. Another gold and a silver medal were awarded to NDSCS students in the CNC Turning Specialist category. At the 2014 SkillsUSA championships, two NDSCS students placed in the top five with a silver medal in Culinary Arts and a Bronze medal in CNC Turning Specialist category.

- In 2015, three John Deere Tech teams comprised of two students each, won national honors at the Post-Secondary Agricultural Students Organization (PAS) conference for Agricultural Machinery Service Technicians in Boise, Idaho, winning first, sixth, and eighth places, respectively.

**Academic Program Assessment Process**

As discussed in the Systems Portfolio, the academic assessment process at NDSCS is well-defined, stable, and regularly monitored and improved through a faculty-driven committee process. The shift to the Student Success Division did not disrupt the assessment process. When requested, IE provides support for any academic programs. Additionally, various online resources are provided to help guide and encourage improvement related to assessment. The online resources have been updated and improved drastically over the past year, which was a suggestion for improvement in the 2015 Assessment Annual Report.

All academic programs have clearly defined student learning outcomes and means of measurement. The process to monitor the assessment remains similar to what is described in the systems portfolio.

The Assessment Committee’s annual report summarizes accomplishments in assessment and identifies areas in the process for improvement or change. In an attempt to gain better insight into the assessment process, the full assessment committee was invited to complete an online evaluation regarding the assessment process and culture at NDSCS. This data is utilized in the annual report to provide recommendations for strengthening the assessment process.

**General Education Assessment Process**

The goal of general education at NDSCS is to assist students in meeting the needs for employment, lifelong learning, and personal growth. To meet this goal, students are provided a variety of credit and non-credit educational experiences, both within and outside the classroom. There are five common student learning outcomes for all students across the institution identified in the General Education Plan, which is monitored and improved through the General Education Assessment Committee. The General Education Committee reviews processes for approving
courses. With the creation of the Student Success Division, the oversight of the General Education committee was shifted to the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs; however, the IE staff serve on the committee and collaboratively assist with assessment efforts. An annual report is developed that provides an overview of the general education outcomes for the colleges; additionally, it offers recommendations for improvements along with possible budgetary implications.

6. Highlights of Institutional Priorities

NDSCS institutional priorities are guided by the College’s strategic plan and AQIP Action Projects. NDSCS updates the strategic plan every three years, with the most recent cycle going from 2013 through 2016, which is also aligned with the NDUS Strategic Goals. Annually each College department is required to develop and align their departmental goals and action plans with the strategic goals. Departments involve their stakeholders, as appropriate, with developing their action plans and collecting data. Across the College, departmental goals are annually submitted (and/or updated) to their supervisor who reviews, approves and monitors progress toward achievement.

NDSCS has made significant strides toward accomplishing the 2013-2016 Strategic Goals. Below is an overview of initiatives, programs, and accomplishments by each goal.

1. Enhance student learning and success.

Since 2013, NDSCS has continued to make strides to support students’ learning and success. Improvements have been made to the new student acclimation process by extending move-in from one to two days, providing engagement opportunities throughout the academic year, engaging College employees in acclimation activities, and encouraging the participation of students’ family. Also, enhancements were made to the registration and orientation process by further involving family members and faculty/staff in these processes. Purposeful peer engagement opportunities have also been added by enhancing social events, providing monies for peer-tutoring and the development of tutor-training program, and by establishing both the Wildcat Welcome Team and NDSCS Ambassadors. Additional support has been added related to academic advising through expanding faculty involvement in new student registration, providing training on entry-level advising, and creating the Advising Shared Drive. This drive was developed based on faculty feedback and allows advisors easy access to essential advising information (e.g., student placement worksheets, CSI results) with the click of a button.

The Student Success Division (SSD) was created in 2014 by aligning Institutional Effectiveness, Student Success/Career Services, Academic Service Center and Academic Counseling into a central division, enabling students to increase their success inside and outside the classroom by receiving academic advising, academic and career counseling, tutoring, and assistance in a central location. In 2015, the SSD transitioned into the newly renovated Old Main building to provide a central location for the Student Success Center, a one-stop service and assistance center that provides: tutoring (peer and professional), quiet and group study spaces, developmental classes and support, career planning and job search assistance, veterans benefit assistance, accessibility services, a testing center, and academic planning/guidance. The SSD has enabled increased synergies between departments such as improved support for high-risk students and those encountering academic and/or financial difficulties.

