2020 Mission Fulfillment Progress Report

Prepared by Michael Brown, Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research on behalf of the Institutional Development, Effectiveness and Accreditation Committee

February 2020
Introduction

Helena College implemented a new framework for strategic planning and assessment of mission fulfillment following the acceptance of its Year One Self-Evaluation Report by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) in July 2018. In response to two recommendations from the NWCCU, the College collaboratively and thoughtfully refined its mission, consolidated and focused its strategic plan, and reframed its core themes to improve planning, decision-making, allocation of resources, and the evaluation of mission fulfillment. Better alignment between the core themes and strategic goals, fewer and more meaningful indicators of achievement, and a more holistic definition of mission fulfillment are intended to provide the College with an efficient and effective framework for both guiding planning and assessment at the institutional and program level, and for openly sharing the results.

Mission Statement

Helena College, a comprehensive two-year college, provides access to and support of high quality lifelong educational opportunities for our diverse community.

Determination of Mission Fulfillment

In compliance with standards set forth by NWCCU, our regional accrediting body, and within the context of our unique institutional purpose, characteristics and expectations, Helena College currently defines and articulates mission fulfillment based on the following determinations:

1. Systematic evaluation of the performance of each of the indicators of achievement for the outcomes identified in the three core themes. An acceptable threshold for mission fulfillment is defined as 75% of the indicators of achievement exceeding, meeting or having an acceptable range of achievement.
2. Regular monitoring of progress towards achievement of the each of the five strategic goals and their supporting objectives. Progress is determined through evaluation of the results of annual work plans supporting specific strategic goal objectives at the unit level (programs, services, committees, senates).

The Institutional Development, Effectiveness and Accreditation (IDEA) Committee is responsible for establishing the extent of mission fulfillment each year, and reporting the results along with accompanying recommendations for improvements or future actions to the Dean’s Cabinet and the campus community.

Helena College Core Themes

1. Student Access and Success (2 outcomes, 8 indicators of achievement)
2. High Quality Education (2 outcomes, 5 indicators of achievement)
3. Community Enrichment (3 outcomes, 9 indicators of achievement)

Current Performance on Core Themes/Institutional Outcomes

Helena College’s performance on the indicators of achievement associated with each of the three core themes and their supporting outcomes was evaluated by the IDEA Committee based on the available data for all metrics as of the end of the 2018-19 academic year. In some cases, new data that became
available during the fall 2019 semester was included in the evaluation. Each indicator of achievement has one or more associated metrics each having **baselines** (rolling three-year averages) and **targets** by which **current performance** is measured. Arrow symbols signify whether the initial targets, set by the Strategic Planning, Assessment and Accreditation (SPAA) Committee in late 2017, were intended for growth, or maintaining existing performance. Where possible, three-year trend data is included. Performance on each indicator of achievement was scored using the following criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Result</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Target met</td>
<td>Performance meets or exceeds target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Acceptable range of achievement</td>
<td>Performance within 90% of target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Target not met</td>
<td>Performance not within 90% of target</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For its core theme outcomes, Helena College defines an acceptable threshold of mission fulfillment as 75% of the collective indicators meeting their targets or having an acceptable range of achievement. As of the fall 2019, 45% of the total indicators (10 out of 22) met or exceeded their established targets, or were within an acceptable range of achievement. The College’s overall performance was impacted by five of the indicators (23%) not yet being measurable as processes for data collection are either pending or still need to be developed to establish baselines and appropriate targets. Excluding the non-measurable indicators, 59% of the remaining indicators met/exceeded their targets or had an acceptable range of achievement. Core Theme One met the acceptable threshold for mission fulfillment (75%) while Core Theme Two (40%) and Core Theme Three (22%) did not. The results for each core theme and their associated outcomes and indicators of achievement are summarized in the table below:

**Core Theme One: Student Access and Success**

| Current Core Theme Mission Fulfillment Score: 75% of indicators (6) met targets or had acceptable ranges of achievement. Core theme meets acceptable threshold of mission fulfillment. (Minimum score of 75% = 6 of 8 indicators meeting targets or having acceptable range of achievement) |
|---|---|
| Objective 1: Helena College achieves its strategic enrollment management goals |
| Indicators of Achievement | Performance |
| 1. Enrollment in credit-bearing programs and courses (Average annual FTE) | Baseline: 832  
Target: 900 ↑  
Current: 804 (FY19)  
Trend: -6%  
**Performance Score: 0** |
| 2. Dual enrollment (Fall + spring unduplicated headcount) | Baseline: 758  
Target: 687 ↑  
Current: 937 (AY1819)  
Trend: +41%  
**Performance Score: 2** |
3. Retention  
(Entering students returning the following fall semester)  
Baseline: 56%  
Target: 57%  
Current: 58% (Fall 2019)  
Trend: 0%  
**Performance Score: 2**

**Objective 2: Helena College students achieve their educational goals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators of Achievement</th>
<th>Performance</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| 1. Completion of gateway math and writing courses  
(Entering students successfully completing gateway math and writing courses within 3 semesters) | Baseline: 29%  
Target: 35%↑  
Current: 25% (Fall 2017 Cohort)  
Trend: -8%  
**Performance Score: 0** |
| 2. Course Success Rate  
(Students successfully completing courses each semester across all modes of delivery: face-to-face, hybrid, online) | Baseline: 81%  
Target: 75% ↔  
Current: 84% (AY1819)  
Trend: +10%  
**Performance Score: 2** |
| 3. Completion of certificate and degree programs  
(Annual number of degrees and certificates completed)  
(Entering students graduating within 150% of time to degree: 1.5 years for certificates, 3 years for associates) | Baseline: 250  
Target: 245 ↔  
Current: 289 (AY1819)  
Trend: +8%  
**Performance Score: 2** |
| 4. Transfer  
(Entering AA/AS students transferring within 3 years) | Baseline: 28%  
Target: 20% ↑  
Current: 35% (Fall 2016 Cohort)  
Trend: +14%  
**Performance Score: 2** |
| 5. Employment Rates  
(Students completing career-technical education credentials who are employed within one-year following graduation) | Baseline: 87%  
Target: 80% ↔  
Current: 88% (AY1617)  
Trend: +1%  
**Performance Score: 2** |
Core Theme Two: High Quality Education

**Core Theme Mission Fulfillment Score:** 40% of indicators (2) met targets or had acceptable ranges of achievement. Core theme does not meet an acceptable threshold of mission fulfillment. (Minimum score of 75% = 3.5 of 5 indicators) 3 indicators still need data and/or targets.

### Objective 1: Helena College students demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators of Achievement</th>
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</table>
| **1. Institutional Competencies** (Students demonstrating competency in information literacy, technology literacy, and diversity outcomes) | Baseline: TBD  
Target: TBD  
Current: N/A  
Trend: N/A  
**Performance Score: N/A**  
*Data collection/assessment pending* |
| **2. Program Learning Outcomes** (Program outcomes successfully achieved by students each academic year) | Baseline: TBD  
Target: 70%  
Current: N/A  
Trend: N/A  
**Performance Score: N/A**  
*Data collection/assessment pending* |
| **3. Transfer Success** (Transfer students in good standing after 1st semester following transfer to 4-year MUS institutions) | Baseline: 84%  
Target: 80% ↔  
Current: 87% (Fall 2019)  
Trend: +3%  
**Performance Score: 2** |
|  | (1st semester grade point average following transfer) |
| **4. Professional license and certification pass rates** (Students successfully passing professional licensing exams and certifications) | Baseline: 98%  
Target: 85%  
Current: 100% (Fall 2019)  
Trend: +4%  
*Combined average for RN, PN and FAA licensing exam results*  
**Performance Score: 2** |

### Objective 2: Helena College supports professional growth opportunities for faculty and staff to advance excellence in teaching and delivery of support services