Also, in an effort to ensure students are able to succeed in their academic programs, all Career and Technical programs have program-specific admission standards in place effective fall
2016. These standards were identified by program faculty through reviewing student success trend data and other student-specific information.

2. Meet the workforce needs of Fargo/West Fargo region.

NDSCS continues to strive to meet the workforce and educational needs of the Fargo/West Fargo Region (and Southeast ND). Specifically, this has been accomplished through expanding academic offerings at NDSCS-Fargo, which had a 42% enrollment growth between fall 2014 and fall 2015. This growth has been matched with expanding support services at NDSCS-Fargo as described in section 7.

3. Utilize technology to enhance students’ collegiate experience.

NDSCS has recently found various ways to innovatively use technology to engage students by utilizing social media, implementing a text alert system for important dates/deadlines and College events, as well as the development of the NDSCS App. Adoption of an online system to refer high-risk students to the Student Success Center has been developed to expedite interventions with these students. Active Directory was also established for all students and employees to increase security of College computers and enable direct access to files regardless of the access point. NDSCS has also embraced the use of NDSCS Online (learning management system) platform with most courses to enhance instruction. Additionally, the Instructional Technology department provides direct support and professional development for faculty regarding technology-based learning.

4. Develop stronger relationships with K-12 partners with a focus on the southeast (SE) region.

As described in section 4, through a current action project NDSCS has continued to grow its partnership with schools in the SE region of North Dakota by increasing communication. NDSCS also hosts an annual on-campus College Fair for high school students that has attracted an average of 300 students per year since 2013. NDSCS continues to provide educational outreach and professional development opportunities for teachers in the SE ND region.

5. Secure external resources.

Since 2013, approximately $940,000 has been provided in student scholarships by the NDSCS foundation and over $2 million in gifts and contributions have been provided to the College by the foundation. These funds have been significantly impacted by the ND Challenge Fund Matching Grant program that was funded in the ND legislature in 2013 and 2015. NDSCS has acquired $4.2 million in grants to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the College. Additionally, more than 20 formal partners are participating in the NDSCS partnership program which contributes about $10 million to College programs.

Employees

The 2014 College Employee Satisfaction Survey illustrated employees’ overall satisfaction slightly increased from 2012; however, their satisfaction with communication is low and lower than the comparison group. In response, the College developed an action project (Section 4) aimed at improving communication. Also, a diverse task force was formed to develop recommendations related to communication. These recommendations have been discussed and the Executive Director of Human Resources has been tasked with implementing the recommendations. The College has continued to exemplify its commitment to retain high-skilled
employees through allocating 3% salary increases annually since 2013. Additionally, the College continues to support the Rewards and Recognition Committee which provides a variety of events and awards each year that recognize quality service and excellent teaching.

Infrastructure
Significant investments have also been made to the College infrastructure. In 2012, $9 million was spent on Residential hall remodels to improve student life on campus. The renovations of Old Main ($8.4 million) and Earl “Skip” Bute Alumni Stadium ($1.5 million) were completed in 2015. Over the next 18 months NDSCS will be addressing over $15 million worth of deferred maintenance projects.

Academic Program Support Initiative
NDSCS is in phase 3 of this 3 phase initiative that provides enhanced academic program administrative support, improved academic program recruitment and retention, and additional academic program partnership development capabilities. The Academic Support Initiative is designed to provide assistance to allow for a greater emphasis to be placed on selected program areas based on North Dakota’s current workforce needs and corresponding program enrollment levels.

7. Highlights related to Distance Education
NDSCS is approved for distance courses and programs, which enables the College to provide a variety of academic programs at a distance and support an additional location in Fargo, ND.

Online Education
Online learning is vital to NDSCS and substantial resources are dedicated to ensuring quality in online programs, including technology support for faculty and academic and support services for students. NDSCS is a member of the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA). For more information about online programs at NDSCS visit: www.ndscs.edu/online or for information on SARA visit: www.wiche.edu/sara

Technical Support for faculty and students is provided collaboratively by the Distance Education staff and NDSCS ITS. Additionally, NDSCS Distance Education staff provides direct support for NDSCS Online, which is the learning management system and course delivery method for online learning. Student and faculty who are experiencing difficulties can also access support from Distance Education staff during standard business hours and through technical support 24/7/365. Distance Education Staff, in collaboration with NDSCS Instructional Technology department, provide individual consultation and group training for faculty using NDSCS Online for online, hybrid, and face-to-face courses.