<table>
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<th>Indicators of Achievement</th>
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</table>
| **1. Professional Development** (% of operating budget allocated to professional development) | Baseline: 2.8%  
Target: TBD  
Current: 6.7% (FY20)  
Trend: +5%  
**Performance Score: N/A** |
Core Theme Three: Community Enrichment

Core Theme Mission Fulfillment Score: 22% of indicators (2) met targets or had acceptable ranges of achievement. Core theme does not meet acceptable threshold of mission fulfillment. (Minimum score of 75% = 7 of 9 indicators) 2 indicators still need data and/or targets

Objective 1: Helena College is responsive to regional workforce development needs

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Indicators of Achievement</th>
<th>Performance</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Assessment of workforce needs</td>
<td>Baseline: TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>(% of CTE programs completing a workforce needs assessment on a three-year schedule)</td>
<td>Target: 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Current: N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trend: N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Performance Score: N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Responsiveness to workforce needs</td>
<td>Baseline: TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Projects, partnerships, curricular revisions, Continuing Ed offerings tied to the results of workforce needs assessments)</td>
<td>Target: TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Current: N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trend: N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Performance Score: N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Employers indicating satisfaction with workforce development offerings and initiatives)</td>
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</table>

Objective 2: Helena College provides cultural, intellectual and social resources for the community

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators of Achievement</th>
<th>Performance</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Community use of campus facilities</td>
<td>Baseline: 44 events/year</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Community events/activities hosted on Helena College campuses each year)</td>
<td>Target: 50 events/year ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Current: 37 (FY19)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trend: -20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Performance Score: 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. College sponsorship of cultural, intellectual and/or social events or activities that are open to community participation (Events/activities open to the public each year)</td>
<td>Baseline: 20 events/year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Target: 10 events/year ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Current: 27 events (FY19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trend: +67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Performance Score: 2</td>
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</table>

Objective 3: Helena College partners with the community to expand opportunities for learning and service
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators of Achievement</th>
<th>Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Participation in non-credit/credit bearing continuing and community education programs | Baseline: 1,602  
Target: 1,775 ↑  
Current: 1,449 (FY19)  
Trend: -13%  
Performance Score: 0 |  |
| (Annual headcount enrollment in CE courses and programs)                                 |                                                  |
| 2. Completion of non-credit credentials                                                  | Baseline: TBD – 1 year of data avail.  
Target: 80%  
Current: 77% (FY19)  
Trend: N/A  
Performance Score: 1 |  |
| (Successful completion rate for credential granting non-credit programs)                 |                                                  |
| 3. Adult Education                                                                      | Adult Education  
Baseline: 10% (5 yr. ave as of 2017)  
Target: 15% ↑  
Current: 3% (FY19)  
Trend: -7%  
Performance Score: 0 |  |
| (Annual conversion rate of Adult Education and Access to Success program completers to Helena College enrollment) | Access to Success  
Baseline: 9%  
Target: 25%  
Current: 3% (FY19)  
Trend: -9%  
Performance Score: 0 |  |
| 4. Service to community by faculty, staff and students                                  | Baseline: 20,001  
Target: 25,000 ↔  
Current: 22,184 (FY19)  
Trend: +43%  
Performance Score: 0 |  |
| (Service hours to the community each semester including student internships, clinicals, service-learning, faculty and staff involvement in the community) |                                                  |
| 5. Credit and non-credit programs to support community needs                            | Baseline: 9 (2 year average)  
Target: 11 ↔  
Current: 9 (FY19)  
Trend: -10%  
Performance Score: 0 |  |
| (CE programs/services provided annually to community partners)                           |                                                  |

IDEA Committee Recommendations on Core Themes, Objectives and Indicators of Achievement

Based upon the first performance evaluation of Helena College’s 22 institutional indicators of achievement, the IDEA Committee recommends the following actions to improve mission fulfillment and the evaluation process:

- The current core themes, outcome-objectives and associated indicators of achievement including metrics and targets were established in 2017. They should be reviewed for their validity and effectiveness in determining mission fulfillment based on the College’s present...
institutional context and priorities. This process will be facilitated by the IDEA Committee in spring 2020, and will include participation and input from relevant stakeholders across the campus community. Many indicators need their targets revised based on significant changes in baselines and current performance.