Academic and student services available to online students mirror what is available to face-to-face students. Financial Aid, Library, Career Counseling, Career Services, Enrollment Services, Student Accessibility Resources, Veterans Assistance, business affairs, and the Student Success Center (including tutoring and academic counseling) are some of the offices providing support and outreach. Recent improvements include refining the acclimation process for online students through enhancing the online orientation processes; and improving the internal processes of following-up on student referrals including those students on academic warning or probation. Similar to face-to-face students, online students are assigned a faculty advisor.
enabling guidance between faculty and students. Students also have access to SMART THINKING which is a real-time online tutoring system available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Additionally, Distance Education staff continually update and develop instructional videos and tutorials to support online students.

8. Overview of additional instructional locations and Dual Enrollment

NDSCS-Fargo

NDSCS-Fargo is an additional location from which NDSCS provides workforce training, academic programs in nursing, paramedic, business, computer science, welding, liberal arts, developmental courses, as well as courses for credit and non-credit. NDSCS-Fargo currently offers 8 programs with 15 award options and is in the process of offering a Dialysis Tech program and a Community Paramedic program. Also, through a Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) initiative grant, NDSCS was able to add the second year option to its welding program starting fall 2014. Information Communication Technology (ICT) was also added to programs at NDSCS-Fargo beginning fall 2013 with an Information Technology Support Certificate. The Information Systems Administrator A.A.S. was added fall 2014 and IT Forensics and Web Design/Web Development were added fall 2015. Several enhancements have been made to the NDSCS-Fargo location, including improvements to student support services, academic program offerings, physical space, and support for faculty professional development.

To better support students, staff positions were created or shifted to NDSCS-Fargo. A Student Recruitment & Outreach Specialist was added January 2014 to provide outreach and support to students, especially non-traditional students transitioning to the College. A Student Service Generalist was added at the same time which enables students to receive face-to-face guidance and information related to enrollment and financial aid at NDSCS-Fargo. With the development of the Student Success Division, an Academic and Career Counselor position was dedicated to the Fargo location in January 2015 which allows more direct support and general advising to students at the NDSCS-Fargo location. Additional staff time was also added to an existing position to allow for coordination and monitoring of the professional tutoring provided at NDSCS-Fargo.

Additionally, significant changes have been made to the physical space at NDSCS-Fargo since 2013. Remodeling of academic related space began summer 2013. The first remodel added faculty office space and two additional classrooms. A more significant remodel was completed fall 2014 that enabled most student support services to be co-located in an area convenient to students. A lactation space was added to better accommodate parenting students, a space was dedicated to have a satellite NDSCS Bookstore available to students during the first few weeks of every semester, and a coffee shop was added to provide on-site food and refreshments. Additional remodeling was completed fall 2015 which added another general purpose classroom, an additional IVN (interactive video network) room, ICT labs, and faculty offices. In total, approximately $500,000 has been invested in remodeling and upgrading of the facility since 2013.

The NDSCS-Fargo location continues to encourage professional development of faculty. NDSCS-Fargo currently has nine full-time faculty with the remainder of courses being taught by either full-time faculty who travel from the Wahpeton location or highly-skilled adjunct faculty members. In an effort to provide support to all faculty, a professional development day is held.
every fall at the NDSCS-Fargo location. This event provides an overview of student support services, logistical information, classroom management, and general academic program information.

**Additional Distance Education**

In spring 2014, six healthcare facilities located in and around Oakes, ND, a very rural community in Southeast ND, approached NDSCS requesting assistance with training LPNs. This request is a result of a workforce need. With the increasing aging population in North Dakota, the need for highly-educated and skilled healthcare professionals has grown exponentially. After receiving approval from required entities, the first Oakes LPN cohort started in fall 2015. This program is delivered over a 3-year period to allow students to continue with their current employment and maintain other responsibilities. Twenty-two of the 66 credits are offered face-to-face in Oakes, while the remainder of the required credits are offered through a mixture of delivery methods including ITV, online, and face-to-face (Fargo, Wahpeton, and Oakes). This program is a model for how other programs could operate in the future.

**Dual Enrollment**

NDSCS also has a robust early-entry program (dual-credit program) offering both online and face-to-face courses. Currently, courses are offered at 34 high schools or taught over ITV/IVN, at NDSCS-Fargo, and NDSCS-Wahpeton. Early-entry students must be in grades 10, 11, or 12 and it is recommended they have a minimum GPA of a 3.0.