- Subject to the review process, the five remaining indicators of achievement that are lacking data collection or reporting processes to establish baselines and appropriate targets need to be addressed promptly to close significant gaps in the evaluation of performance and determination of mission fulfillment.
- If indicator 3.2.1, community use of campus facilities, remains after the review process, the Committee recommends that non-profit groups, subject to the criteria outlined in HC Policy 600.7 (2.c.8), be re-classified as a Category I User-No Charge as a way to promote community engagement in a measurable manner.
- The new 2020 NWCCU Standards for Accreditation no longer require core themes and their associated frameworks. Consequently, the College will need to make a decision about the continued use of core themes as it transitions to the new standards, mandated by 2022. The current Helena College Strategic Plan expires in 2022, providing an opportunity for redefining the College’s approach to assessing mission fulfillment and institutional effectiveness subject to NWCCU Standard One alongside the development of a new strategic plan.

### 2018-2022 Strategic Goals

1. Promote student success and achievement (3 objectives)
2. Advance academic excellence and scholarship (3 objectives)
3. Build community engagement and partnerships (3 objectives)
4. Model and foster equity, inclusion and cultural competency (3 objectives)
5. Ensure institutional integrity (4 objectives)

### Current Progress on Achievement of Strategic Goals & Objectives

Helena College’s strategic plan was updated by the IDEA Committee (formerly known as SPAA) in the fall of 2017 based on extensive input from a campus wide review of the existing plan at the end of the preceding spring semester. The current plan includes five broad strategic goals each having 3-4 supporting objectives outlining specific actions intended to advance those goals toward fulfillment of the College’s mission. In the fall of 2018, annual work plans were implemented to focus action at the unit level in support of the new strategic objectives. The 48 units now completing work plans include academic programs, divisions/departments, support services, institutional committees and senates. In fall 2019, the IDEA Committee conducted a review of the 2018-19 annual work plans to evaluate their alignment, quality, and achievement. Teams of two committee members each evaluated 12 plans using standardized rating criteria. Those reviews, which include comments from the reviewers, have been shared with the plan developers for the purpose of continuous improvement.

### Alignment of 2018-19 Annual Work Plans

Upon implementation in fall 2018, plan developers where asked to select at least three strategic goal objectives related to their areas and detail actions including indicators, timelines, and responsible parties, to support the objectives. No institutional priorities as far as specific goals or objectives were identified, or emphasized. As illustrated in Figure 1, analysis of the plans revealed that strategic goal one
had the most associated actions (61 out of 150). Strategic goals two, three and five had 31, 27 and 22 of the remaining actions while strategic goal four had the least with only nine actions. The plans also tended to focus on the first objective for each of the five strategic goals (Figure 2). This may have been intentional in some plans, or simply due to the fact that the first objective was the default option in the selection menu for each goal in the electronic plan form. In the future, based on the current performance of the core theme indicators or fiscal measures, College leadership should prioritize plan alignment and actions to specific strategic goal objectives in need of attention. Strategic goal four clearly requires an institution wide focus, and could be more effectively operationalized by adding an objective relevant to all or most areas on campus.

Figure 1

![Graph showing 2018-19 Program Plan Actions by Strategic Goal]

Figure 2

![Graph showing 2018-19 Program Plan Actions by Strategic Objective]
Quality of 2018-19 Annual Work Plans

Following the process outlined above, the IDEA Committee rated each of the 48 annual work plans based on completeness, clarity, alignment, effectiveness and achievement. The overall results were as follows:

- 61% of the plans were complete or mostly complete with all required plan details and fields entered or selected.
- 98% of the plans demonstrated clarity with all or most information entered being concise and clearly understood.
- 87% of the plans had alignment with all or most of the selected strategic goal objectives being relevant to the area, and had appropriate action items identified for each objective.
- Plan effectiveness was rated by review of the indicators, timelines and results/future actions
  - For 92% of the plans all or most indicators were appropriate to measure success for the related action items
  - For 96% of the plans all or most timelines were realistic.
  - For 73% of the plans all or most results and future actions demonstrated sound analysis and commitment to continuous improvement
- 44% of the plans successfully achieved all or most of their action items.