NDSCS has taken steps to assure faculty have the proper credentials and demonstrated ability to effective teach. Before faculty are hired to teach early-entry courses, department chairs review candidate’s resumes and transcripts. NDSCS also has measures in place to verify quality of instruction. Early-entry faculty are required to meet with a NDSCS faculty mentor who teaches in the discipline for a curriculum review prior to the early-entry faculty teaching the course. In addition, an annual curriculum review, including course syllabi and learning outcomes review, is required of all early-entry faculty. This review is conducted in concert with the NDSCS faculty mentor and the Early-Entry Program Coordinator.

Recent improvements to the early-entry program include hiring a full-time Early-entry Coordinator to assure and advance quality regarding early entry, while also serving as a liaison between early-entry faculty and the College.

**Faculty Qualifications**

Based on the HLC’s updated guidelines regarding determining qualified faculty related on October 1, 2015, NDSCS is in the process of drafting a policy and procedure to ensure faculty have appropriate expertise in the subjects in which they are providing instruction. NDSCS is in the process of communicating with all faculty teaching for NDSCS, including early-entry instructors, about the development of this new College policy, the companion procedure, and the monitoring that will start in 2017. NDSCS intends to have the new policy and procedure, which will align with HLC guidelines, approved by June 2016. NDSCS is also investigating how to assist faculty in obtaining the credentials, if needed.
Attachment 1

**Action Project Timeline**
“Building Success @ Science: Phase 1”

**Project Goal:** Establish the leadership and communication channels to provide input and explain the Building Success @ Science initiative.

**Objective 1:** Share the ‘Building Success @ Science’ initiative with the broad College community
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mi0Clw84JFY&feature=youtu.be)
**Responsible:** AQIP Strategy Forum Team
**Due:** completed May 7, 2015

**Objective 2:** Identify the areas that will be represented on the leadership team.
**Responsible:** AQIP Team
**Due:** Completed July 2015

**Objective 3:** Seek nominations from the College community for members on the leadership team.
- **September 1-4:** AQIP Team ‘test’ nomination form
- **September 11:** ‘Talking Head’ released RE: nomination; Nomination form open
- **September 18:** Nomination Reminder
- **September 25:** Nomination form closed
- **October 9:** AQIP Team Review nominations, forward recommendations to President Richman
**Responsible:** AQIP Team
**Due:** September 30, 2015

**Objective 4:** Establish the Building Success @ Science Leadership Team; enable the team to set the goal(s) and timeline.
**Responsible:** AQIP Team
**Measures:** Team established, number of meetings, leader of Building Success @ Science Leadership Team determined, regular reports to the AQIP Team regarding progress.
**Due:** December 15, 2015

**Objective 5:** Building Success @ Science Leadership Team develop formal recommendation regarding communication plan, messages and/or channels for the ‘Building Success @ Science’ initiative to the AQIP Team for consideration by the Management Team and approval by the President.
**Responsible:** As determined by the Building Success @ Science Leadership Team.
**Measure:** Recommendations regarding the communication plan, messages and/or channels developed and shared with AQIP team. Recommendations approved by Management Team and President.
**Due:** April 15, 2016

**Objective 6:** Identify and establish communication channels for the ‘Building Success @ Science’ initiative.
**Responsible:** As determined by the Building Success @ Science Leadership Team.
**Measures:** communication plan, messages and/or channels identified, awareness survey regarding initiative
**Due:** By June 2016
Additional Required Materials

Faculty/Staff Policies and Procedures
- NDSCS Human Resources Policies and procedures are provided through the NDSCS intranet at: http://intranet.ndscs.edu/categories/file_tree/policies-1
- NDSCS also follows North Dakota University System Human Resources Policy Manual which can be found at: http://ndus.edu/makers/procedures/hr/

Student Rights & Responsibilities
- NDSCS Guide to Student Rights and Responsibilities is provided and explained to new and returning students through orientation activities, it can be found here: https://www.ndscs.edu/current-students/student-life/student-rights-and-responsibilities/

NDSCS College Catalog
- The NDSCS current and recent catalogs are available here: https://www.ndscs.edu/academics/things-to-know-academics/course-schedules-catalogs/

2013 NDSCS AQIP Systems Portfolio
- The systems portfolio and other information about accreditation, including the addendum, is available here: https://www.ndscs.edu/accreditation-aqip/

2014 Audited Financial Statement

2015 Audited Financial Statement