Results of 2018-19 Annual Work Plans

A review of the final status of the 150 individual action items in the work plans reveals that 28% were completed and another 39% were marked as ongoing; 25% were not completed, 5% were deferred and another 3% did not provide a final status. The final status of the action items by strategic goal is illustrated below (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Final Action Item Status by Strategic Goal
IDEA Committee Recommendations on Strategic Goals/Objectives & Annual Work Plans

In response to the first review of the 18-19 annual work plans and a preliminary review of the 19-20 annual work plans, the IDEA Committee recommends the following actions involving the annual work plan form, development of the plans, submission timeline, and review process:

- Provide initial and ongoing training opportunities for plan developers with an emphasis on alignment to strategic goal objectives, writing S.M.A.R.T. goals and effective indicators, and fully completing the plan forms.
- Expectations with regard to planning and assessment responsibilities should be included in relevant job descriptions and onboarding for new employees.
- Revise the work plan form to improve clarity, alignment and effectiveness by:
  - Including prompts to guide text entry.
  - Eliminating default selections in the pull-down menus.
  - Using form validation to make sure all required fields are completed.
  - Allowing alignment of actions to multiple strategic objectives.
  - Including a mid-year progress report.
  - Adding fields to provide explanation for “deferred” and “ongoing” statuses.
- Only mission statements and goals having “ongoing” or “deferred” status should be exported to following year plans.
- Integrate development of annual work plans with budget requests and employee performance evaluation and development plans. All plan developers should have their plans reviewed by
their supervisor or senior administrator. Work plans in the same administrative area should be coordinated with each other.

- Provide a more explicit link between strategic goal objectives and core theme/outcome indicators of achievement. Specific indicators of achievement could be linked to annual plans.
- College leadership should consider identifying top strategic priorities each year to provide more focus for work plans, and ensure distribution of action items to address strategic goal objectives that are not being sufficiently advanced in a consistent manner across campus.
- Add a more general objective under Strategic Goal 4-Model and Foster Equity, Inclusion and Cultural Competency, that would allow more areas on campus to identify relevant actions in their work plans to support advancement of this goal.
- Change the work plan submission and completion due dates to the beginning and end of each academic year.
- Provide more timely feedback, by dividing the committee review process into two phases: an initial review following plan submission that evaluates the clarity, alignment and effectiveness of each plan, and a final review after completion that evaluates the results.

Conclusion

Helena College’s current framework for evaluating mission fulfillment was established in spring 2018. A year and a half later, the first review of the College’s progress on mission fulfillment indicates that less than half the core theme indicators of achievement exceeded, met, or were within an acceptable range of targeted performance. Nearly a quarter of the indicators still need processes implemented to collect the necessary data, and others need targets established or revised in response to current baseline and performance data. On a very positive note, Core Theme One, which emphasizes outcomes related to student access and achievement, did meet the threshold for mission fulfillment with most (75%) of the indicators exceeding, meeting, or falling within an acceptable range of their targets. Several indicators in Core Themes Two and Three also met or exceeded their targets. Two thirds of the all actions documented in the first year of annual work planning were completed or are ongoing, though most planned and completed actions focused on Strategic Goals 1 and 2. The College clearly has more work to do in fulfilling its mission and developing an effective framework for evaluating its progress in that regard. The IDEA Committee has identified a number of areas for improvement including a full review of the College’s core theme indicators to confirm their continuing relevance, update performance targets, and finalize necessary data collection processes to allow for a complete evaluation of mission fulfillment in the future. Recommendations to improve the development and review of annual work plans will also provide more integrated planning across the institution to advance all of Helena College’s strategic goal objectives, and obtain the best results from which to measure our progress going forward.